

EUROPEAN UNION ACTIVITIES

In a recent research paper, the economists Alesina, Angeloni and Schuknecht took the burdensome task to count the number of European Commission activities and of European Court decisions for the period from 1971 to 2000.

Their figures disclose a remarkable growth of all of these activities. While the total of all “domestic” legal acts of the Commission has increased by the factor of 4.5, the single item of the Commission’s “Decisions” rose by the factor of 7.5.

The most dynamic development has happened in the production of “White” and “Green” papers. In the first half of the 1980s only one – the first – paper of that sort has been published, while in the second half of the 1990s it were 37. A very rapid increase has happened with the Commission’s

“Recommendations” and “Opinions”. Their number rose by the factor of 22.

The number of Court decisions and of international agreements developed somewhat slower.

The EU expenditures, in percent of the EU GDP, rose from 0.4% to 1.1%, i.e. by the factor of 2.7.

R.O.

European Union: Number of Activities, 1971 - 2000

CESifo  DICE

	1971-1975	1976-1980	1981-1985	1986-1990	1991-1995	1996-2000
No. of Directives of the EU Commission	108	264	330	537	566	532
No. of Regulations of the EU Commission	1,788	4,022	6,106	9,124	7,752	5,583
No. of Decisions of the EU Commission	716	2,122	2,591	3,251	4,42	5,299
Total No. of "domestic" legal acts	2,612	6,408	9,027	12,912	12,560	11,414
No. of Court decisions	693	1,155	1,760	2,127	20,27	2,487
No. of international Agreements	454	488	517	542	852	1,123
No. of Recommendations and Opinions	68	114	95	143	1,246	1,505
No. of White and Green papers	0	0	1	9	28	37
EU expenditures as % of EU GDP ^{a)}	0.4	0.7	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.1
EU expenditures as % of government expenditure	1.0	1.5	1.6	1.8	2.0	2.4

Note: The data on legislative acts include all acts issued in the period, including those no longer in force today.
(a) Last year of 5-year period only.

Source: Alesina, A., Angeloni, I., Schuknecht, L., What does the European Union do?, NBER Working Paper 8647, December 2001; original sources mentioned there.