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How To series

A compendium of guides on How To ...

1 - use the Official Journal
2 - find a Directive
3 - trace COM documents
4 - trace EC case law
5 - trace national implementing measures
6 - access and use the institutions registers
7 - find out about EU funding
8 - find out about the ERDF and ESF in the UK
9 - find out about EU contracts & tenders
10 - trace EU statistics
11 - research the EU (a guide for students)
12 - keep up-to-date with the EU

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1 - How to use the Official Journal

1. Contents

As its title suggests, the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU or OJ) is the EU's official journal of record. In its various forms, it contains the texts of adopted legislation, brief details of actions and judgments from the Court of Justice and the General Court, invitations to tender for public contracts and to bid for EU funding, and a variety of notices and communications from the European Commission.

2. Citation

The OJ is usually published five days a week, Tuesday to Saturday, and occasionally on Mondays.

Each issue is numbered and each series has its own numbering sequence which starts afresh each year.

The year, the series and the issue number are therefore needed to find a particular item.

These references, or citations, to the OJ are given in a standard fashion. The table on the next page gives examples.

Note that issues of the OJ are sometimes published out of chronological sequence.

3. Series

The OJ is divided into three main series: the L, C and S.

The C series has two number of sub-series: the E and the A. It is therefore possible to have the same number being used for all three, as with C282 of 6 November 2008, where there is also a C233A and a C233E (see 2008 OJ page).

The OJ CE is a purely electronic version which appears irregularly and is a source for European Parliament written questions and for Council Common Positions. It previously also contained proposals for legislation which appeared in the OJ C itself, but these are now issued electronically as COM Documents.

The OJ CA mainly provides details of open competitions for staff vacancies in the various Community Institutions; it is also published irregularly.

In October 2008, the list of OJs on EUR-Lex included the first of an occasional special issue of the OJ in Maltese, designated 'LM'

4. How to find information

These are the key questions which you need to ask yourself when dealing with a citation to the OJ:

Which series?
Which issue number?
Which year?
Which page number?

Paper copies are still published, and are the valid copies for legal purposes, but most people now access the OJ via EUR-Lex.

The most recent issues can be accessed from the main page of EUR-Lex (top right), but both current and earlier issues can be found on the Official Journal page.

In 2007, 2008 and 2009 there were an average of 352 OJ Ls and 324 OJ Cs issued each year

In October 2009, selected issues in the L and C series became available as 'Complete edition' pdf files. The initiative now covers all new L and C issues, with users able to select pdf versions of individual items or complete issues from the relevant page on EUR-lex (e.g see OJ L254, 29 September 2010).

From 1 January 2010, the structure of both OJ L and OJ C changed to reflect the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon (details are given in Structure of the Official Journal).

Series	Content	Comments	Citation
L	Adopted legislation and details of international agreements, conventions etc entering into force	The most important part of the OJ. Divided into `light type' items (routine agricultural Regulations mainly) and `bold type' (the Directives, Regulations and Decisions in which most people are interested)	OJ L 266, 26.9.2006, p1 NB: this is Directive 2006/66/EC ... of 6 September 2006 on batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and accumulators
C	Brief details of ECJ and CFI actions and judgments, notices from the Commission regarding trade and State aid, European Parliament minutes, opinions of the Committee of the Regions, the Economic and Social Committee and the Court of Auditors and Calls for Proposals re funding programmes (especially R&D)	The contents of this series vary widely. Notices range from routine State aid details to funding notices, and the 89-page `Commission communication ... relating to electrical equipment designed for use within certain voltage limits' (OJ C 208, 30.08.06)	OJ C 233, 2006, p9 NB: As each item within the OJC has its own reference number, the format 2006/C233/06 is also used, where '06' is the item number, not the page number (both these citations refer to the same item)
CE	European Parliament written questions and answers and Council Common Positions	Available online via EUR-Lex and on CD- ROM. Issues began in August 1999	OJ 2006/C233E p25 or OJ C233E, 2006, p25
CA	Open competitions for posts with the Community Institutions	Somewhat confusingly, the Commission has also decided to use the A series to publish the Common Catalogue of Varieties of Agricultural Plant Species (see 2008/C297A for an example)	OJ 2009/C9A p1
S	Invitations to tender for public contracts	Sometimes referred to as the 'supplement', the 'OJS' or 'OJEC' (pronounced 'OJECK') - despite the fact that it is now the OJEU	2006/S 186-198010 NB This is OJ S 186 of 2006, document number 198010 (the OJ S on paper ceased publication in 1996; it is now online as Tenders Electronic Daily at and on CD-ROM -C6 see details)

2 - How to find a Directive

1. What a Directive is

A Directive is a specific type of secondary legislation adopted by the EU institutions under the powers of the founding Treaties.

According to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), Article 288:

A directive shall be binding, as to the result to be achieved, upon each Member State to which it is addressed, but shall leave to the national authorities the choice of form and methods.

When looking for a Directive, it is important to know whether it is the original EU-level text which is required, or whether it is a national version implemented by a Member State.

In the United Kingdom, Directives are implemented by an Act or, more often, a Statutory Instrument. A time limit for the introduction of national implementing measures, usually two to three years, is specified in the text of each Directive.

2. Where a Directive is published

Directives are published in the L (Legislation) series of the Official Journal of the European Union, which is available as a printed publication, but is now usually consulted online via the EUR-Lex database.

3. How to cite a Directive

Directive 2006/44/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 September 2006 on the quality of fresh waters needing protection or improvement in order to support fish life OJ L264, 25.9.2006, p20-31

This citation includes the following elements:

1. Form (Directive)
2. Year enacted
3. Directive number
4. Institutional treaty basis (eg EC, Euratom)
5. The name of the institution(s) responsible for adopting the Directive (eg Commission, Council, European Parliament and Council)
6. Date of adoption
7. Issue, date and page of publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*

Note especially the order of the year and the act number. For legislative acts other than Regulations the year of enactment precedes the number of the act.

Prior to 1992, acts had a unique number. Now it is possible for a Decision, for example, to have the same number as a Directive so check the full details carefully.

For example:

Commission Directive 2000/23/EC of 27 April 2000 amending Directive 92/76/EEC recognising protected zones exposed to particular plant health risks in the Community

and

2000/23/EC: Council Decision of 6 December 1999 on the improvement of information on the Council's legislative activities and the public register of Council Documents

Before 1999 the date was expressed as a two digit number, but it is now given as four.

4. How to find a Directive via EUR-Lex

The easiest way to trace a Directive is via EUR-Lex. Select Legislation in force and then proceed by either browsing or searching:

Browsing

By choosing 'Directory of Community legislation in force' you can browse Directives, Decisions and Regulations by topic (a link can't be given to the Directory page itself, as the URL changes with each new version of the Directory).

Note that this is a list only of legislation in force - repealed acts are not listed (to find such items, see below under 'Searching').

Each of the 20 main sections of the Directory is subdivided - clicking a heading will reveal its subsections. Under each section, items are listed in chronological order, so that the oldest appear first.

Browse the relevant section until you identify the item you are looking for (it is not always clear where a particular item will be located - it can sometimes be quicker to use the search option).

Each item listed has a basic citation, plus links to the full text (where possible, choose pdf, as it will allow you to view graphics - including tables - which are not usually included in the html version). There are links to related texts such as amendments and implementing measures.

Each section of the Directory is also available as a pdf file, which can be useful for printing; the Archive link displays pdf versions of all 20 sections, on a monthly basis.

Formats

Each item found should be available for viewing in a variety of formats: html, pdf and tiff (a high-quality facsimile, similar to a pdf in that it includes original graphics; by giving your e-mail address, you can obtain a free tiff file of the document from the Publications Office, usually within 10 to 15 minutes).

Searching

At the Legislation in force page, choosing the option Search in legislation opens a dialogue box which allows you to specify the type of legislation you are looking for (the default is 'All legislation') and to select a number of other options, such as using keywords (Search terms') or searching by 'Date or time span'.

Note that the default is to limit searches to acts in force - if you want to look for legislation which is no longer in force, untick the box at the bottom left of the page.

Having made your initial selection, click the 'Search' button. If you are searching by keyword, the default is to search titles only (it is worth reading the brief 'Guidelines for good results' displayed on the 'search terms' page).

Searching by number

If you know the number of the Directive you're looking for:
- go to EUR-Lex
- select the option Simple search
- select Natural number, then select 'Directive' and enter year and Directive number then click 'Search'.

5. Further information

For further information about the legislative process and its documentation, see:
- Summaries of EU legislation: Directive
- Decision-making in the European Union
- headings under 'Directives' in the Joint Practical Guide A-Z
- The ABC of Community law (2010 ed; p88 ff)

3 - How to trace COM documents

1. What a COM document is

Commission documents (usually referred to as 'COM documents' or 'COMdocs') form one of the largest and most significant categories of European Union documentation. They comprise a collection of working documents of the European Commission and, as such, are an important source of information on the activities of one of the key institutions of the EU.

As the formal initiator and overseer of the implementation of EU legislation, the Commission generates a significant amount of documentation, of which COM documents form an important and the most public part.

Not all COM Documents become publicly available and there might therefore be gaps in the numerical sequence (this is because some numbers are allocated to documents which are not approved by the Commission, and the texts are never published).

2. Types of COM documents

COMdocs can be divided into three main types:

a) Broad policy consultative documents
These are usually called 'Communications', although the terms 'Green Paper' and 'White Paper' are also used. Such documents are pre-legislative consultative reports, outlining the Commission's preliminary thinking on a subject and soliciting the views of interested parties as a prelude to possible formal legislative action.

See for example COM (2008) 725 final -
Green Paper: On the European Workforce for Health.

Increasingly this type of COMdoc has an associated 'SEC document' (from the Commission's Secretariat-General) which contains more information, such as detailed data and impact assessments. The SEC number is shown on the title page of the COM document (for tracing SECdocs, see point 3 below).

b) Proposals for legislation
Many COM documents take the form of proposals for legislation from the Commission (including amended or modified proposals issued following the consultation of other EU institutions during the decision making process).

This type of COMdoc includes two distinct sections:
- an 'Explanatory Memorandum', explaining the background to, and purpose of, the proposal, and
- the text of the legislative proposal.

An example is: COM (2008) 892 final -
Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an audiovisual cooperation programme with professionals from third countries MEDIA Mundus
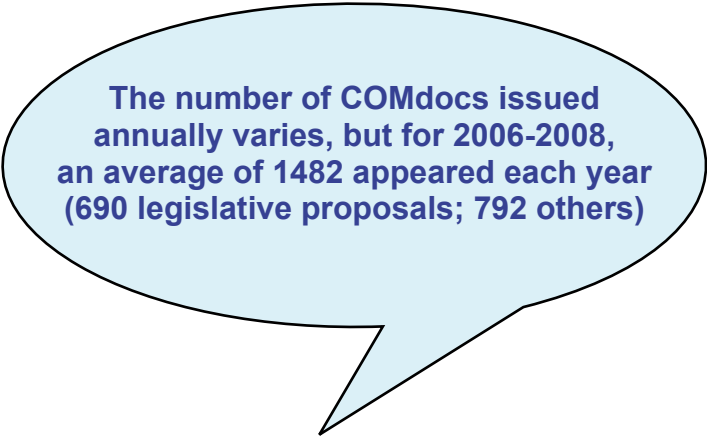
(note that the title page of this COMdoc gives the numbers of three associated SECdocs).

c) Reports on the implementation of policy
This type of COMdoc analyses or evaluates the implementation of existing Community laws or policies.

Much Community legislation explicitly requests the Commission to carry out regular analyses of the implementation and impact of the legislation in question. On other occasions, the Council of the European Union or the European Parliament may ask the Commission to undertake such a report.

An example is: COM (2008) 824 -
Report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the use of substances other than vitamins and minerals in food supplements.

The number of COMdocs issued annually varies, but for 2006-2008, an average of 1482 appeared each year (690 legislative proposals; 792 others)

3. How to trace a COM document

COM documents are now published on the EUR-Lex website under the section Preparatory acts. There is comprehensive coverage since 2000, with most 1999 texts also available. Users can browse by year / month / day and can search by year and document number.

(If available, the pdf version of a document should always be preferred, because it will include any graphics, including tables, which appeared in the original text).

COM documents published before 1999 can sometimes be found via the relevant Commission Directorate General. A small selection of the most important COMdocs is published in a glossy paper format by the relevant DG to promote public awareness.

Access to electronic versions of nonlegislative COM Documents before 1999 is more variable, although there is a selection of both Green Papers and White Papers available. An alternative and growing source is the Archive of European Integration, which has a selection of older COMdocs

The text of older COM documents in the form of legislative proposals can be accessed through EUR-Lex in other formats (i.e. as a proposal and without the Explanatory Memorandum).

You might need to access some pre-1999 COMdocs in a paper or microfiche version. Bibliographical references to them can be comprehensively traced in the sales catalogue called *Documents from the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities* (EUR-OP), which was published up until 2000.

You can refer to older COM Documents at European Documentation Centres, usually based in academic institutions and now part of the Europe Direct network.

4. How to cite a COM document

COM Documents are cited with the following key elements:
* COM
* (Year)
* Running number, final
* (Date of adoption by the Commission)

The example: Communication from the Commission. Europe and Asia: a strategic framework for enhanced partnerships would be cited as:

COM (2001) 469 final, 4.9.2001.

The term 'final' is added at the stage when the Commission adopts the document and it becomes public.

Note that COMdocs are often cited without the word 'final', and also that their appearance online has led to the use of slashes rather than parentheses, as for example in COM/2008/0894 final - where an initial zero is also used as part of the document number.

In addition, those COMdocs that consist of proposals for legislation (the second of the categories described above) have some further information that could be described as part of the citation. This indicates a year / running number and a three letter code indicating which legislative procedure a proposal will follow, such as:

COD (Codecision)
SYN (Cooperation)
AVC (Assent)
CNS (Consultation).

For example: *Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing an audiovisual cooperation programme with professionals from third countries MEDIA Mundus* is cited as:

COM (2008) 892 final 2008/0258 (COD), indicating that this proposal will follow the Codecision procedure.

4 - How to trace EC case law

The Court of Justice of the European Union (also known as the European Court of Justice or ECJ) ensures 'that in the interpretation and application of the Treaties the law is observed' (Article 19, Treaty on European Union - TEU).

The same Article states that the Court of Justice of the European Union 'shall include the Court of Justice, the General Court and specialised courts.'

The **Court of Justice** itself is made up of 27 Judges and eight Advocates-General. When a case is added to the Court's register one of the Advocates-General delivers a reasoned opinion on the points of law involved. The final judgment is delivered by a panel of judges at a later date. Where several cases involve the same point of law they are often combined in a single hearing and are known as 'joined cases'.

The General Court (previously the Court of First Instance or CFI) was established in 1989 by the Single European Act to cope with the growing workload of the ECJ. It deals with actions brought by Community officials, competition cases and actions for damages. It also deals with actions against Community institutions and trademark cases.

The Civil Service Tribunal was established in 2004, has seven Judges, and deals with disputes involving employees of the EU institutions (cases previously dealt with by the CFI and before that by the ECJ).

1. European Court Reports (ECR)
Reports of cases before the European Court of Justice and the Court of First Instance (usually referred to as *European Court Reports* or ECR) are the official texts of ECJ, CFI (now General Court) and Tribunal opinions and judgments.

Due to translation issues, publication of these official reports can take up to two years after a judgment is given. Preliminary texts of opinions and judgments (or 'stencils'), often with accompanying press releases, are now available on the Court's website (Curia) on the day they are issued.

In 2009, the ECJ website started providing easy access to reports of recent cases for each of the Courts:
Court of Justice
General Court
Civil Service Tribunal

2. How to cite European Court reports
Case C-91/92 Faccini Dori v Recreb [1994] ECR I-3325

The citation includes the following elements:
1. The case number (C-91/92) shows when the case was added to the Court's register (1992 in this case)
2. The names of the parties involved (Faccini Dori v Recreb)
3. The year in which the case was judged (1994)
4. ECR = European Court Reports (the official series of reports)
5. Section I (from 1989) = Court of Justice (Section II = Court of First Instance)
6. Page number at which the report starts.

The page reference is the same for all language versions of the reports.

Until 1993 each report consisted of the Report for the Hearing, Opinion of the Advocate General and Judgment of the Court. From 1994 only the opinion and judgment have been published to speed up the translation process.

Cases from the CFI are cited in the same way, except that the case number has the prefix T (Tribunal de Première Instance) and the report appears in Section II e.g. *Case T-83/91 Tetra Pak v Commission [1994] ECR II-755.*

Tribunal cases bear the prefix F (Tribunal de la fonction publique).

Cases from before 1989 have no prefix letter.

Between 1994 and the advent of the Civil Service Tribunal, staff cases from the CFI were issued separately as **Reports of European Community Staff Cases** (ECRSC) and appeared only in the language of the hearing.

3. Other sources of European Court reports

Common Market Law Reports (CMLR) is a commercial service from Sweet & Maxwell, which commissions translations of important cases to make them available more quickly. Since 1988 *Antitrust Supplements* have also been issued, giving texts of competition cases and merger decisions.

All England law reports has issued a series of European cases since 1995; now published by LexisNexis as All England European Cases.

4. Indexes

Two cumulative indexes are published annually by the ECJ: *Index A-Z* covers all cases since 1953 by name and case number and includes those which are still pending (an online version is available as Numerical access to the case-law).

Notes - references des notes de doctrine is an index, by case number, of articles on individual cases in legal journals (this appears on the website as Annotation of judgments).

Indexes also appear in the final part of each year's *European Court Reports* and in each volume of the CMLR.

5. Recent cases

The Court's website includes press releases concerning new judgments; summaries of varying detail are published in the C series of the Official Journal of the European Union.

Significant cases are summarised in general legal journals and also reported by EU news providers.

6. Electronic sources

The ECJ launched its own website, Curia, in 1996, giving free access to all language versions of the Proceedings (since late 1996), opinions and judgments of the Court (since June 1997) and recent press Releases.

Recent case law (i.e. since 17 June 1997) can be searched by name of party, date, case number, word in text, and field (i.e. subject).

The site also incorporates several useful databases: a Digest of Community case-law (in French only) summarising judgments by subject matter; an Alphabetical table of subject-matter (in French only); Documentation concerning the Brussels and Lugano Conventions and also a French-only online version of the Annotations of judgments.

The legal database of the EU, EUR-Lex (which replaced the earlier Celex database), includes a Case-law section, which presents judgments, opinions etc. This section also includes an archive (located at the foot of the page), stretching back to 1954.

Commercial CD-ROM / online versions of EUR-Lex are available from:
SAI Global (Eurolaw)
Justis Publishing (Justis Celex)
Ellis Publications (OJ OnlinePlus).
The legal databases LexisNexis Butterworths and Westlaw both include access to all EU legal documents.

Note that EUR-Lex and Curia are free, but that commercial (fee-based) sources can be easier to use.

7. Tracing a Court report

Cases since 1954 are available via EUR-Lex and the Curia website, though both offer only limited search options for most years.

Cases since June 1997 can be searched on Curia using keyword, party name etc.

The EUR-Lex Simple search function for case-law gives access to all cases and allows not only keyword searching, but also parties to be identified (by searching for a name and limiting the search to 'Title' ; at the 'Simple search' page, select 'Case-law', 'Search terms').

If you know the year and case number, use the list of cases on Curia (Numerical access to the case-law) or the EUR-Lex option to search by natural number.

5 - How to trace national implementing measures

Directives are acts which have to be implemented in the laws of the individual Member States of the European Union.

According to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), Article 288:

A directive shall be binding, as to the result to be achieved, upon each Member State to which it is addressed, but shall leave to the national authorities the choice of form and methods.

This brief guide is designed to help users trace the legislation by which Member States implement these Directives.

1. EUR-Lex

EUR-Lex, the EU's own full-text database of Community legislation, gives references to national implementation of Directives once the European Commission has been notified of them by Member States.

The national implementing measures are displayed in the 'Bibliographic notice' which accompanies the text of a Directive in some versions, but not all.

To see what a 'Bibliographic notice' looks like, see this example on EUR-Lex of Directive 75/439/EEC on the disposal of waste oils.

To ensure that you can see the 'Bibliographic notice', find a Directive by browsing the Directory of European Union legislation in force and clicking on the document number ('Celex number') shown immediately above the Directive title, e.g.

> **31975L0439**
> Council Directive 75/439/EEC of 16 June 1975 on the disposal of waste oils
> (OJ L 194, 25.7.1975, p. 23–25)

Alternatively, finding a Directive by using the EUR-Lex search options 'Natural number' or 'Celex

number' will also give you the option of viewing the 'Bibliographic notice', as in this example.

Having found the 'Bibliographic notice', scroll down until you find the heading 'Display the national execution measures'. Clicking 'MNE' will show a list of the national laws introduced to give effect to the Directive in some or all of the Member States.

Only bibliographic details are provided and there are no links to texts.

Note the warning that "The fact that there is a reference to national implementing measures does not necessarily mean that these measures are either comprehensive or in conformity".

There are a number of problems with this source:
- the MNE details are only available on the 'Bibliographic notice' associated with a Directive; other html or pdf texts of a Directive do not include this information - MNE gives references to documents, not their full texts
- the information displayed is that which is forwarded to the Commission by the relevant authority in each Member State; depending on the speed and efficiency of this process, measures might be in place without there being a record of them on EUR-Lex.

2. N-Lex

Arguably, the best way to check if a Directive has been implemented is to consult the relevant national source. This can now be done in a largely standardized way for the majority of EU Member States via N-Lex.

Launched by the European Commission in April 2006 as an experimental service on national implementation, N-Lex allows official national legislative websites to be searched via a standard interface, and gives access to full text.

For each Member State for which information is provided (23 as of April 2009), the options available are:
- to search the official legislative source/s for that country
- to read 'General information' about it/them, the national legislative process and associated document types, and the search options offered by N-Lex.

Because of differences in the structures of the national databases, not all searches will work for each Member State, but it is generally possible to search by:
- keyword
- document number
- date

There is country-specific help available, allowing the user to identify, for example, the types of documents available for a particular Member State.

It can be helpful to identify the relevant document details (e.g via EUR-Lex) before using N-Lex.

4. Applicant countries
The Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) unit of the Commission's Directorate-General for Enlargement offers a useful aid for tracing EU legislation implemented in countries which have applied to join the Union.

From the TAIEX website, choose 'Legislative Databases' then 'Law approximation database (LAD)', and use the 'search wizard' facility. LAD currently has information for the Member States which joined in 2004 and 2007, as well as for candidate and prospective candidate countries; in some cases, LAD provides links to the full text of legislation.

5. Search engines
Providing the information is freely available on the web, another useful option is to use a search engine. Copy and paste the Directive reference number or text from the title (in the relevant language) into Google - or your preferred search tool - and it should find the implementing measures (which have to refer back to the original Directive).

You can easily switch languages in EUR-Lex to get the exact title in the language you want.

You might wish to limit your Google search to a particular site by using 'site:' and all or part of a URL (e.g. 'site:www.legilux.lu', 'site:gov.uk)

To find addresses of national legislative sites for the EU Member States, go to the list on the Court of Justice website. Some of them have good search engines of their own, so you can search directly using the Directive number or title text.

6. Statistics on implementation
The European Commission's page Application of EU law provides information on implementation and on infringements, with access to Annual reports on national implementation of EU law and also to the Timetable for implementing EU law nationally page, which has options to search by Directive year and number, or to browse monthly summaries (2009-2011, in French only. Looking at the file for December 2011, one can for example, see that 31 of that month is the deadline for national implementation of Directive 2010/24/EU, concerning mutual assistance for the recovery of claims relating to taxes, duties and other measures.

7. Other sources
For those needing only UK implementation, Halsbury's Statutory Instruments - EC Legislation Implementator is an an easy-to-use annual guide, which in one volume lists Directives and their implementing SIs, and in another volume lists SIs and the Directives they implement. More details can be found on the LexisNexis website.

Implementing SIs can also be traced using sources from other publishers, amongst which are Eurolaw from SAI Global, Justis Celex from Justis Publishing and Westlaw.

Broader coverage is provided by EU Tracker from LexisNexis, which tracks implementation of Directives in 20 Member States.

6 - How to access and use the institutions' registers

Background
Article 15(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) states:

Any citizen of the Union, and any natural or legal person residing or having its registered office in a Member State, shall have a right of access to documents of the Union's institutions, bodies, offices and agencies, whatever their medium ...

That general principle is given effect by Regulation 1049/2001 (published in Official Journal L145, 31.05.2001).

Despite the principle that "all documents of the institutions should be accessible to the public", the Regulation specifies a range of exceptions, including grounds of public security, defence, international relations, and economic policy.

The Regulation sets out detailed provisions, including a definition of 'document' ("any content whatever its medium 7 concerning a matter relating to the policies, activities and decisions falling within the institution's sphere of responsibility").

It also requires, in Article 11, that each of the three institutions should "provide public access to a register of documents" and that access to the register "should be provided in electronic form."

In 2001, those three institutions issued a Joint Declaration calling on other EU bodies to also provide access to documents in conformity with the Regulation. In 2003, both the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the Committee of the Regions (CoR) adopted Decisions establishing their own document registers.

Accessing the registers
Each of the registers is located on the server of the relevant institution, and has its own URL, which is given in the appropriate section below. Alternatively, the registers can be accessed via these routes:

1 - At the main page of Europa, under the section 'Publications and documents' choose Official documents, then select the relevant institution from the section 'Register of documents' (not all institutions currently provide registers).

2 - On EUR-Lex, use the link under the left hand menu 'Practitioner's Corner'.

Parliament
The European Parliament's register is the most wide-ranging of the three institutional registers, providing references and texts that have been in the public domain since 3 December 2001, divided into four main Groups:
- those relating to Parliamentary activity
- general EP information documents
- official documents forwarded by other institutions
- documents from third parties

There is an e-mail alerting service for new items ('Mailing list'), but no browsing option - although the date range facility can be used.

The default Simple search is a title-only keyword search of limited value, but the Advanced search gives many more options, including Parliamentary term (7th, 6th or 5th), document type (entered manually or selected from a drop-down list), and date range. There is an excellent help facility.

Note that, even when a reference is found, there might well be no text available online - although the site does offer advice on obtaining documents.

Council
The Council's Register was the first of the registers to be made public. It contains references to, and - where available - full texts of, documents from 1 January 1999.

It includes documents of meetings from all the Council's configurations, as well as documents under discussion from other institutions, notably the Commission.

Unlike the EP site, the Council's register offers a browsing facility for items added within the past two weeks (the 'Latest documents references' and 'Latest public documents (full text)' options).

There are 'Simple search' and 'Advanced search' options, with plenty of on-screen help for formatting queries, and additional advice on 'How to search in the register'. Both search options allow the user to select from a list of subjects.

Not all documents listed are available in full text. For example, using the subject heading AER (air transport) to find documents since 1 January 2007 (<1.01.2007) produces a list of 70+ items. Tick the 'Public documents' box to show only items which are available in full text, or are partially available, or are published but not on the Council website. Availability of the various documents found is indicated by icons.

Commission
The Commission's Register contains documents published since January 2001. They are mainly, though not exclusively, pre-legislative items, bearing COM, SEC or C numbers, plus agendas and minutes.

This Register has one search screen, with options to search for document number, date, Commission department responsible (via a drop-down list), word(s) in the title (a maximum of three words!) and language of the title. A 'subject' search option is no longer available.

As with the Parliament register, browsing can be achieved using the date range search. There is a 'Help' option under the 'Information' menu on the left of the page. (The Register can be useful for tracing texts of COM documents before they are published in the Preparatory acts section of EUR-Lex).

Committees
Comitology committees assist the Commission in exercising its implementing powers. They comprise representatives of the Commission and of the Member States. Committee documents are transmitted to the European Parliament; only those sent are available on the Register - including, for example, (draft) meeting agendas and summaries of meetings, draft legislation, summaries of committee voting results, working papers.

The Comitology Register was launched in 2004, but was revised in April 2008. The main Register contains documents since that date, with older materials being available in an archive.

The site gives information about comitology and has a list of current committees. A search screen offers a number of options, with the default set to 'Dossiers'. Additional search options can be seen by selecting

'Documents'. Title, number, date and Committee are among the options (note that choosing 'Committee' opens a new window, from which a selection can be made).

EESC, CoR
The EESC Register offers both simple and advanced search options, with searching possible by word(s) in text/title, document type, author, date. 'Advanced' mode adds document/dossier number options.

The CoR Register (Electronic Document Register - EDR) "facilitates public access to all documents relating to consultative and decision-making procedures at the various stages of their production." Simple, advanced and 'official letter' search options are available.

Further information
References given in the registers are not legally binding - only the texts published in the Official Journal are recognised as being authentic versions.

In a joint Parliament, Council and Commission user guide to the Regulation, published in 2002, users are warned that they "should not confuse access to documents and access to information", and that the institutions will "provide existing documents in the form in which they are available" - which, given their official and/or legalistic language, means that they will not always be readily understandable.

The Commission issues annual reports on the application of the Regulation. Recent reports have been published as:
COM (2007) 841 (2006)
COM (2008) 630 (2007)
COM (2009) 331 (2008)
COM (2010) 351 (2009)

The European Parliament also publishes reports on the Regulation, available via its Register pages, as does the Council, whose reports can be found via its page on access policy.

2007 saw the publication of the 'Green Paper on Public Access to Documents held by institutions of the European Community: A review' (COM (2007) 185). A public consultation on the Regulation was undertaken in 2007 and in January 2008, the Commission issued a Report on the outcome of the consultation (SEC (2008) 29).

In April 2008, a draft Regulation 'regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents' was published as COM (2008) 229. Progress of the proposal can be tracked via the PreLex dossier.

7 - How to find out about EU funding

Background
This guide offers an overview of the money that the EU makes available through special funding programmes and in major policy areas. It focuses on sources of information about these disparate funding opportunities and does not extend to offering advice on how to apply, although help is available on some of the sites mentioned.

The EU budget
The EU financial framework for the period 2007-2013 covers:
- Sustainable growth (nearly 50% of spending; includes competitiveness and cohesion for growth and employment)
- Preservation and management of natural resources
- Citizenship, freedom, security and justice
- The Union as a global player
- Administration (roughly 5% of the Budget).

In 2008, the Union budgeted to spend €129 billion, an amount equivalent to 1.03% of the Member States' Gross National Income (GNI).

The European Commission provides information on Financial programming and Budget.

Common Agricultural Policy
Under the CAP, agriculture continues to receive over 40% of EU cash. The CAP has been in a process of ongoing reform since the early 1990s with changes focusing mainly on increasing the competitiveness of agriculture. The Commission's Agriculture and Rural Development website offers information on the latest CAP Health check.

R&D
Research and development is key to the EU's goal of becoming, by 2010, "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world". A core element of the Lisbon Strategy, which aims to meet this target, is the creation of a European Research Area (ERA). Details of the Union's attempt to bring R&D spending up to 3% of GDP - a key aim - can be found at the Investing in European Research website.

Framework Programmes (FPs) are the EU's main instrument for funding research. The Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development 2007-2013 (FP7) has a total budget of €50.5 billion for the seven years, together with a budget for nuclear research of €2.7 billion.

The broad objectives of FP7 have been grouped into four categories: **Cooperation, Ideas, People** and **Capacities**. With a budget of €32 billion, Cooperation covers topics such as health, energy, space, nanosciences, environment, and information and communication technologies (ICT). Details are on the CORDIS FP7 site.

Structural Funds
Support for its poorer regions has been an EU policy priority for many years and it has four well-established Funds to put its regional policy into action:

- the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) which is intended to promote economic and social cohesion through the reduction of imbalances between regions;

- the European Social Fund (ESF) which focuses on the strategic objectives of the Union's employment policy;

- the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF), which finances both direct payments to farmers and measures to regulate agricultural markets; the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), which finances rural development programmes. For more information see Funding opportunities under the Common Agricultural Policy;

- the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) aims both to protect resources and the marine environment and to ensure the economic and social development of fisheries areas. Further information can be found via the Commission's EFF website.

In the 2007-2013 programming period, the EU will invest €308 billion (2004 prices) in the regional growth agenda and to stimulate job creation. Over 81% will be concentrated on the **Convergence Objective**, covering the poorest Member States and regions. In other regions, some 16% of the Structural Funds will be concentrated on supporting innovation, sustainable development, better accessibility and training projects under the **Regional Competitiveness and Employment Objective**.

Another 2.5% will be available for crossborder, transnational and interregional cooperation under the **European Territorial Co-operation Objective**.

For further information see Regional Policy - Key objectives.

Although the poorest regions are now all in the east of the EU, the UK will continue to receive substantial aid from the Structural Funds, amounting to €9.4 billion (2004 prices), for 2007-2013. Delivery of the funds in England is through the Department of Communities and Local Government which is the Managing Authority for the ERDF through the Regional Development Agencies, and also the Department for Work and Pensions which is the Managing Authority for the ESF through the Skills Funding Agency.

Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are responsible for delivering the Structural Funds in their territories. For information on access to the Funds in England, see Department for Business, Information and Skills (BIS) pages on European Structural and Cohesion Funds.

Details of Scottish provision can be found at the Scottish Government website, while information is also provided by the Welsh European Funding Office and the Northern Ireland Department of Finance and Personnel.

Education and training
The Lifelong Learning Programme is the flagship EU funding programme in the field of education and training. Covering the period 2007-2013, its budget of €7 billion will support projects and activities that foster interchange, cooperation and mobility between education and training systems, under the following pillars:

- Comenius: the teaching and learning needs of all those in pre-school and school education up to the level of the end of upper secondary education.

- Erasmus: the teaching and learning needs of all those in formal higher education, including trans-national student placements with firms.

- Leonardo da Vinci: the teaching and learning needs of all those in vocational education and training, including placements in firms of persons other than students.

- Grundtvig: the teaching and learning needs of those in all forms of adult education.

Advice and information about many of these programmes is available through institutions in the UK, including the British Council Lifelong Learning Programme.

Grants
The Commission DGs all have grant-making powers. A grant "is a direct financial contribution from the European Commission to support a specific action or project of a non-commercial nature, to cover eligible costs directly incurred by the beneficiaries."

Grants can be given to various organisations including universities, firms, interest groups and non-governmental organisations. Details of many funding opportunities, including grants, can be accessed via the Commission's Contracts and grants page.

Bodies such as the Community Plant Variety Office and the European Medicines Agency make grants available within their specific policy area - see Grants and Public Contracts page.

Beneficiaries
The Commission now makes available details of Beneficiaries of EU funds, including those receiving EU money via national administrations.

8 - How to find out about the ERDF and ESF in the UK

The ERDF and ESF are both elements of the Structural Funds - the European Union's main instruments for supporting social and economic restructuring across the Member States. They account for over one third of the EU budget and are used to tackle regional disparities and support regional development through a range of actions, including developing infrastructure and telecommunications, developing human resources and supporting research and Development.

European Regional Development Fund
The ERDF aims to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the European Union by correcting imbalances between its regions. In short, the ERDF finances:
- direct aid to investments in companies (in particular SMEs) to create sustainable jobs;
- infrastructures linked to research and innovation, telecommunications, environment, energy and transport;
- financial instruments (capital risk funds, local development funds, etc.) to support regional and local development and to foster cooperation between towns and regions;
- technical assistance measures.

ERDF - England
ERDF priorities for England vary according to region. Details of regional priorities can be found via the Department of Communities and Local Government ERDF in the Regions page - the Department is the designated Managing Authority for all ERDF programmes in England.

Information on ERDF investment in England is available from the Regional Development Agency (RDA) network. RDAs can advise on the application process, including advice on the potential of projects and their eligibility for ERDF funding.

ERDF - Scotland
The ERDF priorities for Scotland are:
1: Enhancing Business Competitiveness, commercialisation and innovation
2: Enhancing key drivers of sustainable growth
3: Enhancing peripheral and fragile communities

The Scottish Government is the Managing Authority for ERDF structural fund programmes in Scotland. Information about accessing ERDF in Scotland is available from the websites of the Highlands and Islands Partnership Programme (HIPP) and from ESEP Ltd.

ERDF - Wales
In Wales, the ERDF priorities are:
1: Building the knowledge based economy
2: Improving Business Competitiveness
3: Developing strategic Infrastructure for a modern economy
4: Creating an attractive business environment
5: Building Sustainable Communities
6: Technical assistance

The Wales European Funding Office (WEFO) is part of the Welsh Assembly Government and manages the delivery of Structural Fund programmes in Wales. For information about the ERDF in Wales, see the ERDF Operational Programme page of the WEFO website.

ERDF - Northern Ireland
The ERDF priorities for Northern Ireland are:
1: Sustainable Competitiveness and Innovation
2: Sustainable Enterprise and Entrepreneurship
3: Improving Accessibility and Protecting and Enhancing the Environment
4: Technical assistance

The ERDF in Northern Ireland is managed by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment.

European Social Fund
The ESF sets out to improve employment and job opportunities in the European Union. It supports actions in Member States in the following areas:

- adapting workers and enterprises: lifelong learning schemes, designing and spreading innovative working organisations;
- access to employment for job seekers, the unemployed, women and migrants;
- social integration of disadvantaged people and combating discrimination in the job market;
- strengthening human capital by reforming education systems and setting up a network of teaching establishments.

The UK's regions have developed their own ESF priorities, reflecting specific circumstances and levels of EU funding.

There are six Operational Programmes (OPs): one for England and Gibraltar, two for Scotland (Highlands / Islands and Lowlands / Uplands), two for Wales (East and West), and one for Northern Ireland.

The two main themes are: removing obstacles to people entering the labour market and improving workforce skills.

ESF - England - priorities:
1: 'Extending employment opportunities' supports projects to tackle the barriers to work faced by unemployed and disadvantaged people.

2: 'Developing a skilled and adaptable workforce' supports projects to train people who do not have basic skills and qualifications needed in the workplace.

Further information is available from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) website on the ESF in England. The DWP has overall responsibility for ESF funds in England, manages the programme at national level and liaises with the European Commission in Brussels.

Each region has its own ESF allocation to fund projects aimed at addressing regional jobs and skills needs, within the framework of the two England ESF priorities.

At the regional level, ESF funds are distributed through public agencies ('Cofinancing organisations') such as the Learning and Skills Council and DWP. Their role is to bring together ESF and domestic funding for employment and skills, so that ESF complements domestic programmes.

The Co-financing Organisations agree contracts with 'providers' delivering ESF projects on the ground. The DWP website includes a list of Cofinancing Organisations approved for the 2007-2013 ESF programme, from which details of ESF funding opportunities in the sub-regions can be obtained.

ESF - Scotland - priorities:
1: 'Progressing Into Employment' aims to assist the co-ordinated progress of unemployed and inactive people of all ages towards sustainable employment.

2: 'Progressing Through Employment' seeks to improve the skills of the workforce to enhance employability, productivity, adaptability, inclusion and entrepreneurial expertise.

3: 'Improving Access to Lifelong Learning' is intended to widen access to post-school lifelong learning, particularly for key client groups.

Further information about accessing ESF in Scotland is available from the websites of the Highlands and Islands Partnership Programme (HIPP) and from ESEP Ltd.

ESF - Wales - priorities:
1: Increasing employment and tackling economic inactivity

2: Raising skill levels and adaptability of the workforce

3: Technical assistance

The Wales European Funding Office manages the delivery of the EU Structural Fund programmes in Wales. For information about the ESF in Wales, see the ESF Operational Programme page of the website of WEFO.

ESF - Northern Ireland - priorities:
1: Helping people into sustainable employment.

2: Improving workforce skills.

The contact point for the ESF is the Department for Employment and Learning, whose website includes details of the Northern Ireland European Social Fund Programme.

Additional UK-wide information can be found via the ESF in the UK website.

9 - How to find out about EU contracts & tenders

Public Purchasing in Europe
Every year, public sector organisations in Europe purchase goods and services worth around €1500 billion.

To make sure that this market operates openly and fairly, a series of European Directives has been adopted to set out the procedures which purchasers must follow when buying supplies, services and works (i.e. construction).

The Directives require that contracts above a certain value must be advertised EU-wide in the *Supplement to the Official Journal of the European Union* (OJS). They also set out such things as minimum time periods for the bidding process, the technical standards which can be specified in the tender documentation and the criteria by which bids should be evaluated.

The EU legislation covers a wide range of organisations including central and local government departments, public hospitals and schools and those organisations providing public services such as water and Energy.

Texts of the Directives and other documents can be found via the Commission's pages on Public Procurement Legislation.

Thresholds
The thresholds are reviewed every two years. As a guide, from January 2010, the values (excluding VAT) set out under Regulation 1177/2009 are:
Supplies - €125,000 (€193,000 for some authorities)
Services - €125,000 (€193,000 for some services)
Works - €4,845,000

Contracts falling below the thresholds fixed in the Directives do not have to be advertised in the OJS, but must still be awarded under the terms of European rules on fair competition.

Types of Notices
The notices advertised in the OJS include:

Pre-information Notices (i.e. Periodic Information): advance notification of an intention to go out to tender for supplies, services or works.

Invitations to Tender: these are issued under four main types of procedure:

- 'open', where any company may submit a Tender

- 'restricted', where companies submit initial information and those shortlisted are invited to submit a full tender

- 'competitive dialogue', where companies submit initial information and then a shortlist of firms works with the public body to define the requirements more precisely before bidding

- 'negotiated', where the contracting authority negotiates directly with one or several firms (used only in special circumstances)

Contract Award Notices: announcements published on completion of the tendering process, which can - but do not always - give details of the winning tenderer and the value of the contract.

Tracing EU Tenders
Supplement to the Official Journal of the European Union: The OJS is available in two formats: electronically as the database Tenders Electronic Daily (TED) and as a CD-ROM.

Tenders Electronic Daily: Accessed via the internet at ted.europa.eu, TED is updated five times a week and is available in all official EU languages. Once the language option has been selected, it is possible to look at the notices for the current issue date or to search the whole database.

Search options available include 'Standard', 'Extended' and 'Expert'. The extended search form, for example, permits research by various criteria including country, industry code (using the Common Procurement Vocabulary or CPV), name of the awarding authority, deadline, and free text.

It is also possible to search the database archive, which contains around five years' worth of notices, but you will be required to register first in order to do this (registration is free).

OJS CD-ROM:
The CD-ROM is published on Tuesdays and Fridays. Search options and menus mirror the online database. Annual subscriptions can be arranged via the Publications Office agents.

Information Relays
The network of official EU Information Relays, notably the **Enterprise Europe Network** (EEN), which in February 2008 replaced the Euro Info Centre network. Members of the EEN can provide alerting services to businesses interested in identifying potential contract opportunities. A list of Enterprise Europe Network members and details of their services is available on the EEN website.

European Documentation Centres, which are now part of the **Europe Direct** network, may also be able to offer advice. EDCs can be located via the Commission's EDC page.

A number of commercial companies offer subscription-based services, often based on the OJS. These services take the form of printed publications and / or websites and can usually be located via the internet.

Sub-threshold tenders:
Public authorities are not obliged to publish notices in the OJS for contracts falling below the thresholds fixed in the Directives (although they can do so if they wish). There is therefore no one source for tracing such contract opportunities: information is published in a variety of places including local and regional press, trade magazines, organisations' own websites etc.

Further Information
The EU has a website - SIMAP - dedicated to public procurement, giving access to additional information including the relevant EU Directives, the Common Procurement Vocabulary used to categorise invitations to tender, contract value thresholds etc.

Further details of the Union's public procurement policy can also be found on Europa, where the public procurement pages provide background information and links to many of the sources mentioned in this

guide, and a section on EU tenders and contracts has links to 'Tender notices by EU institution'.

Doing business with the European Commission: Tips for potential contractors is a 16-page booklet covering a range of procurement-related issues, including finding information on contract opportunities, procurement procedures and tendering.

National ministries also usually have details of the measures to implement the EU Directives on their websites. SIMAP includes a list of national public procurement databases.

European funding programmes
Programmes funded by the European Union are managed by the European Commission, usually by the appropriate Directorate-General (DG).

Calls for tender or for expressions of interest are advertised in the *Official Journal* C series (Information and Notices - accessed via the EUR-Lex OJ page) and on the DG websites, although the Commission is increasingly using Executive agencies to manage these programmes. Agencies set up so far include:

- Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)
- European Research Council Executive Agency (ERC)
- Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI - energy and enterprise programmes)
- Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC)
- Research Executive Agency (REA)
- Trans-European Transport Network Executive Agency (TEN-T EA)

10 - How to trace EU statistics

1. Introduction
Most EU statistics are collected and published by Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Communities, which is also a Directorate-General of the European Commission. Its task is to provide the EU with statistics at European level, which enable comparisons between countries and regions in order to facilitate the development and implementation of Community policy.

2. Data
The statistical authorities of Member States collect data, which are verified and analysed and sent to Eurostat (if data are not sent they will be missing from Eurostat tables).

Eurostat itself does not usually collect data, but consolidates them and ensures they are comparable, using harmonised methodology (read the methodology of a dataset to find out what this means in practice).

This process means that the latest published data might not be very recent, but ensures that meaningful comparisons can be made. Data are collected from Member States and candidate countries and are published at country, eurozone and EU level - in some cases comparisons with other major economies are included.

Subject coverage is broad, but some areas are much richer in data terms than others (e.g. agriculture is covered in great detail, because of the historical focus of the EU).

Eurostat uses the same thematic classification across all of its products and databases, with nine main themes and 30 'subthemes', the main themes being:
- General and regional statistics
- Economy and finance
- Population and social conditions
- Industry, trade and services
- Agriculture and fisheries
- External trade
- Transport
- Environment and energy
- Science and technology

3. How to find out what Eurostat produces
Data produced by Eurostat is made available in printed publications, on CDROM and in databases. All Eurostat publications since 2003 are now available as free downloads from its website.

Eurostat no longer issues a full annual publications catalogue, but instead produces periodic information on its products and services which can be accessed online via the Publications section of the website.

The most comprehensive and current guide to Eurostat products is the website, which has a search facility and also lets users browse by theme.

4. What is available on the website?
The website provides free statistics, plus background information about Eurostat, and details about its products, methodology and classification.

Amongst the key materials available in full text from the main screen (redesigned in 2009) are:
Eurostat Yearbook,
News releases
Statistics in focus / Data in focus (publications on particular topics, typically 4-12 pages; the long-standing 'Statistics in focus' provides more commentary than the relatively new 'Data in Focus' series; note that the list doesn't distinguish between the two).

The Statistics database link (towards the top left of the main screen) displays a 'tree view' of available data. Expanding a section will lead eventually to a list of headings for which data is available. To the left of each heading is an icon for Eurostat's 'Tables, Graphs and Maps interface'.

To the right of each heading is an icon for 'Explanatory texts (metadata)'. Clicking it will open a dialogue box offering information about the data concerned, such as sources and currency.

Clicking the 'Tables, Graphs and Maps' icon will open a new window, with options to see data displayed in those three formats (the default display is 'Table'; clicking the relevant tab at the top left of the page will - providing the system is working - display data in the form requested).

Visitors can register on the site to access additional data options (e.g. displaying a 'custom tree') and to receive email alerts about new publications.

5. Other sources of EU statistics

Copies of Eurostat publications in print are held by a range of libraries. Ideally, users should identify the product or publication required from the website, before contacting their local library or European information centre (for a list of the latter see the Europe Direct website).

The Eurostat Datashop network sells data and provides support and advice about EU statistics, on a consultancy basis. Some information is free.

The Eurostat website is itself a datashop; 'Links' at the top of each page gives access to details of national statistical offices in the EU and elsewhere.

Many EU institutions and agencies publish statistics, and materials such as COM documents can also be useful sources of statistics (see our guide How to trace COM documents). Use the Policy areas section of Europa to find links by subject.

Statistics about the EU and its Member States are published by a range of organisations, including:

OECD

World Bank

United Nations (the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Statistical Division has a list of statistics organisations within the UNECE region).

Eurostat data is also sold to commercial publishers / data suppliers for use in their products (e.g. the *Statistical Yearbook* published by Data Service & Information).

6. Suggestions for tracing EU statistics

Determine the subject, geographic coverage (eg EU, Eurozone, country), time series and format (print / electronic) of the statistics Required.

Electronic datasets
Check databases
- that are freely available on the web
- to which your library has access
- which might be accessible at other libraries in your region.

Print/PDF
- check the Eurostat Yearbook (which gives further sources and references to help trace more information)
- search the Eurostat website using theme or keyword to identify the publication required.

What to do if ...
1. Data is not available
- contact a datashop for advice on availability.

2. Data is not sufficiently current
- on the Eurostat site check News releases and Statistics in focus / Data in focus or try elsewhere (see 'Other sources' opposite).

3. More data is required for an individual country
- try OFFSTATS or the website of one of the national statistical offices.

4. Publication is not available locally
- try a European Documentation Centre, a major library, interlibrary loan, or buy from a datashop.

5. More help is needed
- visit Eurostat's User support page for a free email enquiry service in each Member State.

11 - How to research the EU (a guide for students)

1. Library catalogues
To find published research and documents, start with the catalogue of your own university, college or reference library. Many universities have a European Documentation Centre (EDC) and can provide access to the major official publications of the European Union institutions.

Outside specialist collections, individual libraries will probably only hold a small proportion of the journals or books you need, but other items might be obtained through inter-library loans or via electronic services – ask staff for details.

The European Commission Library catalogue is available online as ECLAS. It is one of the best places to find references to books, articles and official documents relating to the European Union. Online publications are also catalogued and can be searched separately.

The two bibliographical series: *Publications and documents of the EC* and *Recent publications on the European Communities* cover monographs and journals catalogued by the Library between 1977 and 1995 and are held by most EDCs.

A detailed index of books and articles published on EC law, is issued annually by the Court of Justice Library as 'Legal bibliography of European integration' (see EU Bookshop page).

The journal *European Access* was published from 1980 until 2002. It included articles, summaries of legislation, and detailed bibliographies of English-language books and articles. It is still held by some EDCs and is also available electronically as part of European Sources Online.

2. Europa
The European Commission's 'Europa' website has a vast amount of information about the European Union, including its history, institutions, policies and legislation.

The main page of Europa has six main menus:

1 - About the EU

Sub-sections include:
Basic information
Institutions and bodies
History
Terminology

2 - Policies and activities
Policy areas

3 - Your life in the EU
Healthcare
Consumer rights

4 - Take part!
Public consultations
Blogs
Videos

5 - Publications and documents
Official documents
Legislation and treaties
Publications
Statistics and opinion polls
Archives

6 - Media centre
Press services
Videos and photos

A Quick links option has menus aimed at audiences including:
Businesses
NGOs
Schools and universities

3. Subject research
The European Commission's Summaries of EU legislation website (also known as SCADPlus) offers readable introductions to most policy areas, significant pieces of legislation and the legislative process.

The European Parliament's Fact Sheets is a series of introductory texts, usually good for historic detail, though with an emphasis on Parliament's role. The main sections are:
How the European Union works
Citizens' Europe
The Internal Market
Common policies
Economic and Monetary Union
The EU's external relations

The European Commission issues a wide range of annual reports, which can provide a useful starting point for tracking the development of specific policies.

In addition to the General Report on the Activities of the European Union (on the web since 1997) and specific reports on competition policy and on agriculture, many reports are issued as Commission documents (COMdocs) and published in the Preparatory acts section of EUR-Lex.

Although some internet sources are only available on subscription, many websites have been set up by official and academic institutions to make research papers freely available. One of the most useful sites is European Research Papers Archive, based in Vienna, a searchable access point to 13 major series of academic papers.

The Archive of European Integration which includes pdf versions of official documents not available elsewhere. From 2008, a document delivery service is available via the Archive, and in 2009 AEI staff started adding speeches of Community officials from 1975-1984.

For current research, use European Integration Current Contents, which has the contents pages of some 110 journals from 14 countries - and includes some abstracts.

4. Current awareness
Press releases from the EU are available in Europa's Press Room. Good coverage of EU affairs in the English-language press can be found in the weekly newspaper European Voice and also n the Financial Times. F
For a wider view, try euobserver, which reports EU-related stories from around the world, and EurActiv, which offers both informed analysis and background information on a wide range of EU issues. News of particular interest to the business community is the focus of EUbusiness.
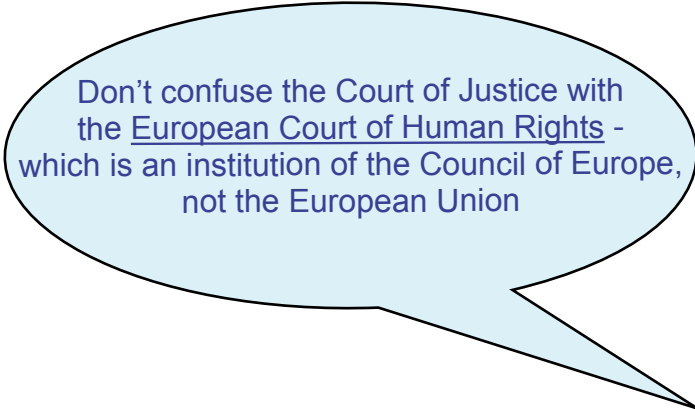
5. Legislation
Texts of Treaties, International agreements, Legislation, Preparatory acts, Case-law and Parliamentary questions are freely available online from EUR-Lex.

The texts of judgments and opinions of the Court of Justice since 1997 are available in all official EU languages on the website of the Court of Justice - Curia.

In addition to the 'quick access' search on the main page, an advanced search allows additional options, including keyword search. Browsing by case number can be done using the Numerical access option.

The Court of Justice issues a bibliography of cases which have been summarised in legal journals as Annotation of judgments.

Don't confuse the Court of Justice with the European Court of Human Rights - which is an institution of the Council of Europe, not the European Union

6. Europe Direct
The Commission has set up the Europe Direct network to answer enquiries about the EU. Enquiries can be made by telephone, email or in person (see the website for contact details).

7. References and bibliographies
Always note references to articles, books, reports, etc as you use them - particularly when you make photocopies – as it can be very difficult to identify them later. If you are writing a dissertation, you should give page references in your footnotes; bibliographies should give author, title, publishers and date of publication for books; in references to journal articles you should also give the title, volume, part number and page numbers of the journal.

Where you have referred to an article or report published online it is a good idea to download or print a copy, as online materials can move or even disappear completely.

European Union law: an integrated guide to electronic and print research, by Marilyn J. Raisch, includes examples of citations for official documents.

12 - How to keep up-to-date with the EU

The EU is a dynamic entity, constantly evolving in response to internal and external pressures. Defining 'up-to-date' is not easy: some people will want to follow developments day-by-day, others might be content with an annual review. The sources mentioned here should cater for all needs.

1. Legislation, case law

The primary source of adopted EC legislation is the 'L' series of the Official Journal of the European Union (OJ), published five days per week in both paper and electronic versions and available free of charge via the EUR-Lex database. EUR-Lex also includes the Directory of European Union legislation in force, a revised version of which is published at the start of each month.

Proposed legislation (previously published in the OJ C series) is available in the Preparatory acts section of EUR-Lex. Progress of proposed legislation (and of policy documents) can be tracked via two official websites: the Commission's PreLex site and the European Parliament's Legislative Observatory (also known as OEIL). These sites offer different information and should be seen as complementary rather than alternative sources.

As the Union's prime decision-maker, the Council is often a useful source of legislative developments, with Council press releases providing news of adopted proposals etc (note that decisions are not always taken by the Council responsible for the topic concerned, but often by the next Council configuration to meet).

The European Parliament's range of current awareness sources is brought together in the Press service section of the Europarl website (choose Agenda for highlights from the coming week in Parliament or Plenary sessions for summaries of Strasbourg plenaries).

Press releases from the other EU institutions can also be useful for tracking news, with links listed at the Europa Press Room, which also provides access to the Commission's Rapid database and to the Communication DG's daily briefing Midday Express.

The EU News site (which replaces the monthly Bulletin of the EU) allows users to browse news items by topic and year/month and includes links to many of the documents mentioned.

The General Report on the Activities of the European Union in paper and web formats offers useful annual overviews of legislative and policy developments.

The website of the Court of Justice of the European Union offers recent judgments and opinions of:
Court of Justice
General Court
Civil Service Tribunal
Judgments are also available via EUR-Lex and notable cases are summarised in Press releases.

2. Policies

Official EU sources
There are three particularly significant sources of policy information:

1 - COM documents (and the associated SECdocs) published on EUR-Lex

2 - the websites of the Commission's Directorates-General (DGs are responsible for developing policy and for making proposals for legislation; documents are often available on DG websites before they are published on EUR-Lex)

3 - press releases (especially those from the Commission via the Rapid database)

Other notable sources include the What's new? page on Europa, which highlights significant developments across the EU institutions and bodies (but is very selective) and the General Report (although the format adopted for the 2009 report makes it less useful than earlier versions).

Details of new funding initiatives are published in the Official Journal C series, often with more details available from the Cordis website, as well as the EACEA site and other Commission sources.

The websites of most of the EU institutions, bodies and agencies, including the Commission's DGs and some Parliamentary Committees, have a 'what's new' section or newsletter, giving details of the policy areas and initiatives for which they are responsible

Other sources
News, background and analysis of EU policies can be found in a wide range of websites and publications. Those listed here are trusted sources, with specialist knowledge of EU affairs (for which users might be asked to pay). Many offer a critical, though informed view of EU developments and for that reason can be valuable sources for anyone seeking a 'balanced' view of what's going on in the EU.

Access to European Union: law, economics, policies (annual review published by European Study Service)

BBC News Europe section (updated daily)

E!Sharp (monthly magazine; €20 for online subscription; selected items available free).

EUbusiness (updated daily)

EUobserver (updated daily)

EurActiv (updated daily)

Europe Daily Bulletin, published by Agence Europe (€1430 for online subscription).

European Voice (weekly newspaper from the publishers of The Economist; selected items available free on the website; €193 for joint online / paper subscription).

Europolitics ('The European affairs daily' from Europe Information Service; online version €1785 daily / €640 monthly).

Financial Times (the best UK daily for EU news). The FT website includes sections on Europe and Brussels, though free access to articles is very limited.

JCMS Annual Review of the European Union (supplement to the Journal of Common Market Studies; includes a chronology of key events; 2009 edition: £17.99 / €21.60; free to JCMS subscribers).

3. Events, video coverage
On Europa, an EU events page offers links to events pages for the main EU bodies, plus an EU calendar, giving an overview of significant meetings and other events on a weekly basis. The Council Calendar includes 'Main topics for the coming fortnight', giving details of forthcoming Council meetings and Agendas.

Live coverage of selected events is available via the Commission's Audiovisual Service, which provides Europe by Satellite as well s other audio and video news services.

The Commission also has a Webcast Portal, offering 'live Internet broadcasts and video recordings of conferences in Brussels and elsewhere in Europe, as well as European Commission documentary videos on various policies.'

The European Parliament's europarltv includes a section devoted to proceedings in Parliament, plus more general news coverage.

The Council Live service offers both live and archived footage of meetings of the Council, European Council and other fora.

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Please notify any problems with links to: eric@eia.org.uk.

This compendium is free to EIA members and available for purchase to others at £25.

EIA members can access this and other resources via the EIA website (logon required).