

## TABLE OF ACTIVITY IN THE TAX FIELD FROM 1999 TO 2004

### I. DIRECT TAX

#### Legislative proposals presented by the Commission but not yet adopted

Proposal concerning Mergers Directive	October 2003
Proposal concerning Interest & Royalties Directive	December 2003
Proposal for a Council Decision on the conclusion of a savings tax agreement with Switzerland	February 2004

#### Non-legislative initiatives adopted by Commission

Communication on a strategy to tackle obstacles to cross-border pension provision	April 2001
Communication on a new company tax strategy	October 2001 ( <i>discussed at company tax conference in April 2002</i> )
Creation of EU Joint Forum on Transfer Pricing	July 2002
Report savings tax negotiations with third countries	November 2002
Company tax Communication reviewing progress on removal of cross-border tax obstacles	November 2003 ( <i>discussed at Conference in Rome on 5-6 December 2003</i> )
Communication providing guidance for EU Member States and Accession States on making dividend tax systems compatible with EC Treaty.	December 2003

#### Proposals adopted by Council

*(date of Commission Proposal is indicated where this occurred during this Commission)*

Council Decision authorising the Commission to negotiate savings agreements with 6 third countries	October 2001 ( <i>proposed by Commission in September 2001</i> )
Package to combat harmful tax competition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Code of Conduct for business taxation</li> <li>• Directive on the taxation of Savings</li> <li>• Directive on the taxation of Interest and Royalty payments between associated companies</li> </ul>	June 2003 ( <i>Commission savings tax proposal: July 2001</i> )
Amendment to broaden scope of Parent-Subsidiary Directive	December 2003 ( <i>Commission proposal: July 2003</i> )

## II. VAT

### Legislative proposals presented by the Commission but not yet adopted

Proposal to modify special VAT rules applicable to travel operators selling holiday packages	February 2002
Proposal to allow non-EU travel agents to deal with a single EU VAT administration	March 2003
Proposal to apply VAT to all postal services	May 2003
Proposal to rationalise/simplify reduced VAT rates	July 2003
Proposal to amend place of supply of services rules	December 2003
Proposals for decisions authorising individual Member States to apply special rules e.g. to prevent fraud/ tax evasion or to introduce simplification.	January and February 2004

### Non-legislative initiatives adopted by Commission

Communication presenting a new VAT strategy	June 2000
Report on reduced VAT rates	October 2001
Launch of online service giving businesses access to some of the "VIES" system of electronic information exchange used between tax authorities	June 2002
Report analysing results of experimental application of VAT to labour-intensive services	June 2003
Communication reviewing/updating VAT strategy	October 2003

### Proposals adopted by Council

*(date of Commission Proposal is indicated where this occurred during this Commission)*

Directive simplifying rules on tax representation	October 2000
Directive setting minimum standard VAT rate	January 2001 ( <i>Proposal: September 2000</i> )
Directive harmonising, simplifying and modernising invoicing obligations	December 2001 ( <i>Proposal: November 2000</i> )
Directive and Regulation adopting rules for applying VAT to electronically delivered services	May 2002 ( <i>Proposal: June 2000</i> )
Directive extending reduced VAT rate for labour-intensive services to 31/12/003	December 2002 ( <i>Proposal: September 2002</i> )
Directive on place of supply of gas and electricity	October 2003 ( <i>Proposal: December 2002</i> )
Directive concerning VAT implementing powers and derogation procedures	January 2004 ( <i>Proposal: June 2003</i> ).
Directive continuing reduced VAT rate for labour-intensive services until 31 December 2005	February 2004 ( <i>Proposal: December 2003</i> )
Decisions authorising individual Member States to apply special rules for reasons such as to prevent fraud/tax evasion or to introduce simplification.	Adopted throughout the five years

### III. EXCISE DUTIES

#### Legislative proposals presented by the Commission but not yet adopted

Proposal for harmonisation of excise duties on commercial diesel and approximation of the tax treatment of diesel used for non-commercial purposes with that of petrol used in passenger cars.	July 2002
Proposal to amend the Energy Tax Directive so as to allow the EU accession countries temporarily to apply excise duty exemptions or lower rates of duty than the EU-wide minimum rates. ( <i>Specific proposal for Cyprus to follow in a few weeks</i> )	January 2004

#### Non-legislative initiatives adopted by Commission

Communication on aviation fuel taxation	March 2000
Commission Recommendation setting guidelines for the authorisation of warehousekeepers under Council Directive 92/12/EEC in relation to products subject to excise duty	November 2000
Communication presenting strategy on taxation of passenger cars in the EU	September 2002

#### Proposals adopted by Council and Commission

*(date of Commission Proposal is indicated where this occurred during this Commission)*

Council Directive amending Directives 69/169/EEC and 92/12/EEC as regards temporary quantitative restrictions on beer imports into Finland	July 2000
Council Decision on reduced rates of excise duty and exemptions on certain mineral oils used for specific purposes (package of over 100 derogations)	March 2001 ( <i>Proposal: November 2000</i> )
Commission decisions establishing common fiscal marker for gasoil and kerosene	July 2001, April 2002, December 2003
Council Directive revising EU rules on tobacco taxation	February 2002 ( <i>Report and proposal: March 2001</i> )
Decision of Council and European Parliament on computerisation of movement of excisable goods	June 2003 ( <i>Proposal: November 2001</i> )
Energy Tax Directive	October 2003 ( <i>Adopted Directive incorporates Comm. Proposal on taxation of biofuels of November 2001.</i> )
Individual Council Decisions authorising Member States to apply exemption or reduction in excise duty on fuel for specific policy considerations.	Adopted in the period 1999 to 2002

#### IV. ADMINISTRATIVE CO-OPERATION AGAINST FRAUD

##### Legislative proposals presented by the Commission but not yet adopted

Proposal to amend the EU regulation on administrative co-operation in the field of indirect taxes so as to include certain simplifications concerning the special margin taxation scheme for travel agencies	February 2003
Proposal for a Directive amending Mutual Assistance Directive so as to improve administrative co-operation in the direct tax area	July 2003 ( <i>political agreement by Council in November 2003</i> )
Proposal for a regulation in the field of excise duties to strengthen administrative co-operation	December 2003

##### Non-legislative initiatives adopted by Commission

Report on Member States' VAT control systems	February 2000
Report: operation of 1998-2002 Fiscalis Programme	November 2003

##### Proposals adopted by Council

*(date of Commission Proposal is indicated where this occurred during this Commission)*

Directive on Mutual Assistance in Recovery of tax debts	June 2001
Council & Parliament Decision adopting the Fiscalis programme to improve operation of tax systems in Internal Market	October 2002 ( <i>Proposal: January 2002</i> )
Regulation improving administrative co-operation in the field of VAT	October 2003 ( <i>Proposal: June 2001</i> )

## OTHER TAX ISSUES

### Non-legislative initiatives adopted by Commission in 1999 – 2003

Contribution to use of qualified-majority voting in tax and social security matters	March 2000
Communication on tax strategy	May 2001
"The Structures of the Taxation Systems in the European Union", published by the Commission's Taxation and Customs Union Directorate-General and Eurostat	June 2003
Contribution to Commission's opinion on the Inter-Governmental Conference	September 2003

### Proposals adopted by Council

Council Decision authorising France to extend the application of a reduced rate of excise duty on "traditional" rum produced in its overseas departments	February 2002 ( <i>Proposal: June 2001</i> )
Council Decision authorising Portugal to apply a reduced rate of excise duty in Madeira on locally produced and consumed rum and liqueurs and in the Azores on locally produced and consumed liqueurs and eaux-de-vie	February 2002 ( <i>Proposal: July 2001</i> )
Council Decision on the AIEM tax applicable in the Canary Islands	June 2002 ( <i>Commission Proposal: December 2001</i> )
Directive authorising France to prolong lower excise duty rates for tobacco products released for consumption in Corsica.	December 2003 ( <i>Commission proposal: April 2003</i> )
Council Decision authorising the French Overseas Departments (Guyana, Guadeloupe, Martinique and Reunion) to continue until 1 July 2014 tax exemptions or reductions from "dock dues" taxes for certain locally made products.	February 2004 ( <i>Commission proposal: December 2003</i> )