

European Union (Audit of Benefits and Costs of UK Membership) Bill

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Establish a Commission to carry out regular audits of the economic costs and benefits of the UK's membership of the European Union; and for connected purposes.

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1 Committee of inquiry into costs and benefits of the UK's membership of the EU

- (1) The Chancellor of the Exchequer must appoint a committee of inquiry to report to him on the matters set out in section 2—
- (a) within six months of the date on which this Act is passed, and 5
 - (b) subsequently, every five years.
- (2) The committee of inquiry shall be called the EU Membership Audit Commission ("the Commission").
- (3) The Chancellor of the Exchequer shall appoint seven members to serve on the Commission, one of whom shall be appointed as chairman. 10
- (4) In appointing members under subsection (3), the Chancellor of the Exchequer must seek to ensure that—
- (a) there is a balance of those in favour and those against the UK's continued membership of the EU;
 - (b) the chairman is someone who is broadly neutral on the matter; 15
 - (c) no member has been—
 - (i) a member of the European Parliament, or
 - (ii) an employee of the European Commission.
- (5) *The Treasury—*
- (a) shall make available to the Commission such administrative and other support as the Commission reasonably requires to fulfill its functions; 20
 - (b) may pay to members of the Commission such remuneration and allowances as it considers appropriate.

- (6) Subject to the provisions of this section, the Commission may conduct its proceedings in such manner as it considers appropriate.

2 Terms of reference

The terms of reference of the Commission shall be to examine the costs and benefits of the UK's continued membership of the European Union, taking into account the impact of membership on the UK's – 5

- (a) economy (including consideration of public expenditure and receipts resulting directly from membership),
- (b) national security and defence, and
- (c) constitutional arrangements. 10

3 Report of the Commission

- (1) The Commission shall report to the Chancellor within twelve months of its appointment.
- (2) The Chancellor of the Exchequer shall provide a copy of the Commission's report to the National Audit Office and invite the views of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon. 15
- (3) The Chancellor of the Exchequer shall lay before each House of Parliament a copy of the Commission's report and any report containing the views of the Comptroller and Auditor General.
- (4) A Minister of the Crown shall, as soon as is practicable after the laying of reports under subsection (3), make a motion in each House of Parliament expressing a view on the contents of the Commission's report. 20

4 Expenses

There shall be paid out of money provided by Parliament any expenditure incurred by the Treasury by virtue of this Act. 25

5 Short title

This Act may be cited as the European Union (Audit of Benefits and Costs of UK Membership) Act 2008.

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To establish a Commission to carry out regular audits of the economic costs and benefits of the UK's membership of the European Union; and for connected purposes.

*Presented by Mr Christopher Chope
supported by
Mr Peter Bone, Mr William Cash,
Mr Nigel Evans, Mr David Heathcoat-Amory,
Bob Spink, Mr Robert Syms, Mr Andrew Turner,
Peter Viggers and Sir Nicholas Winterton.*

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