



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 21.05.2003  
COM(2003)282 final

**COMMISSION OPINION**

**on the draft Council Decision on a revision of the Statutes of the Economic and  
Financial Committee**

## COMMISSION OPINION

### on the draft Council Decision on a revision of the Statutes of the Economic and Financial Committee

In accordance with Article 209 of the Treaty establishing the European Community, the Council shall, after receiving an Opinion of the Commission, determine the rules governing the Committees. The Council requested the Opinion of the Commission, in a letter dated 23 April 2003, on a revision of the Statutes of the Economic and Financial Committee (EFC), which are currently set in the Council Decision of 31 December 1998 (1999/8/EC).

The proposed revision aims at accommodating the forthcoming enlargement of the European Union to 25 Member States. In order to continue working efficiently, the draft Council Decision proposes that the EFC will work in two formations: a restricted one, where only members from national administrations, the Commission and the ECB participate, and the full one where all members, including the members from national central banks, will take part.

For that purpose, it is being proposed to introduce a new article and to modify two articles. Specifically:

- Article 4 of the proposal (new Article) establishes the 2 formations;
- Article 5 of the proposal (corresponding to Article 4 of the current Statutes) clarifies that national central banks members cannot claim to attend all discussions on questions on which the Council may subsequently take a decision;
- Article 10 of the proposal (corresponding to Article 9 of the current Statutes) has been modified to increase the minimal number of members needed for calling a meeting, from 2 to 4.

The Commission considers that the proposed revision of the Statutes is appropriate. This change recognises that members from national administrations have particular responsibilities on matters where the Council takes decisions. However, the expertise and analytical insight of the central bankers will still be used when appropriate. The revision has no impact on the role of the Commission in the Committee.

In conclusion, the Commission is of the opinion that:

- Article 2, 2<sup>nd</sup> indent of the proposal should be amended to reflect the current Treaty numbering. Accordingly, the reference to Article 151 should be replaced by a reference to Article 207 EC.
- Article 5 of the proposal could be made clearer by saying: “*However, when advice or an opinion is given on questions on which the Council may subsequently take a decision, members from **national** central banks, when they are present, **the ECB** and the Commission may participate fully in the discussion but shall not participate in a vote.*”