The Commission's role in the second and third pillars of the European Union

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The Commission's role in the second and third pillars of the European Union

The 1992 Treaty on European Union (TEU) provides for Commission intervention in the area of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and for cooperation in the fields of justice and home affairs (JHA), but its role is less extensive than the one it plays in the context of the European Communities.

The Commission is fully associated with the work carried out in the area of the CFSP (Article 27 of the TEU) and, in particular, represents the Union and is responsible for the implementation of decisions taken under this Title, and other tasks of the Presidency (Article 18 of the TEU). It may refer to the Council any question relating to the CFSP and may submit proposals to the Council (Article 22(1) TEU). The Council may also request the Commission to submit to it any appropriate proposal relating to the CFSP in order to ensure the implementation of a joint action (Article 14(4) TEU, introduced by the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam).

Within the context of JHA — reduced to police and judicial cooperation on criminal matters after the 1997 Amsterdam reform — the Commission shares a right of initiative with Member States (Article 34 TEU) and elsewhere, it is fully associated with the work in the areas referred to in this Title (Article 36(2) TEU).