

# COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(83) 277 final

Brussels, 11 May 1983

Amendment of the Proposal for a

COUNCIL DECISION

promoting a European infrastructure for innovation and technology transfer

(submitted to the Council by the Commission pursuant to the second  
paragraph of Article 149 of the EEC Treaty)

COM(83) 277 final

## Motivation

On 18 June 1982, the Commission sent to Council a proposal for a Council decision "concerning a plan for the transnational development of the supporting infrastructure for innovation and technology transfer (1983-1985)" (1)

The President of the Council sent this proposal to the European Parliament on 30 June 1982. On 10 March 1983, Parliament adopted a resolution (2) approving the plan but also voted a number of amendments.

At the time of the discussion in the plenary session and in the parliamentary committees it became clear that there was a broad agreement between the Parliament and the Commission on all amendments. Therefore the Commission presents this modified proposal for a Council decision which, on the one hand, reflects this agreement, and which, on the other hand, also includes some minor modifications the Commission finds opportune to make.

With respect to the original proposal, the major modifications are listed and commented below.

1. The original, rather heavy-handed title is replaced by a more direct and shorter title.
2. A third indent is appended to Article 3, so as to state explicitly in the Council Decision that the transnational aspects of pilot projects in technologically lesser developed Member States are eligible for support.
3. The Commission considers that the amendment proposed by Parliament, which no longer provides for an advisory committee created by Council Decision, is acceptable in view of the following circumstances :
  - a) the Commission intends in any event, and has made this clear in Parliament, to create an advisory body composed of the national authorities responsible for innovation policy, if only for the execution of the actions of Chapter 3 of Annex I;
  - b) this plan of action towards a European infrastructure for innovation and technology transfer is an essential element in the general activity of the Community for the generation and useful application of new technology.

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(1) OJ N° C187 of 22.7.82, pages 4 to 7

(2) OJ N° C of .....83, pages to

As such, any advisory body must, in the view of the Commission, fit into the general framework of advisory committees for that broad area of work both as regards its position vis-à-vis the Commission and as regards its rules and procedures. The Commission has made a proposal(3) in this respect in response to the Council's request for improved procedures. The Commission feels that this proposal should not be prejudged by the decision on the present programme and that the definitive arrangement for it must conform with the general dispositions which will be decided. Until then, a temporary solution should be adopted on this programme to avoid further delay.

4. Annex I is expanded to include a list of actions, the execution of which will have priority at the start of the implementation of the Council Decision and which will provide the Commission with the necessary experience for its further execution and the Council with the basis for further decisions in this matter.

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(3) COM(83) 143 final of 16 March 1983

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Amendment of the  
(x) PROPOSAL FOR A  
COUNCIL DECISION

Promoting a European infrastructure for innovation and technology transfer

(submitted pursuant to Article 149, paragraph 2 of the EEC Treaty)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Article 235 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the Opinion of the European Parliament, (1)

Having regard to the Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee, (2)

Whereas, in accordance with Article 2 of the Treaty, the Community has as its task to promote a harmonious development of economic activities and continuous and balanced expansion throughout the Community;

Whereas the Heads of State or Government, meeting in Luxembourg on 1 and 2 December 1980, expressed the hope that efforts by the Member States in the field of industrial innovation would be better coordinated in order to improve the competitiveness of European products by making the best use of the dimension afforded by the common market; whereas they requested the competent authorities of the Community to examine ways of eliminating the fragmentation of markets and improving incentives to innovation and the dissemination of knowledge;

Whereas it is primarily up to undertakings to develop trade in technologies and to promote their exploitation;

Whereas, nevertheless, a resolute effort is required to promote interaction between technology, industry and the market at European level, so as to ensure that further economically viable innovations accrue from discoveries and inventions through utilisation of the advantages of scale afforded by the European dimension;

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(x) The modifications with respect to the original proposal (OJ No C187, 22.7.82, p. 4 are underlined.

(1) OJ No C

(2) OJ No C33, 7.2.83, p. 17.

Whereas the Member States have developed specialised services in the field of research exploitation, technology transfer, information, consultancy and financing;

Whereas these infrastructures are important for facilitating innovation, particularly in small and medium-sized undertakings;

Whereas the introduction of transnational mechanisms for liaison, cooperation, training and information would be crucial in optimising these national efforts;

Whereas the said mechanisms would provide wider access to such essential elements of industrial innovation as research, technology, capital and the market;

Whereas the Treaty does not provide the powers necessary to this end,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS :

#### Article 1

With a view to facilitating innovation in the Community, a package of measures designed to promote the transnational development of liaison and cooperation infrastructures and to provide incentives to trade and the exploitation of technologies is hereby drawn up, and is defined in Annex I.

#### Article 2

On the basis of continuous exchange and comparative assessment of experiences, Member States and the Commission shall endeavour to assure compatibility of the measures referred to in Article 1 with national and regional measures to promote innovation, in the manner provided for in Annex I, Chapter 3.

#### Article 3

The activities or projects described in Annex I shall be undertaken on the responsibility of the Commission or shall qualify for partial Community financing under the appropriations provided for in the budget of the European Communities.

The following activities or projects may be eligible for consideration :

- activities or projects involving partners established in various Member States; or
- activities or projects involving operations on a Community scale or services open to all Member States; or
- programmes for developing innovation infrastructure, where circumstances so require, so as to enable Member States with weaker infrastructure to participate fully in transnational projects.

Article 4

The Commission shall disseminate in the Community, by the most appropriate means, the results of the actions undertaken pursuant to this Decision.

Article 5

The appropriations required for implementing this Decision are estimated at 15 million ECU over a period of three years from the date this Decision takes effect, and are independent of additional manpower requirements. This amount constitutes an indication of the financial appropriations which will be entered in the general budget of the European Communities.

As regards the activities described in Annex I, the Commission shall endeavour to share the cost of the operations, to recover a part of its outlay from any such revenue as may accrue and to limit its contributions to an initial launching period.

Article 6

The Commission shall implement this Decision and may have recourse to consultation in so doing.

The Commission shall submit a report each year to the Council, the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee.

Article 7

This Decision shall take effect on the day of its publication in the Official Journal of the European Communities.

Done at Brussels, ...

For the Council

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ANNEX I

TOWARDS A EUROPEAN INFRASTRUCTURE FOR INNOVATION  
AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

Scope and description of actions

Scope

The principal objective is to promote the rapid penetration of the Community's economies by new technologies as they become available, having regard especially to small and medium-sized enterprises.

The proposed actions will reinforce national structures working towards this end, in particular by adding the European dimension to the operations of existing national research exploitation, technology transfer, advisory and specialised financial services. The aim is thus to strengthen the transnational innovation infrastructure which is essential for an efficient European market in innovation.

Three principal lines of actions are envisaged :

- (1) to render existing and developing organisations and services in this field more effective by facilitating their operations on, and their access to, the Community market; this transnational extension of structures in the Member States will be based upon flexible and dynamic mechanisms of liaison and cooperation;
- (2) to the degree necessary for the objective, to help meet the corresponding basic requirements in the training of people, in knowledge and in technical and communication means;
- (3) to contribute to the general advance of methods used in this field by promoting, where beneficial, concertation, the exchange of experience and the introduction of new methods in the Member States.

Description of actions

Initially, the following priority actions are envisaged :

1. Start-up support for the establishment and initial activities of liaison mechanisms :

- Standing Technological Conference of European Local Authorities (STCELA);
- association of financial organisations specialized in the financing of innovation;
- associations of technology and management advisory services, including "technology awareness agencies".

2. Actions to promote the supply and dissemination of information at Community level on :

- supply and demand in respect of national and transnational cooperation of small and medium-sized enterprises, market analyses and market studies, technological surveys and trend analyses and R&D findings;
- public invitations to tender;
- norms, standards, rules and regulations applying to exports (and imports).

3. Support for better utilization of Community-wide protection of industrial and commercial property rights.

4. Consultation on action taken or to be taken at national and Community level, notably with a view to evaluating and securing the actual implementation of new or not yet Community-wide applied methods of promoting innovation, for the benefit in particular of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Subsequent to the availability of initial experiences, the following actions are envisaged :

Chapter 1 : European cohesion between existing innovation promotion organisations

1.1. The industry/research interface, in particular :

- a) start-up support for the establishment of liaison mechanisms;
- b) support for promotional actions for exploitation of new technology or market prospection inside and outside the Community.



1.2. Technology and management advisory services, in particular :

- a) start-up support for associations in order to establish "human" networks of relations between the services concerned, and also for the necessary back-up activities;
- b) support for exchange of personnel of such services as the most efficient way to gain experience on other markets as well as to establish networks of mutual assistance;
- c) support for their joint technological market exploration inside and outside the Community.

1.3. Venture finance operations, in particular :

- a) start-up support for an association of financial organisations specialised in the financing of innovation;
- b) support for professional publications of such an association;
- c) support for the build-up of reference networks of experts and consultants.

1.4. Interface between public users and innovative industries, in particular :

- a) support, as long as necessary, for the basic structure of Community local authority cooperation in new technologies;
- b) support for orienting local authority purchasing towards innovation;
- c) support for technology exchange between participants.

Chapter 2 : Strengthening the foundations : people, knowledge, communication

2.1. Training in management of innovation and technology transfer, in particular :

- a) encouraging suitable European higher educational institutions and organisations to offer special courses in this field;
- b) support for the development of teaching tools for this purpose on a European basis.

2.2. Joint support functions for the awareness and assessment of new technologies and potential markets, in particular :

- a) support for joint assessment of technology and markets;
- b) support for increasing technology awareness, by means such as cooperation between "technology awareness agencies" or giving a European scope to technology conferences normally organised on a national or regional basis;
- c) support for the acquisition, analysis and dissemination of information on technologies and markets to which access is difficult;
- d) support for the establishment of an information exchange on available expertise regarding technology, markets, finance and public aids for innovation throughout the Community.

2.3. Access to patents and licensing markets, in particular :

- a) support for the intensification of consultation and contacts with the parties concerned, in particular as regards the patent cost, the use of patent information and the criteria of industrial property protection;
- b) support for complementing what is already done in some Member States to promote the use of industrial property rights by inventors;
- c) support the creation of an efficient common market for the licensing of technology, by promoting the concertation of intermediary services and by providing start-up support for transnational forms of cooperation.

2.4. Opening new channels of communication to accelerate market introduction of new products, in particular :

- a) to promote the timely and Community-wide diffusion of calls for proposals for new products, and in particular of public tenders, by developing new efficient media or by promoting a more intensive use of existing communication channels;
- b) establishing an up-to-date awareness system on regulations, norms and standards.

Chapter 3 : Concertation of Member States and Community action

- a) intensification of the concertation and the exchange of information and experience within working groups;
- b) comparisons and evaluations of programmes and measures;
- c) Community support for the advancement of programme methods, and for the advancement of the transnational innovation infrastructure in particular.

