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C O M E T T P R O G R A M M E

REPORT OF 1988 ACTIVITIES

(presented by the Commission)

FOREWORD

This document represents the Annual Report referred to by the terms of Article 5 of the Decision of the Council establishing the COMETT Programme. The purpose of this Report is to formally record, and present to the Council, the European Parliament, and the Economic and Social Committee an account of the progress made in the implementation of the COMETT Programme during 1988. The statistical data contained in the annexes of the Report provide additional quantitative information about the development within individual Member States and at Community level.

A report such as this can only contain the key highlights of the years activities. However it must be remembered that the success of the COMETT Programme is due to the efforts of all those involved in the promotion of projects at the grass-roots level, where enthusiastic commitment to build strong European cooperation in this field has ensured the successful development of the COMETT Programme. The Community would therefore like to record formally its appreciation to all those individuals who have contributed to the implementation of the COMETT Programme; as well as to the formal authorities at both Community and Member State level whose support has been so crucial for the implementation of the COMETT Programme during 1988.

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0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. COMETT - The Community Action Programme for Education and Training for Technology became operational on the 1 January 1987. A total of 588 projects were selected for support during the first operational year, 1987, with funding until 31 August 1988.
2. In 1988 the Third Call for Applicants was launched. A total of 695 applications were received containing 1699 project proposals. As a result a further 457 projects were selected for support. In addition 289 of the 1987 projects were renewed for a further year of funding. The total level of Community support grew from about 13,7 ECU Mio to over 19 ECU Mio; of which more than 50% went to the renewal of 1987 projects;
3. The pattern of projects being supported is :

	1987	1988	Renewals
Strand A University-Enterprise Training Partnerships	107	19	106
Strand Ba Transnational Student Placements	225	171	-
Strand Bap Transnational Student Placement "Pools"	-	67	-
Strand Bb Transnational Fellowships	62	71	-
Strand C Joint Ongoing Training Projects	137	97	126
Strand D Multilateral Initiatives for Developing multimedia Training Systems.	57	32	57
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TOTAL	588	457	289

Table 1 - Projects supported by COMETT - 1987 and 1988.

4. It is estimated that over 2,500 enterprises, 1,000 universities and 1,000 other types of organisations directly participated in the implementation of COMETT projects. Many more organisations, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, were also involved as recipients of the advanced level education and training activities undertaken.

5. In July 1988 the Commission published its proposal for the second phase of COMETT. The Commission proposed a 5-year Programme with a budget of 250 ECU Mio, and took particular account of the advice of a Working Party established by the Industrial Research and Development Advisory Committee (IRDAC). On 16 December the Council voted in favour of COMETT II with an estimated budget of 200 ECU Mio for 1990-1994.
6. An analysis of the Final Reports of the projects accepted in 1987 showed that :
 - the training partnership network is becoming established in all Member States on both a regional and sectoral basis, some Member States having a more adequate regional coverage than others;
 - the provision of student placements has been satisfactorily achieved but the fellowships less so; the administrative difficulties experienced in establishing placements should be eased by the new Pool arrangements;
 - as a minimum estimate, over 200,000 trainee hours have been delivered to 5,000 trainees;
 - that an estimated 1,000 hours of multi-media training programmes have been developed.
7. To complement the internal monitoring and evaluation of the Programme the Commission issued a Call for Tender for the external evaluation of the Programme. As a result Coopers and Lybrand, in co-operation with the Science Policy Research Unit, University of Sussex, were selected to carry out an external evaluation exercise, commencing at the end of December 1988.
8. A range of conferences, information days and other COMETT events were organised in all Member States as part of the animation of the Programme. In December 1988 a mid-term COMETT conference "the European Value Added in Advanced Training for Technology" was attended by over 200 project promoters. The conference concluded that COMETT was making an important contribution towards the development of advanced level training for technology across the Community.

I INTRODUCTION

I.1 BACKGROUND

9. The Community has long recognised the importance of improving the technological base of Europe. The substantial commitment to scientific research and development programmes is one demonstration of the Community's commitment in this area. Equally important is to ensure the development of the Community's human resources to stimulate and exploit the use of new technology. While each Member State has its own distinctive system of higher education and training, the Community is in a position to improve the effectiveness of these individual systems through actions carried out on a concerted basis with the active involvement of both sides of industry.
10. In May 1988, the Commission published its document "Education in the Community - Medium-term Perspectives : 1989 - 1992"⁽¹⁾. This sets out three broad strategic objectives for the Community's education and training activities. The first and central objective, in the period up to 1992, is the identification and application of the education and training systems' contribution to the creation of the Internal Market and to its exploitation and economic life. The second objective is the closer integration of education and economic life. The third objective is the reduction of regional disparities and to reinforce the social cohesion of the Community.
11. COMETT, the Community Action Programme for Education and Training for Technology was adopted by the Council Decision 86/365/EEC of 24 July 1986 ⁽²⁾ with an operational phase of 1987-1989 and an estimated budget of 45 ECU Mio. COMETT represents an important part of the Commission's overall response in the education and training field. By supporting the development of university/enterprise links on a trans-national basis, COMETT assists in the development of systems and mechanisms for identifying and providing solutions for the high level skill needs of industry in the field of technology. In doing so COMETT also contributes to the development of social and economic cohesion across the Community, particularly through assisting in the transfer of technology to the less advanced regions, and so contributes to the overall balanced development of the Community.

1 Education in the European Community-Medium Term Perspectives 1989 - 1992, Communication from the Commission COM (88) 280 Final 18 May 1988.

2 O.J. No L222, 8 August 1986, p 17.

I.2 THE COMETT PROGRAMME

12. The objectives of COMETT are (3):

- to give a European dimension to co-operation between universities and enterprises in training relating to innovation and the development and application of new technologies, and related social adjustment;
- to foster the joint development of training programmes, the exchange of experience, and also the optimum use of training resources at Community level;
- to improve the supply of training at local, regional, and national level with the assistance of the public authorities concerned, thus contributing to the balanced economic development of the Community;
- to develop the level of training in response to technological and related social changes by identifying the resulting priorities in existing training arrangements which call for supplementary action both within Member States and at Community level, and by promoting equal opportunities for men and women.

13. COMETT focuses on five inter-related areas of action, each of which constitutes a Strand within the Programme as a whole:

- Strand A : the development of University-Enterprise Training Partnerships (UETPs) in the framework of a European Network
- Strand B : schemes for the exchange of students and personnel between universities and enterprises
- Strand C : the development and testing of joint university-enterprise projects in the field of continuing training
- Strand D : multilateral initiatives for the development of multi-media training systems
- Strand E : complementary information and evaluation measures designed to support and monitor developments of relevance to the COMETT Programme.

³ Article 3 of Council Decision 86/365/EEC 24 July 1986.

I.3 COMETT DURING 1988 IN SUMMARY

14. In 1988 there was one application Round. A total of 1699 project applications were submitted. The Commission was able to accept 457 projects. This brought the total number of projects supported under COMETT to 1045. In addition all multi-annual projects supported under the 1987 Rounds were also invited to apply for renewal. This represented a further 289 projects receiving support.
15. In 1988 the Commission also published proposals for a new phase of the COMETT Programme, as provided for in the original COMETT Decision. These proposals were based on the initial analysis of the experience of COMETT I. It was hoped to gain an early decision on COMETT II to allow adequate time for the planning, preparation and launch of COMETT II, and to ensure a smooth, planned transition between COMETT I and COMETT II. A Decision (4) in favour of COMETT II was taken at Council (Social Affairs) on 16 December 1988, with a budget estimate of 200 ECU Mio for the period 1990-1994.

4 O.J. N° L 13/28 Decision 89/27/EEC

II. CURRENT POSITION COMETT I

A. PROJECTS

OVERVIEW

16. In 1988 there was only one selection Round compared with two in 1987. A Call for Applications was issued in November 1987 with a closing date of 31 March 1988. In response to difficulties experienced in the distribution of the Guide for Applicants within certain Member States the closing date was extended until 22 April 1988. The Call for Applications invited applications for new projects under all Strands of COMETT.
17. In addition, all existing Strand A, C and D projects of a multi-annual nature were invited to apply for a renewal of their projects.
18. An innovatory feature was the development of the Strand B Pool projects. Existing training partnerships seeking renewal were also able to apply for a "pool" of student placement grants which could be implemented flexibly over the ensuing academic year. The training partnerships were able to specify the number of students they wished to send and the destination Member State, but without having to identify the receiving enterprises at the application stage. The success of this initiative is indicated by the fact that the majority of eligible training partnerships made a Pool application.

Strand A	:	141
Strand Ea	:	561
Strand Bap	:	68
Strand Bb	:	335
Strand C	:	420
Strand D	:	174

TOTAL	:	1699

Table 2 - New project proposals received in 1988.

A further analysis of applications, including participation by Member State is given at Annex 1.

19. These impressive figures demonstrate for a second successive year the enormous interest which COMETT has stimulated in the development of training cooperation at European level in university/enterprise cooperation.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

20. The selection process corresponded closely with that described in the 1987 Annual Report (5), comprising in summary :
- (i)- firstly, the evaluation of the applications by the services of the Commission, with the support of the COMETT Technical Assistance Unit. This procedure enabled all ineligible applications to be removed at an initial phase (non-transnational nature of the project, level of training lower than that decided by the Council, etc...); it also allowed failings in a certain number of the proposed projects to be highlighted and, in more general terms, to prepare the ground for the other stages in the selection procedure.
 - (ii)- next, the search for an internal coherence with the other community programmes - those relating to the Framework Programme of Research and Development as well as those directed towards specific sectors, such as the strategic programme in favour of SMEs for instance. Within the context of an inter-services consultation set up for this purpose, it concerned identifying from among the projects put forward, those which, from the point of view of the other Community Programmes, represented special interest - in other words, favouring synergies.
 - (iii)- next, it was necessary to check the chosen approach with independent experts, from universities and industry. For the evaluation of projects in the third round the Commission again called upon the COMETT Experts Committee to meet for three days in Brussels (14 - 17 June 1988).
 - (iv)- the proposal of a draft list of accepted projects was thus drawn up and submitted to the COMETT Committee (14-15 July 1988).
21. Finally, at the end of this process the Commission, on 23 July 1988, decided upon a final list of projects for Community support. This included a small complementary list of projects for which the Commission was subsequently able to generate some additional funding provision.
22. The criteria used for the selection of projects were those given in the Guide for Applicants. To be eligible, projects must have involved cooperation between both universities and enterprises relating to post-secondary level training concerned with technology, science or management development related to the Research and Development fields established as priority areas for Community action, fields in which technological change is significantly altering skill requirements or fields concerned with the social implications of technological change (eg health and safety, industrial relations, legal questions).

5 COM (88) 36 Final 12 February 1988.

23. Projects had to involve transnational cooperation between at least two Member States (except for regional Strand A training partnerships). Particular attention was also given to the potential links between proposed projects and other Community priorities and programmes, including actions to assist with the less developed regions, the involvement of SMEs and ensuring the equality of opportunities for men and women. For all projects, their potential contribution towards the creation of greater cohesion within the Community was considered.
24. In assessing the applications for the renewal of existing projects, due recognition was given to the newness of most projects at the date for the submission of their renewal application, it being recognised that projects were still in their initial stages of establishment having been underway for only a maximum of six months.

1988 RESULTS - ACCEPTED PROJECTS

25. The results of the 1988 Round were :

N° of projects	
Strand A	126
Strand Ba	396
Strand BaP	67
Strand Bb	133
Strand C	234
Strand D	89

TOTAL	1045

Table 3 - 1988 Round Accepted Projects

Further statistical analysis is given at Annex I

BUDGET

26. The total level of Commission support requested in the 1988 Round was around 93 ECU Mio (68 ECU Mio new project applications and 25 ECU Mio renewed project applications) against an available budget of 20 ECU Mio. On the basis of the projects selected for support the following allocations were made.

	1988 (Round 3)	Renewals	TOTAL (87 + 88)
Strand A	: 665 000	4 060 000	8 235 000
Strand Ba	: 1 234 542		3 961 596
Strand Bap	: 2 063 600		2 063 600
Strand Bb	: 486 800		939 039
Strand C	: 2 672 500	4 012 000	11 131 500
Strand D	: 1 400 000	2 555 000	6 560 000
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TOTAL	: 8 522 442	10 627 000	32 890 735

Table 4 - Amounts allocated by Strand (ECU) - 1988 Round

Further financial analysis is contained at Annex 2.

PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF PROJECTS ACCEPTED IN 1987

27. All 1987 projects were required to submit a Final Report by 1 October 1988 ⁽⁸⁾ detailing the activities carried out during the contract period 1 September 1987 to 31 August 1988. An initial analysis of the reports received has been undertaken and was the subject of a detailed report to the COMETT Committee in January 1989, entitled "The Development of COMETT".
28. The following summary is extracted from this report, copies of which are available on request. The report is based primarily on the final reports submitted by the projects supported under COMETT during 1987-88, and addresses the current state of development of COMETT as at the beginning of 1989. The report identifies numerous points of reference which must guide the remaining development of COMETT I as well as the planning of the transition to COMETT II.

⁸ except for the second Round Strand B projects for which the deadline is March 1989.

An analysis of the situation regarding the development of the COMETT Programme in each Member State.

Programme in each Member State

29. There is, overall, good coverage in all Strands in every Member State, although there are inevitably variations. In terms of overall levels of participation in COMETT projects, one can observe five groups:
- * the most active participants in COMETT are France and the United Kingdom, which are both participating in about 50% of all COMETT projects
 - * the Federal Republic of Germany and Spain are participating in 30-33% of all COMETT projects
 - * Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands are present in 20-25% of all COMETT projects
 - * Portugal, Greece, Ireland, and Denmark are taking part in 9-16% of all COMETT projects
 - * Luxemburg is participating in 1.4% of the COMETT projects.
30. Qualitatively, the progress made by the projects is extremely encouraging, especially given that the COMETT projects are by definition transnational initiatives between universities and enterprises which require careful and often lengthy planning during their first year. It is therefore expected that the second (and in some cases third) year of project development will provide even more insights into the process of university-enterprise cooperation in training and will be the more decisive period in terms of the training products and structures which COMETT is promoting.

An analysis by Strand of the situation regarding the development of the projects accepted in 1987.

The main findings of the first year of operation are as follows:

31. STRAND A : UNIVERSITY-ENTERPRISE TRAINING PARTNERSHIPS (UETPs)
- 31.1. There are currently 125 training partnerships in operation in the Member States, amongst which one-third are sectoral in nature and two-thirds regional or regional and sectoral. The Report is based on reports from 96 of the 108 which were operational in 1987-88.
- 31.2. The first year of training partnership operation has been characterised by organisational, legal, and financial launching of these consortia. Many training partnerships have managed this launch successfully and have embarked on a broad range of activities, including the mounting of projects in the other Strands of COMETT, interaction with other Community programmes and networks, and training needs analysis and other services for industry in their region or sector.
- 31.3. With regard to geographical distribution of the training partnerships, the report identifies:
- * countries where the coverage is more or less complete (IRL, UK, L)
 - * countries with extensive but incomplete coverage (E, F, I, P)
 - * countries with significant coverage but where there are vital gaps (B, DK, D)
 - * countries where the coverage is rather random and leaves more serious gaps (GR, NL).
- 31.4. The sectoral coverage of the training partnerships is most significant in Production and Manufacturing (7 training partnerships), Microelectronics (5 training partnerships), Other Electronics and Information Technology, Chemical/Pharmaceutical, and Agro-food/Biotechnology (4 training partnerships each), with 12 further sectoral training partnerships in various technology and technology related fields.
- 31.5. The training partnerships are the main contribution within COMETT to promoting structural change in the extent and quality of the university-industry dialogue about training for technology. While the other Strands of COMETT promote individual actions in the form of exchanges and joint projects, the regional and sectoral structures created by the training partnerships are planned as longer-term investments. Such structures not only initiate and promote the dialogue, but also support the more time-limited individual exchanges and projects.

- 31.6. In summary, the training partnership Network is universally recognised as being the backbone of COMETT and the most likely output from COMETT which can affect the scale and quality of university-enterprise cooperation in the field of technology. The first year of operation has seen the launching of ambitious and well-planned cooperative structures, both regional and sectoral. Several of them, in particular certain of the regional training partnerships, can be considered as having a model character which will serve well in both COMETT I and COMETT II. The main strategic issues for the training partnerships are the same as those identified for the COMETT Programme as a whole, since the training partnerships are the key carriers of the overall cooperative effort.

32. STRAND Ba : TRANSNATIONAL STUDENT PLACEMENTS IN ENTERPRISES

- 32.1. The findings on Strand Ba are provisional, since the vast majority of the projects will only present their final reports in the Spring 1989. 1013 student placements were supported during 1987-88, although, for the reason given above, only 198 of them are analysed in detail in the report.
- 32.2. Of the 198 placements, three-quarters were at "undergraduate" level, while the remainder were postgraduate or post-experience in nature. 52% of the placements were in Management/Business Studies, and 48% in Engineering, Technology, and Technology-related fields.
- 32.3. The placements which have taken place take account of the varying national circumstances of the universities sending the students, and therefore the average duration of the placements reflects the national qualification structures. In about 90% of cases, the placement was an obligatory part of the student's study programme, and academic recognition was ensured in all but 3 of the projects supported.
- 32.4. Overall, the Commission's decision to insist on clear qualitative criteria within the selection process (which meant that less placements were accepted than could have been possible within the percentages laid down in the COMETT Decision) led to a high overall quality of placement.

33. STRAND Bb : TRANSNATIONAL FELLOWSHIPS

- 33.1. As with Strand Ba, the results in Strand Bb are provisional, since the analysis is based on reports from only 12 out of the 62 fellowships supported in 1987-88. Out of the 62 projects, over half were fellowships from enterprises into universities (or other organisations), while amongst the remainder 37% were from university to enterprise (or other organisation). The average duration of the fellowships was 4.5 months.
- 33.2. The fellowships have met four broad aims:
- * increasing the specific scientific and/or commercial skills of the fellow concerned
 - * developing the training capabilities of the fellow's organisation
 - * contributing to the execution of a COMETT project within another Strand (A, Ba, C, or D)
 - * general transfer of experience and knowledge.

34. STRAND C : JOINT CONTINUING TRAINING PROJECTS

- 34.1. Within the 112 projects covered in the report, 20% concerned the development of training courses, 20% the development of training materials, and 60% the development of both courses and materials. While it is difficult to make precise assessments (especially since we are only in the first year of multiannual projects), COMETT has enabled in its first year the participation of 5000 persons in seminars for an average duration of 40 hours, that is an overall volume of 200,000 trainee hours.
- 34.2. The strongest sectoral areas covered by the projects are Automation and Advanced Manufacturing (of which seven are in CIM), Production Management, Innovation Management, Mechanical Design and Analysis, Microelectronics, Agrofood, and Architecture and Regional Planning.

34.3. The key factors for the further development of these multiannual projects are identified as being :

- * The marketing approach for the projects and products
- * The willingness for universities to consider continuing education as an integral part of their mission and as a business
- * strategies for training within the enterprises in terms of investment in future development and competitiveness
- * The willingness to use existing training resources, when these correspond to the specific training needs of the enterprises.
- * University-enterprise agreements in order to develop real partnerships to respond to the needs and lead to other beneficial spin-offs.

35. STRAND D : MULTILATERAL MULTIMEDIA TRAINING INITIATIVES

- 35.1. Within the 47 projects analysed (out of a total of 57 supported in 1987-88), there is a mix between structural projects (designed to establish a European level infrastructure for programme development and delivery) and "micro" projects concerned with the development of programmes to meet identified needs. Cross linkages between both these types of projects are beginning to be established.
- 35.2. Nearly half of the projects accepted have produced some pilot materials. Only a small minority have developed finished programmes which are available for sale. Most projects will be releasing their programmes for general use during 1989. An estimated 1,000 hours of multimedia materials have been developed in total.
- 35.3. The range of media and delivery methods is greater than suggested in project proposals. The predominant media of projects are written texts and computer based training materials (C.B.T.). Nearly half plan to incorporate video based materials. Programmes will be delivered locally (75%) or by post (55%). Computer conferencing, cable networks and satellites are also being utilised.
- 35.4. As programme materials become more generally available projects will need to place greater emphasis on marketing and delivery network activities - particularly with respect to their tutorial support systems.

B. PROCESSES

COMETT COMMITTEE

36. The development of COMETT has been conducted throughout in close collaboration with the COMETT Committee. The role of the Committee is to assist the Commission in the implementation of the COMETT Programme. The Committee is made up of two representatives from each Member State on the basis of nominations made by the Member States. The Commission provides its President and secretariat.
37. The Commission may consult the Committee on any matter concerning the implementation of the COMETT Programme. The Committee delivers opinions, including, on the general guidelines governing the COMETT Programme, the general guidelines for the financial assistance to be provided by the Community, the procedure for selecting the various types of projects and any measures which require a Community contribution of more than 100,000 EDU.
38. The Committee met formally on two occasions (14/15 April 1988 and 14/15 July 1988) and also once informally (13 - 15 January 1988) to discuss the development of COMETT and to contribute towards the development of the proposals for COMETT II.

A list of members of the COMETT Committee is given at Annex 5.

COMETT INFORMATION CENTRES

39. To facilitate and promote the dissemination of information about COMETT, National Information Centres have been established within each Member State. Each Member State is responsible for the designation of the organisation to act as the Information Centre. The precise role of each Information Centre varies between Member States reflecting individual needs and circumstances. The Commission provides some funding support towards the costs of activities undertaken by the Information Centres. In addition the Commission supplies various items of promotional literature and display materials for use by Information Centres.

A list of National Information Centres is given at Annex 6.

COMETT EXPERTS GROUP

40. The Commission has established the COMETT Experts Group as an additional source of specialist technical advice and expertise. Members have been invited on the basis of their personal knowledge on a particular technical area or sector related to the work of COMETT. The breadth of membership is such that there is at least one Expert from each Member State, ensuring awareness of the level of technology exploitation in all regions. The Experts met on 14/16 June 1988 to examine the proposals received by the Commission, giving particular attention to those proposals being considered for support by the Commission.
41. Their contribution played an important role in ensuring the Commission was able to select the most appropriate range of projects to achieve COMETT objectives.
42. The Members of the COMETT Experts Group also participated in the informal discussions on the preparation for COMETT II.

LINKS WITH OTHER COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES

43. An important aspect of COMETT is the potential it has for synergy with other Community programmes. COMETT complements the strategic Community approach in the R & D and innovation field by contributing towards the development of the highly qualified manpower necessary for the development, transfer and exploitation of new technologies. Close consultation has been established both in the selection of projects and also the ongoing monitoring and animation of the COMETT Programme. COMETT projects have also established links between organisations active in a number of Commission R & D Programmes. There is a particular link between COMETT and DELTA (?) in which the activities of each programme is mutually informing and enhancing.
44. In the education and training field COMETT complements the activities of the ERASMUS programme for the mobility of university students and the EUROTEDNET (•) programme for basic vocational training for the new information technologies.

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- 7 DELTA - Developing European Learning through Technological Advance. Council Decision 88/417/EEC O.J. N L206, 30 July 1988, p.20.
 - EUROTEDNET - Community wide network of demonstration projects in the field of New Information technologies and Vocational Training. COM (85) 167 Final.

45. The ERASMUS Programme was adopted by the Council in June 1987 ⁽⁹⁾ to promote inter-university co-operation; in particular to increase substantially the number of university students carrying out a period of integrated study in another Member State. Though there are a number of important differences between the specific aims, objectives and actions of the two Programmes, both COMETT and ERASMUS have the common policy aim of encouraging students to spend periods of recognised study in other Member States. Close links have therefore been established to ensure maximum synergy in the overall implementation and monitoring of the two Programmes. There has been reciprocal attendance at meetings of the COMETT and ERASMUS Committees and advisory bodies, as well as direct contacts between the COMETT and ERASMUS teams. In particular there has been a harmonisation of the selection timetable for both Programmes, with close co-ordination of the detailed decisions on funding for individual projects.
46. The experiences of both Programmes, about the foreign language preparation necessary for successful study abroad, have contributed significantly to the design and development of the Commission's proposals for the LINGUA Programme ⁽¹⁰⁾ to promote the quantity and quality of training in foreign languages through complementary actions at Community and Member State level.
47. The Industrial R & D Advisory Committee of the Commission (IRDAC) is a consultative group of leading European industrialists established by the Commission to advise on the development and implementation of R & D Programmes in the industrial sector. Following a Round Table on COMETT held on 7-8 September 1987, it was agreed to establish an IRDAC Working Party on COMETT, chaired by Sir Robert Telford, Life President of the Marconi Company. The Report of the Working Party was adopted by IRDAC at the end of May 1988 ⁽¹¹⁾. The view of IRDAC was that :
- "COMETT appears as a necessary, indeed a vital programme to stimulate greater action in education and training for advanced technology across all industry, large and small, manufacturing or services, traditional or newer high technology".

⁹ Council Decision 87/327/EEC of 15 June 1987 (O.J. N L166 - 25 June 1987, p.20 - 24).

¹⁰ COM (88) 841 Final of 6 January 1989 - proposals for a Council Decision submitted by the Commission.

¹¹ IRDAC Working Party 7 "COMETT" . "IRDAC Opinion on the Development of COMETT", June 1988.

IRDAC additionally put forward a number of specific recommendations, including clear guidance on the need for COMETT II and the level of funding required. On the latter point, it argued clearly that the proportion of industrial R&D budgets devoted to training is substantially higher than the 1% that the COMETT budget represents in relation to the Community's R&D budget; therefore, a substantial increase in COMETT II was, in the view of IRDAC, justified. During 1988, regular contact was also maintained with the European Round Table of Industry, which had established a special group to examine a wide range of issues relating to industry's relationships with education and training. That group reported early in 1989.

48. In relation to the linkages between COMETT and the other Community programmes mentioned above, attention is paid to the need to coordinate the Community funding allocated so as to ensure that no double funding arises. The procedures for inter-programme consultation at the selection stage provide such safeguards.

MEETINGS, STUDIES AND GROUPS

49. During 1988 a number of special meetings and studies were undertaken to contribute to the overall animation of the programme through an in-depth analysis of certain key issues related to the implementation of COMETT. In addition, information conferences and other meetings were held in the Member States as part of the overall process of encouraging participation of both universities and enterprises in the COMETT Programme. The following examples are provided to illustrate the depth and range of these activities.
50. An informal meeting of the COMETT Committee, COMETT Experts and other invited contributors was held in January 1988 to discuss the progress of COMETT and to provide guidance for the development of the COMETT II proposals. This meeting played a critical role in the preparatory thinking of the specific proposals for COMETT II.
51. In February a special Conference was held to consider the experience of promoters in the operation of the Strand Ba student placements. A special advisory group was established to assist in the development of the conference and consider the outcomes of the discussions held. One of the concrete outcomes was the formulation of the Strand Ba Pool arrangements whereby training partnerships are granted a "Pool" of placements for allocation.
52. In April a workshop was held to consider the training needs of higher education staff involved with establishing closer links with industry. This followed the COMETT study "The training needs of staff in the Community's higher education sector engaged in cooperation with industry" which was published in 1987.
53. In July 1988 the Strand D Advisory Group, consisting of experts drawn from COMETT projects and other organisations, met to discuss the progress of Strand D projects and identify priority action areas for COMETT multimedia activities. The group made a number of specific recommendations, including the importance of training trainers in the use of multimedia methods, the need to ensure quality in programme development and the importance of establishing effective networks.

54. In October a special conference was held to discuss links between COMETT and the European Business Network (EBN). A number of training partnerships already have close links with their local Business Innovation Centre (BIC) and were able to highlight specific examples of cooperation.
55. A special meeting for training partnerships from southern Europe was also held in October. This provided an opportunity for issues such as the needs of less advanced regions and of achieving North-South linkages to be discussed.
56. In December the Commission organised its mid-term COMETT conference "The European Value-Added in Advanced Training for Technology". This was attended by over 200 delegates from Strand A, C and D projects supported in 1987, as well as invited guests from within or working with the Commission. The delegates endorsed the importance of COMETT as a programme to establish and develop a transnational approach to higher level technology training.
57. During the year a number of analyses were made on the development of COMETT within individual Member States. These established the considerable progress being made, as well as identifying priority issues to be addressed during the remainder of COMETT I and during the planning and implementation of COMETT II.
58. The Commission also accepted a number of requests from individual projects and organisations for support towards the holding of special conferences and workshops on priority COMETT themes.

TECHNICAL AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

59. The implementation of COMETT is undertaken with the assistance of the external COMETT Technical Assistance Unit. The services provided by the external Unit include the processing of project applications, administration of contracts, technical analysis of Interim and Final Reports from projects, information and publicity. The small number of staff, drawn from a range of Member States, also provide other technical services as required by the Commission. With the extremely limited number of Commission staff devoted to COMETT, the services of the external Unit are essential in enabling the Commission to provide as full a range of technical and logistical services as possible within the limited budget available.

C. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

INTERNAL MONITORING AND EVALUATION

60. Monitoring and evaluation are important aspects of the implementation of the COMETT Programme. A variety of formal and informal methods are used to collect and analyse intelligence at three levels :
- i) project level
 - ii) Strand level
 - iii) Programme level
61. At the project level the process begins with the initial analysis of project applications whereby a number of quality criteria are assessed to ensure selected projects are adequately designed. For approved projects the formal process consists of interim reports, final reports and renewal applications. In this way every project is continually monitored and evaluated to ensure its progress is satisfactory and also to identify specific issues which may have a more general implication. In addition there are ad hoc contacts with project promoters during their visits to Brussels, attendance at conferences and other similar activities.
62. At a Strand level a number of Strand specific analyses have been undertaken. In addition special Advisory Groups have met to consider the development of Strand Ba and Strand D. Also a special responsibility for each Strand has been allocated internally to ensure that Strand specific issues are identified and considered within wider activities.
63. At a Programme level, the development of the Programme has been carefully monitored with respect to both its internal design and implementation and its wider contribution to Community objectives. In 1988 this perspective had a particular emphasis in the context of the development of the proposals for COMETT II. The contributions of the COMETT Committee, the COMETT Experts Committee and the National Information Centres were of particular importance, especially in providing information about the development of COMETT within each Member State.

EXTERNAL MONITORING AND EVALUATION

64. To complement the on-going internal monitoring and evaluation activities, the Commission issued a Call for Tender for the external evaluation of the COMETT Programme. After careful consideration of the many excellent proposals received, the Commission selected a team from Coopers and Lybrand and the Science Policy Research Unit at the University of Sussex. The evaluation was launched at the end of December and a final report is due at the end of April 1989. The terms of reference for the evaluation require :
- an examination of the implementation of COMETT, including the manner of launching COMETT and of generating, appraising and monitoring of projects;
 - an assessment of the development of the COMETT projects selected in 1987;
 - an assessment of the initial impact of COMETT.
65. This external evaluation will include a postal questionnaire to all 1987 projects supplemented by a number of in-depth case studies. The study will also include unsuccessful candidates, as well as an assessment of why potential applicants have not sought COMETT support. It is intended that the results of this will contribute both to the continuing implementation of the existing COMETT programme and also to the planning and animation of COMETT II.

III. COMETT II

66. The Commission published its proposal for COMETT II on 25 July 1988 ⁽¹²⁾. The proposal was drawn up after consultation with the COMETT Committee and taking account of the opinions expressed by IRDAG, the social partners at Community level (ETUC/UNICE) and the Liaison Committee of Doctors Conferences of the Member States, all of which had requested the continuation of the Programme and a significant increase in the financial resources allocated. A decision in favour of COMETT II was taken by the Council (Social Affairs) at their meeting of 16 December 1988 ⁽¹³⁾. The budget estimate approved for the period 1990-1994 was 200 EDU Mio, against the original Commission proposal of 250 EDU Mio.
67. The Commission had also proposed the extension of COMETT II to include the EFTA countries. No decision has yet been taken on this proposal, by the Council.
68. COMETT II is not just a simple continuation of the existing Programme but is both a deepening and broadening of COMETT I. The Decision stresses that COMETT remains above all a Community Programme for advanced training for technology and its applications, and that within that context university/enterprise co-operation remains a means rather than an end in itself.
69. However the Commission intends that the development of COMETT II will be much more pro-active than COMETT I. There will be an increased emphasis on changing skill requirements, with more account being taken of regional needs. This will be achieved through greater diversification and flexibility in the implementation of the Programme. A particular objective will be to ensure enhanced involvement of SMEs in all aspects of COMETT activity. There will be continuous and participative monitoring and evaluation of the Programme's implementation to ensure that the Programme's objectives are being met in the most effective and efficient way.

¹² COM (88)429 Final.

¹³ O.J. N L 13/28 (Decision 89/27/EEC)

70. The main changes to the Programme include :

Strand A : training partnerships having 3-year contracts of up to 180,000 EDU to enable them to become firmly established as effective organisations.

Strand B : The introduction of new types of fellowships allowing longer or more intensive secondment of highly qualified personnel.

Strand C : A merging with Strand D to create a new Strand concerned with supporting major new education and training initiatives - with funding of up to 500,000 EDU, as well as shorter continuing training projects.

Strand D : Continued provision for special measures contributing to the overall success of COMETT, including special studies on key issues.

71. The Commission will be able to take advantage of the early decision to adopt COMETT II to plan and prepare for the most effective launch of the new Programme; exploiting to the full the very many strengths and successes of the existing Programme.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

72. The second year of COMETT has seen the Programme develop in a number of important and different ways :
- the continued growth of interest in the Programme across the Community, as demonstrated by the growth in the number of applications for support (reaching 1699 project proposals requesting over 145 EDU Mio of support against an available budget of 20 EDU Mio),
 - the development of the training partnership network in both quantitative and qualitative terms, including both regional and sectoral training partnerships,
 - the organisation and completion of 1239 student placements and 71 fellowships,
 - the delivery of a minimum of over 200,000 hours of training to 5,000 learners,
 - the development of an estimated 1,000 hours of multi-media distance learning materials,
 - the ongoing analysis, monitoring and evaluation of 1045 projects, including 289 from 1987 that were also renewed in 1988,
 - development and presentation of proposals for COMETT II resulting in the Council Decision of 16 December 1988 to approve COMETT II from 1990-1994 with a budget of 200 EDU Mio ⁽¹⁴⁾,
 - organisation of a major mid-term conference attended by over 200 project promoters as well as major COMETT conferences and events throughout the Community.
73. From all these many achievements a number of key issues have emerged for the continued development of COMETT. At a project level there is an ongoing need to ensure that projects continue to progress towards meeting their objectives from a solid base. In particular there is a need to enhance and extend the real involvement of enterprises, particularly SMEs, and to establish sound administrative and financial bases for their activities. The continued development of transnational linkages through European level co-operation is proving an important asset to projects and their activities. However it must be recognised that for many projects these linkages are still comparatively new and in need of strengthening. The experience of many projects also demonstrates the very real benefits that derive from close co-operation and synergy with other Community programmes, particularly the R & D Programmes.

¹⁴ The exact annual financial provision will be decided in accordance with the budget procedure.

74. The priorities for 1989 include :

- consolidation of the COMETT network and its constituent projects,
- the development of transnational linkages both within the COMETT network and with other Community Programmes,
- enhancing the awareness and participation of enterprises and other organisations within the COMETT Programme, particularly in the utilisation of project outcomes,
- preparing for the launch of COMETT II.

75. In conclusion it can be said that in 1988 the COMETT Programme has been able to exploit the very positive reaction to its launch in 1987. There has been a build up in both the quantity and quality of COMETT activity. This will provide a firm foundation for the further development of COMETT in 1989 and beyond.

ANNEXES

1. Statistical Overview
2. Budgetary Overview
3. Sectoral Overview
4. Publications
5. COMETT Committee Members
6. COMETT Information Centres
7. Abbreviations

ANNEX 1 STATISTICAL OVERVIEW

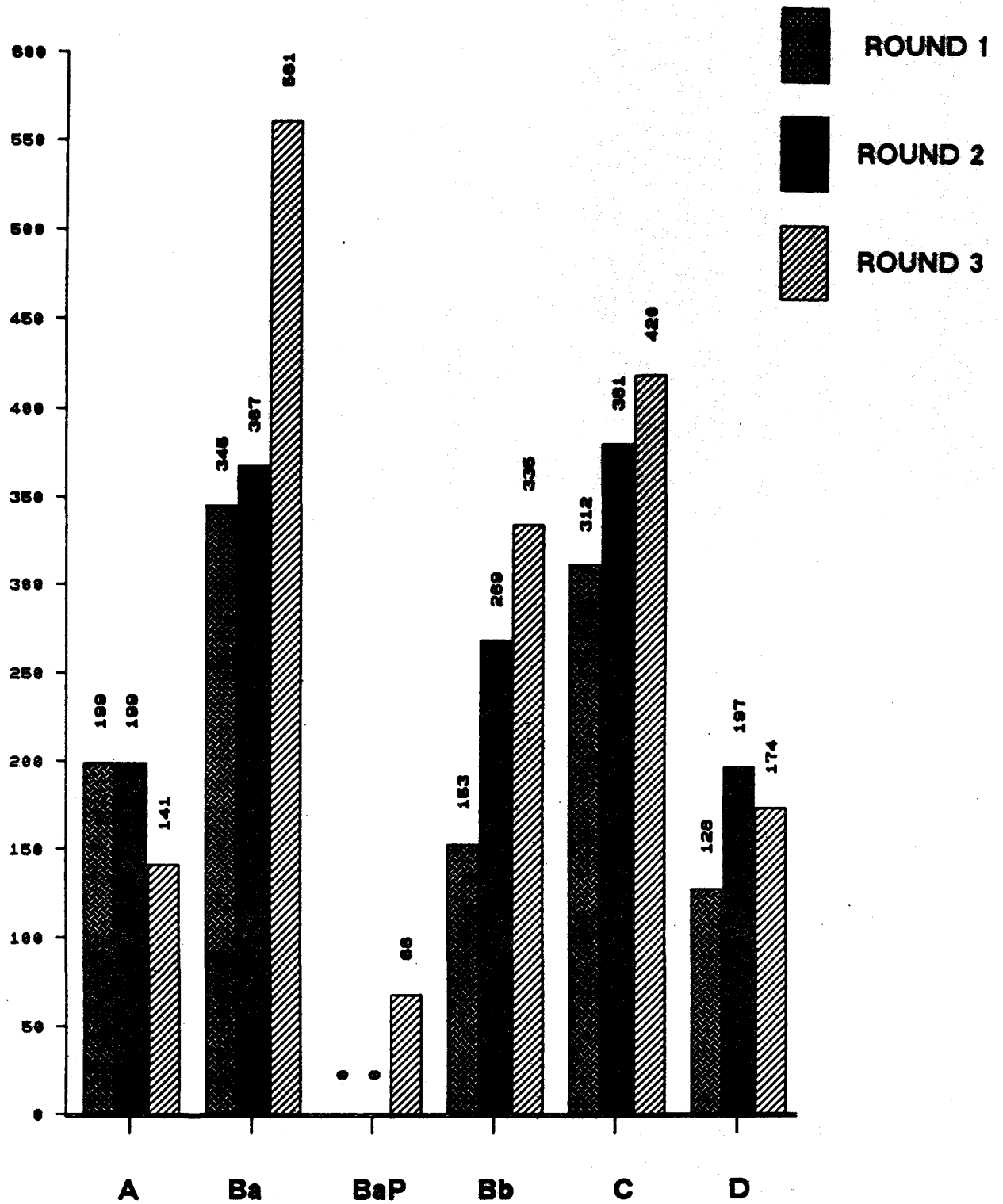


TABLE I.1 PROJECTS SUBMITTED

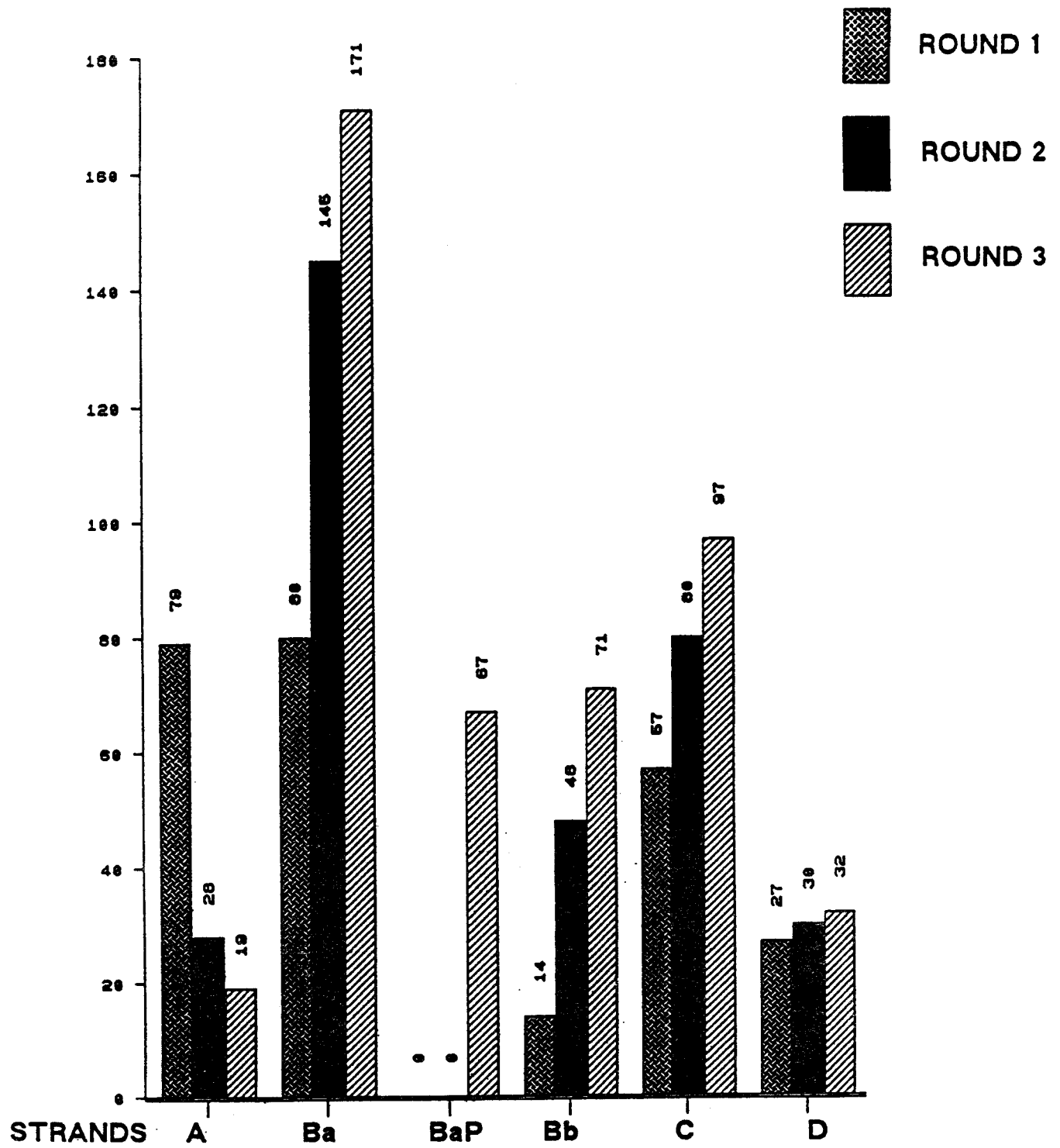


TABLE 1.2 PROJECTS ACCEPTED

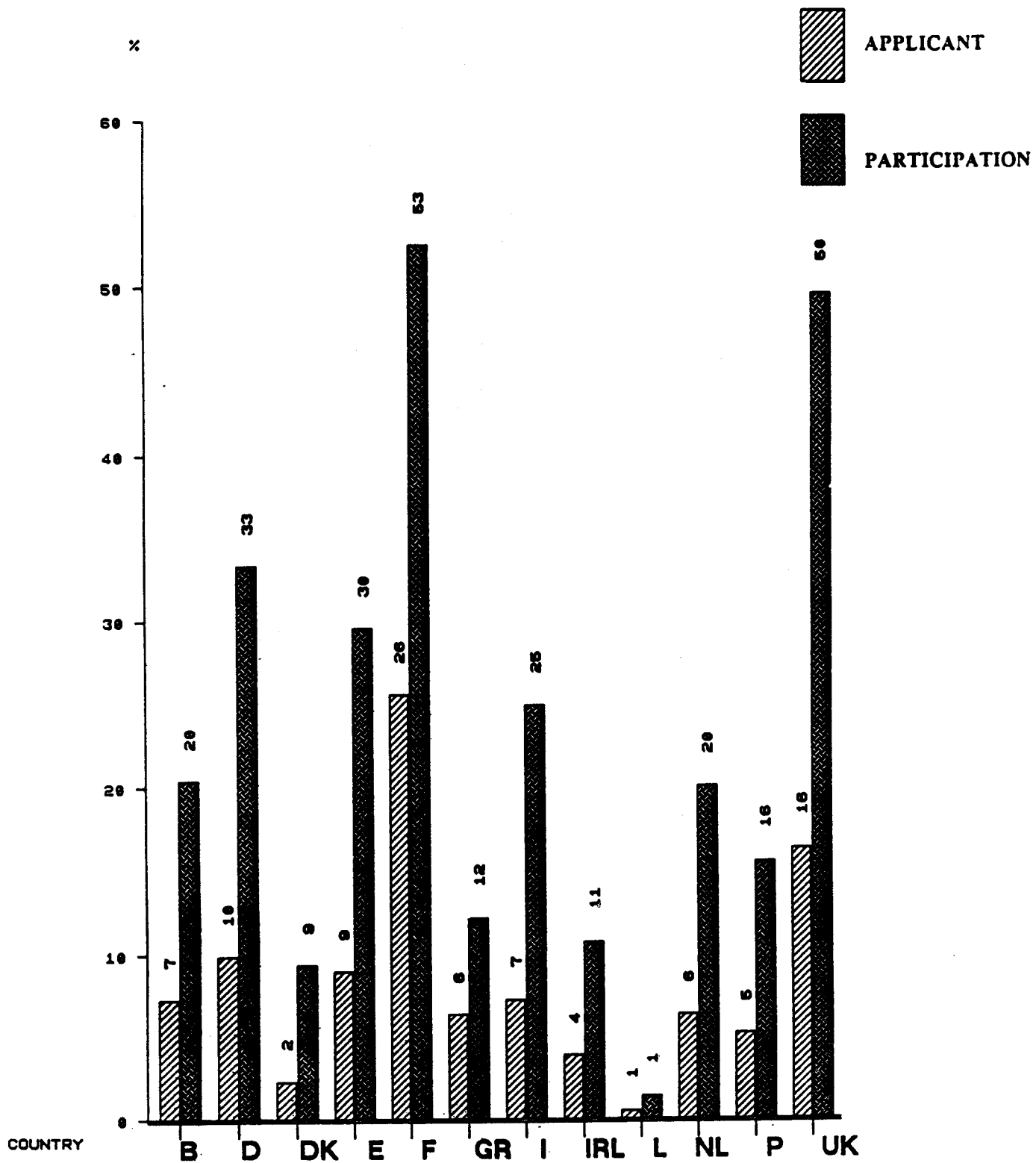
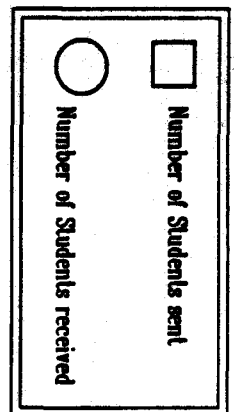
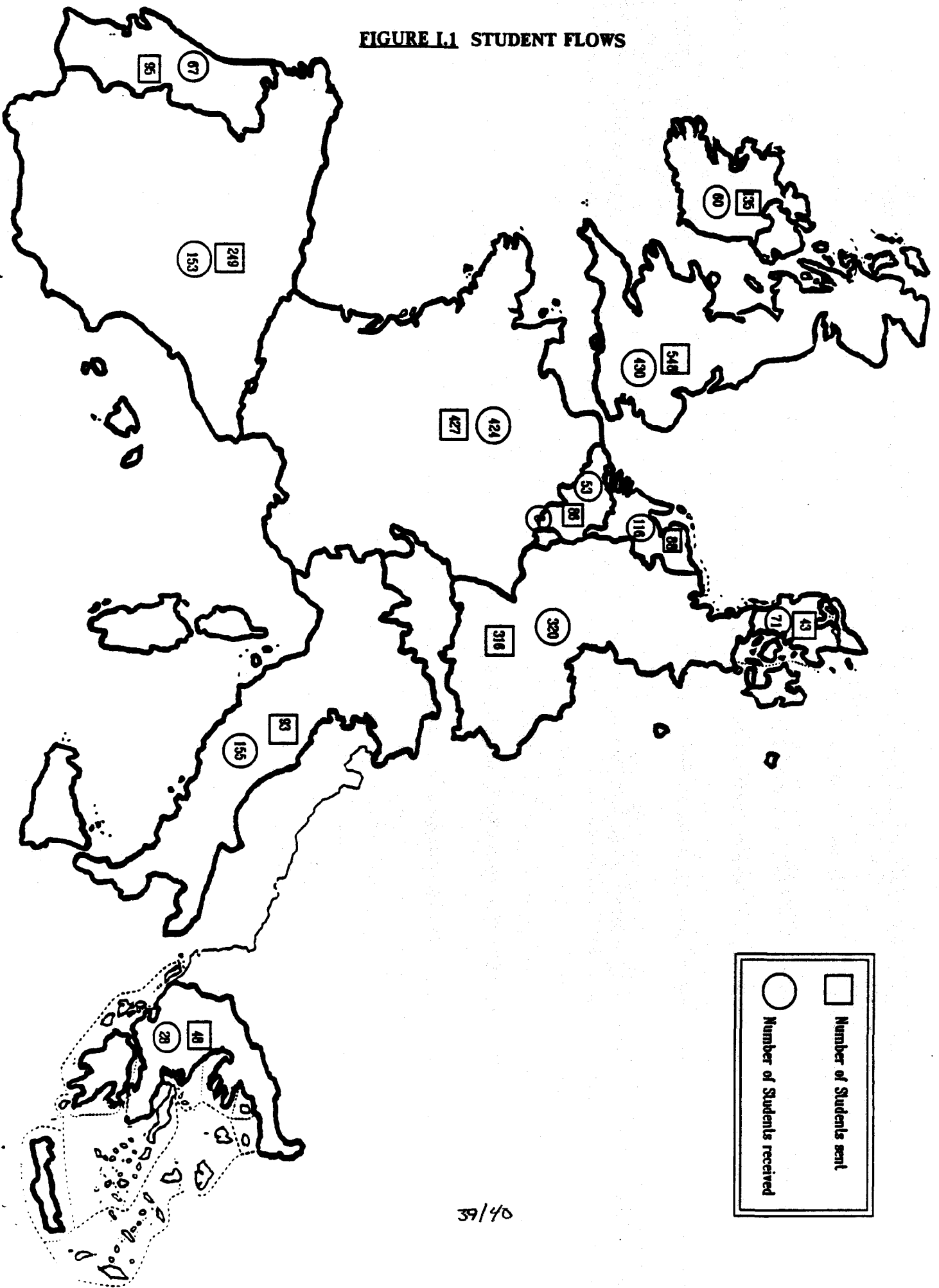


TABLE I.3 INVOLVEMENT OF MEMBER STATES IN ACCEPTED PROJECTS

FIGURE I.1 STUDENT FLOWS



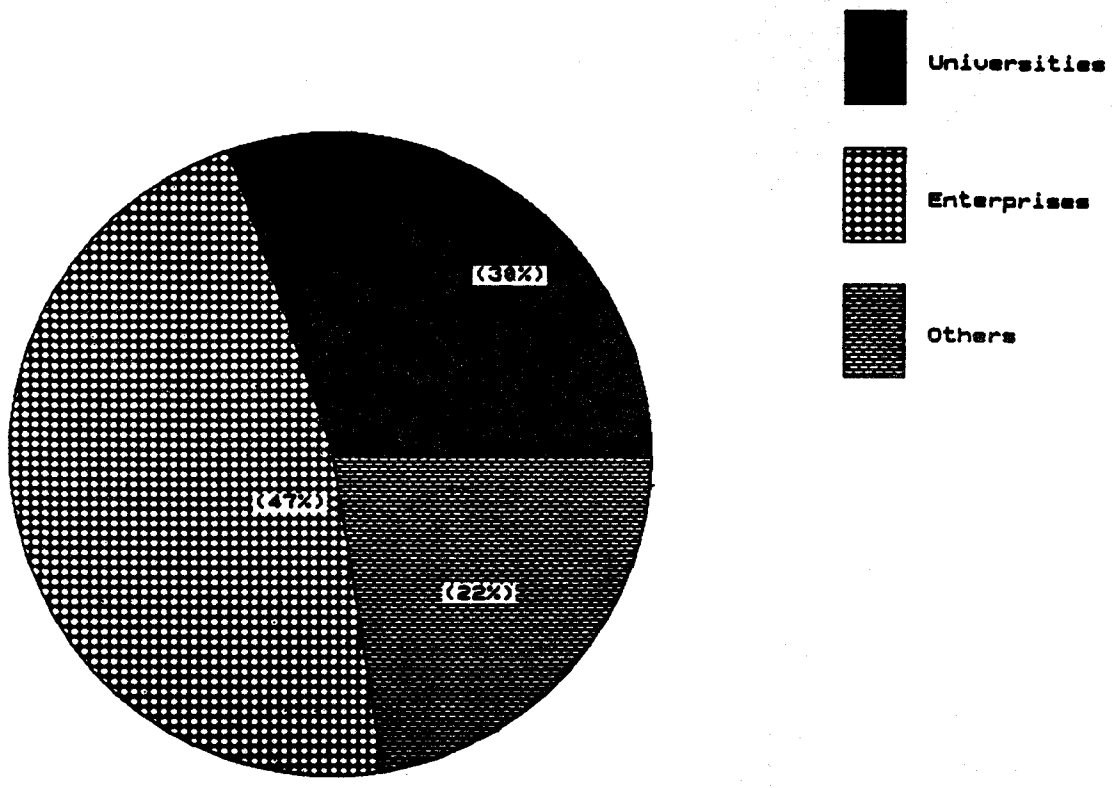


TABLE I.4 NUMBER OF DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS IN ACCEPTED PROJECTS

	A	Ba	Bb	C	D	Total
Universities	557	461	105	679	294	1696
Enterprises	915	587	94	904	340	2653
Others	537	91	15	511	183	1259
	2009	1139	214	2094	817	5608

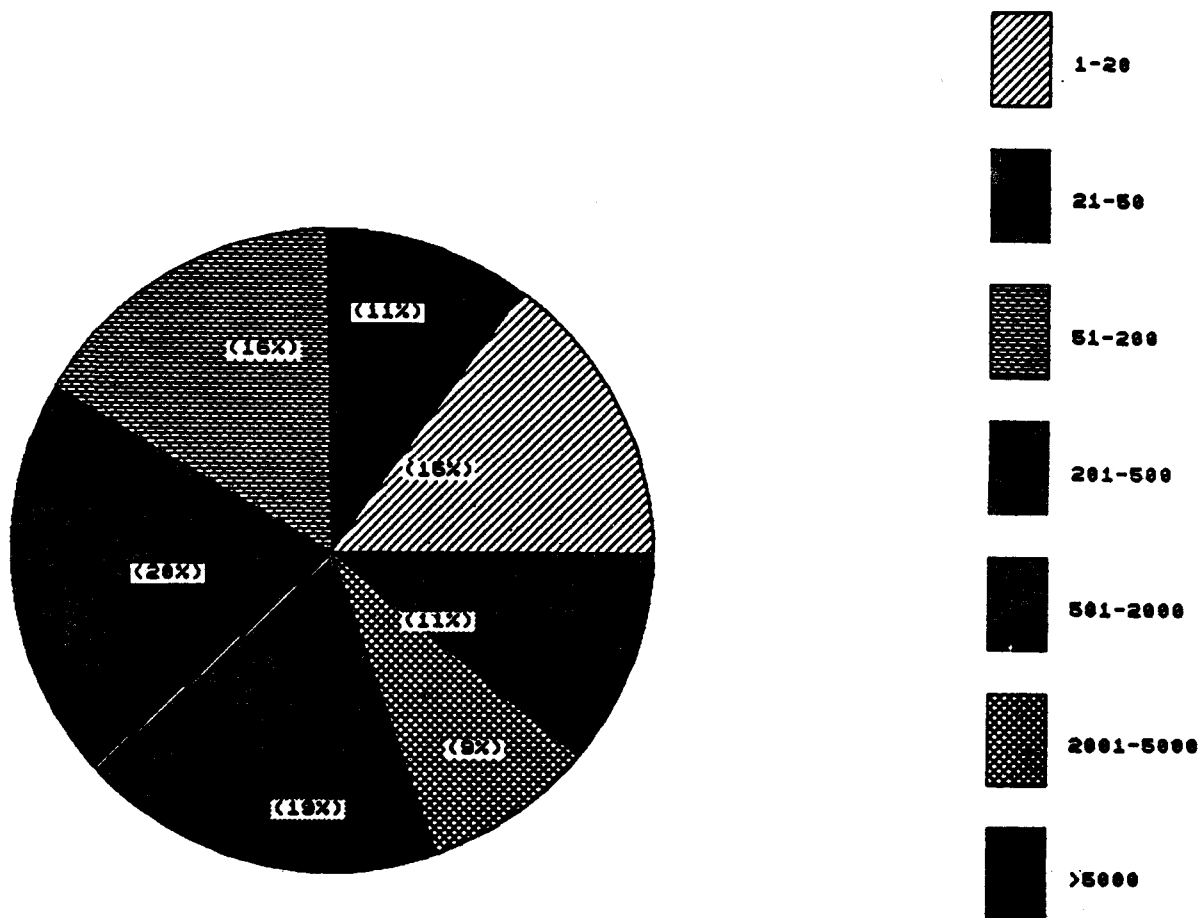


Table I.5 DISTRIBUTION OF ENTERPRISES IN ACCEPTED PROJECTS BY SIZE AND STRAND

Employees	A	Ba	Bb	C	D	Total
1-20	15.0%	8.3%	18.5%	14.3%	24.0%	14.9%
21-50	12.1%	4.6%	29.6%	8.4%	14.6%	10.5%
51-200	17.3%	17.4%	18.5%	14.7%	16.7%	16.2%
201-500	17.0%	17.4%	11.1%	25.8%	11.5%	20.2%
501-2000	18.9%	25.7%	7.4%	18.6%	12.5%	18.6%
2001-5000	10.4%	9.2%	7.4%	6.8%	10.4%	8.7%
>5000	9.2%	17.4%	7.4%	11.4%	10.4%	10.9%
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

ANNEX 2

BUDGETARY OVERVIEW

AMOUNTS IN ECU Mio

250 MECU

200

150

100

50

0

STRANDS

A

Ba

BaP

Bb

C

D



ROUND 1



ROUND 2



ROUND 3

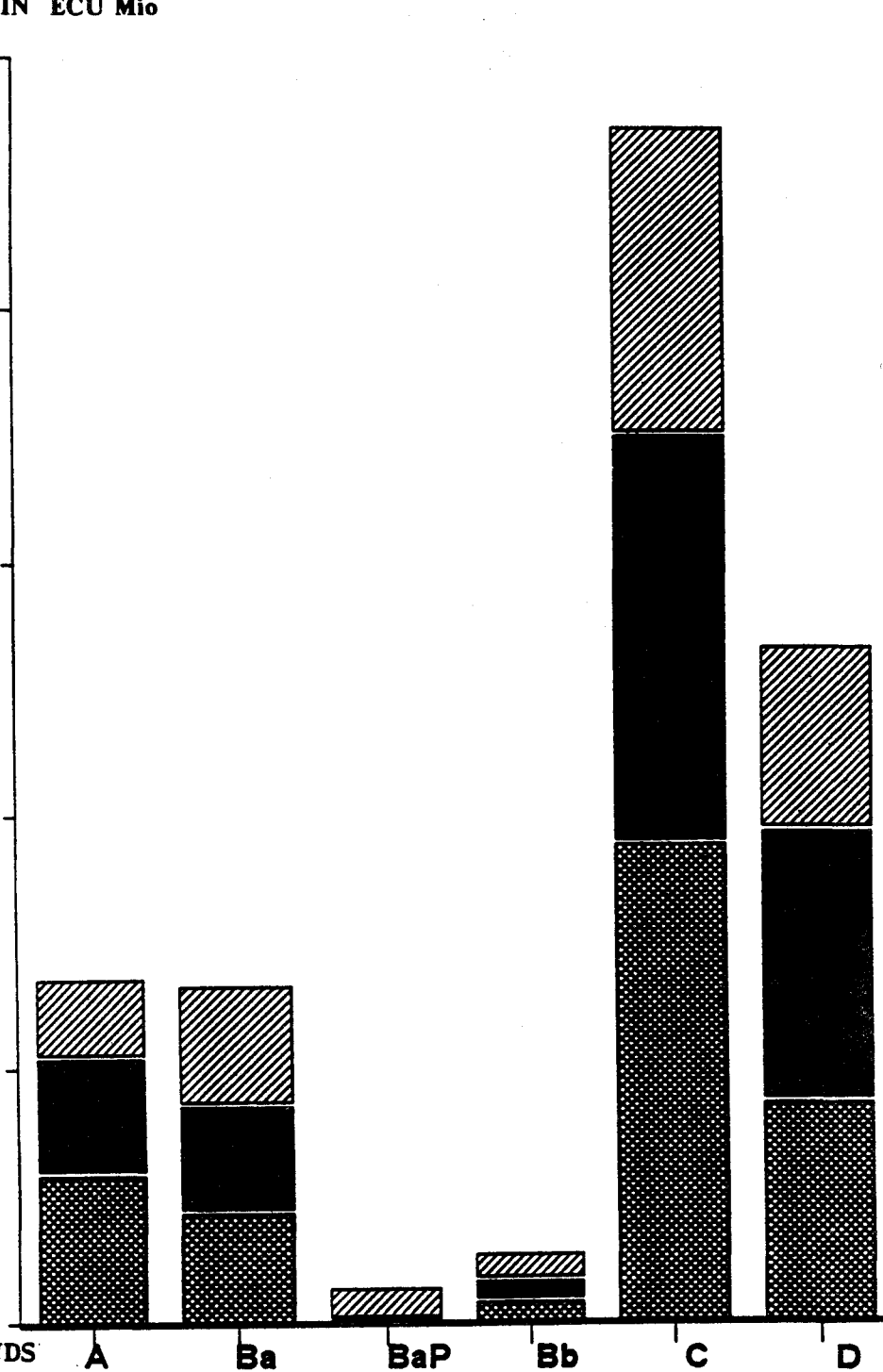


Table II.1 OVERALL REQUEST IN PROJECTS SUBMITTED

AMOUNTS IN ECU Mio

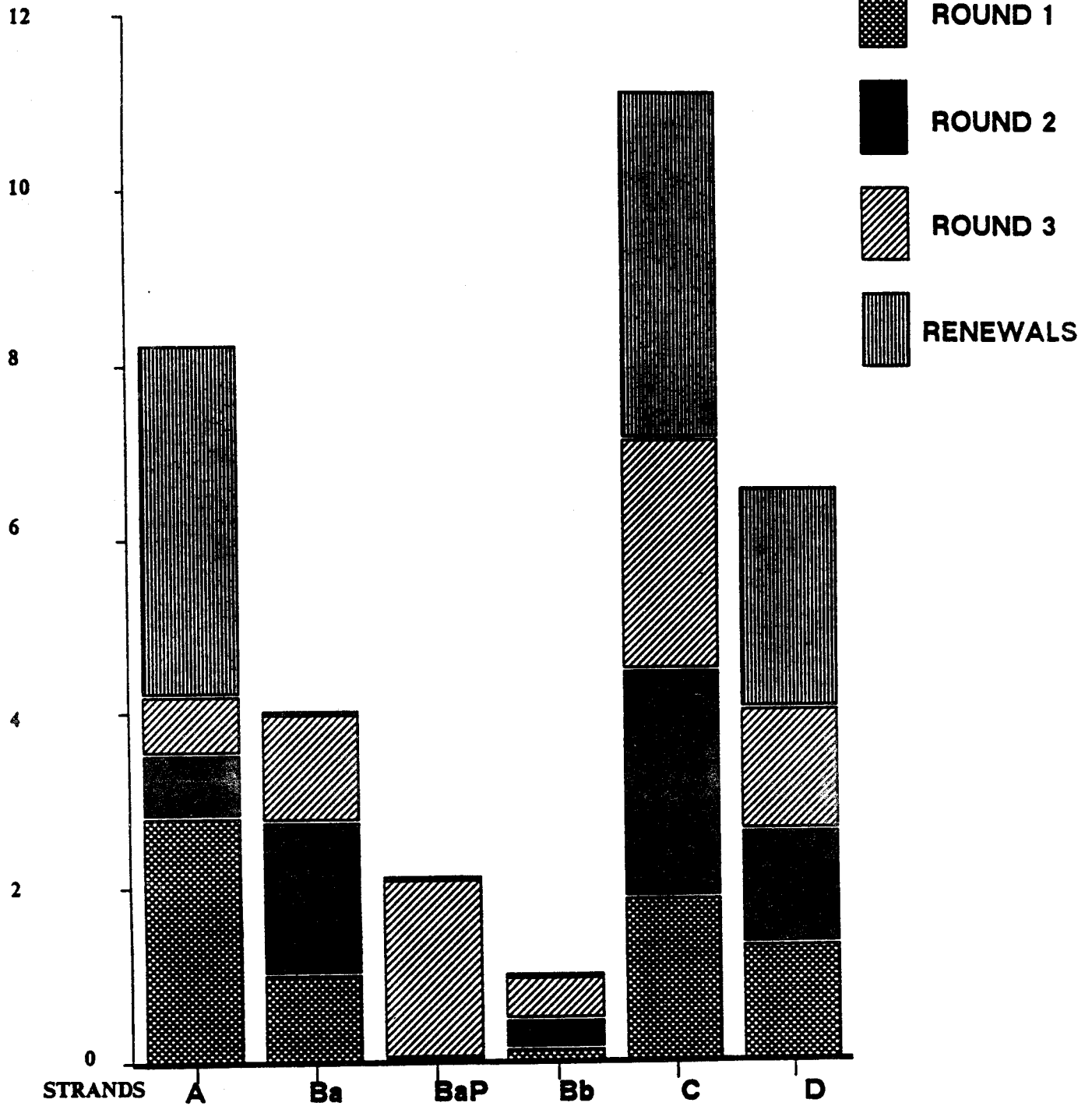


Table II.2 OVERALL ALLOCATIONS TO PROJECTS ACCEPTED

ANNEX 3 SECTORAL OVERVIEW

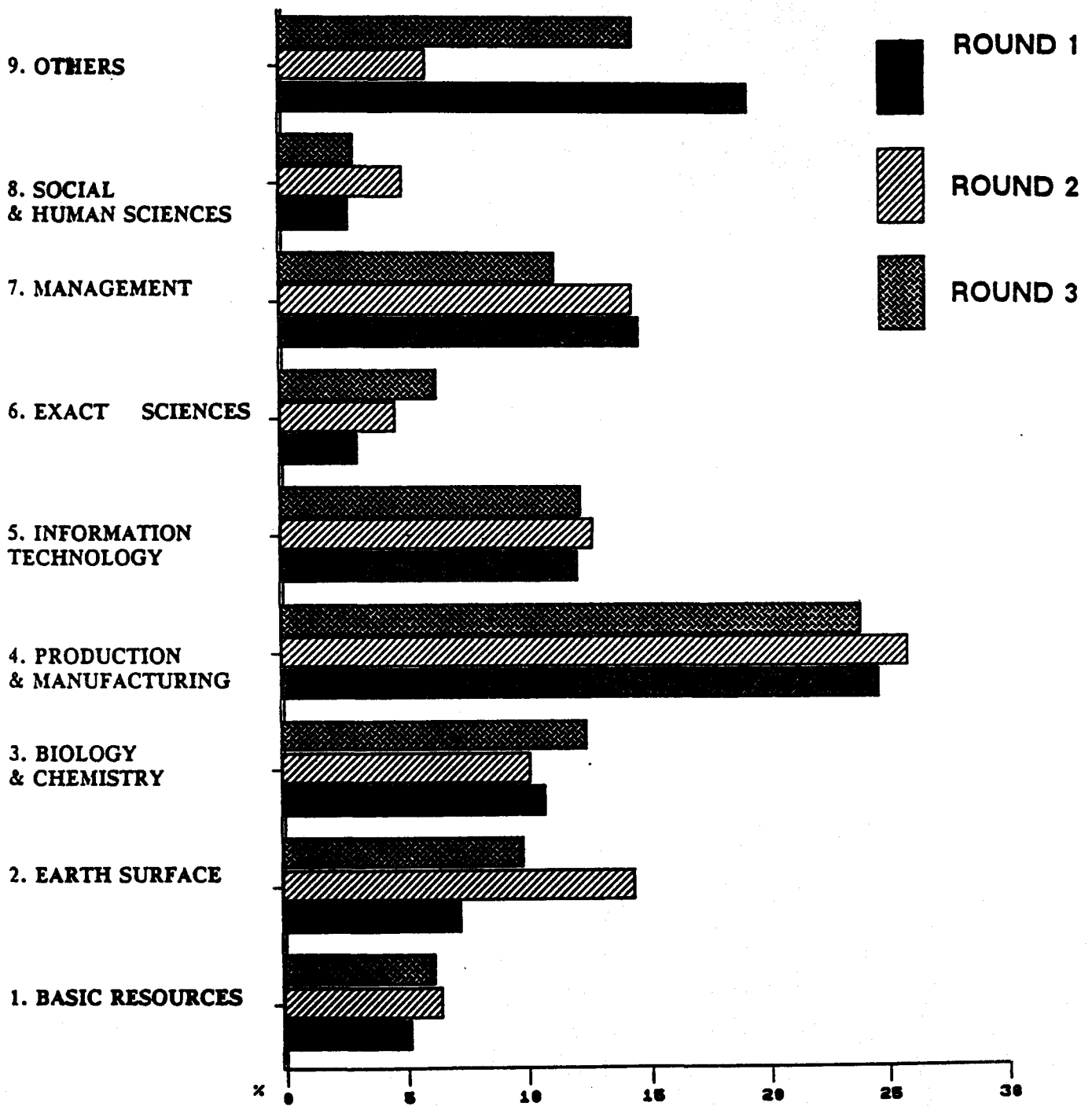


Table III.1 SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF ACCEPTED PROJECTS

ANNEX 4

PUBLICATIONS

PUBLICATIONS

The following publications have been produced and are available on request :

- Directory of Projects Supported Under the Third Call For Proposals-1988
- Statistical Analysis of COMETT Projects
- Sectoral Classification of COMETT Projects
- COMETT BULLETIN (regular newsletter)
- Guide For Applicants-1989

ANNEX 5 COMETT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

59/60

LIST OF COMETT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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ANNEX 7 ABBREVIATIONS