



### FAST

#### FORECASTING AND ASSESSMENT IN THE FIELD OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

##### 1. THE FAST PROGRAMME

In 1978, the Council of Ministers of the European Communities decided to launch the FAST research programme for a five-year experiment. This programme was set up at the beginning of 1979.

The main aim of this research programme is to contribute to the definition of the long term goals and priorities of a coherent Community R+D policy. In order to achieve this objective the FAST programme should, in particular, attempt to shed light on the potentialities, problems and possible conflicts which might affect the Community's long-term development, and propose alternative guidelines for an R+D policy with a view to helping in the resolution of these problems or the realization of these potentialities.

The FAST programme is the responsibility of the Directorate-General for Research, Science and Education (Directorate-General XII) and is executed by a team of six research workers, set up during 1979.

##### 2. RESEARCH PRIORITIES

The FAST Programme will centre on three topics :

- work and employment
- the "information-society",
- the "bio-society".

An examination of the transformations and changes facing Europe reveals that:

- employment and energy are currently, and seem likely to remain for the next decade, the main points of convergence at which the majority of the other problems are most acutely felt;
- two changes, the computerization of society and, in the longer term, the biological revolution, could produce a profound social transformation during the next few decades.

The constraints imposed by the energy problem are the subject of numerous research activities elsewhere (both in the Commission and in the Member States). What is new about the FAST Programme therefore, is its adoption of an analytical framework which takes account of the plurality of temporal perspectives and its consequent examination in certain priority areas of the R+D projects which could directly or indirectly :

- affect work and employment (the major problem of the next decade),
- constitute a preparation for the information society (the major change in the next 20 years),
- turn to account the opportunities offered by the bio-society (the major change in the next 30 years).

### 3. WAYS AND MEANS OF IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMME

In order to fulfil its task, FAST will employ a wide variety of methods; more particularly, the FAST Programme will be based on :

- research contracts devoted to topics requiring in-depth examination to produce significant results. In view of the field covered by these projects, it will probably be necessary to set up multinational teams at the European level.
- further analyses on specific topics, clarifying or examining problems, conflicts or possibilities in fields other than those covered by research contracts. Seminars will be held relating to a number of further analyses.
- research conducted by individuals into subjects for which individual, personalized research is more appropriate.
- seminars on topics which, by their nature, require a multi-disciplinary approach and direct discussion between experts. On these occasions, two or three communications will be discussed in detail.

As part of these activities, the FAST programme will concentrate on the research projects listed in Table 1 (1,8 million EUA will be allocated to finance these projects).

At the same time, the research undertaken in respect of the three areas of interest (work and employment, the information society and the bio-society) will have to be coordinated and set in the more general, coherent framework of Europe and its changing environment. Accordingly, the FAST team will continue the activities relating to Europe under Change \* by constantly updating and expanding the first report which was completed at the end of 1979. In this way, FAST will fulfil its function as a watchtower for future problems and its task of organizing and summarizing the information required by an increasingly complex, uncertain world.

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\* The first report entitled "Europe under Change" will be published in English and French in March/April 1980 and in German, Italian, Dutch and Danish somewhat later, in the European Perspectives series.

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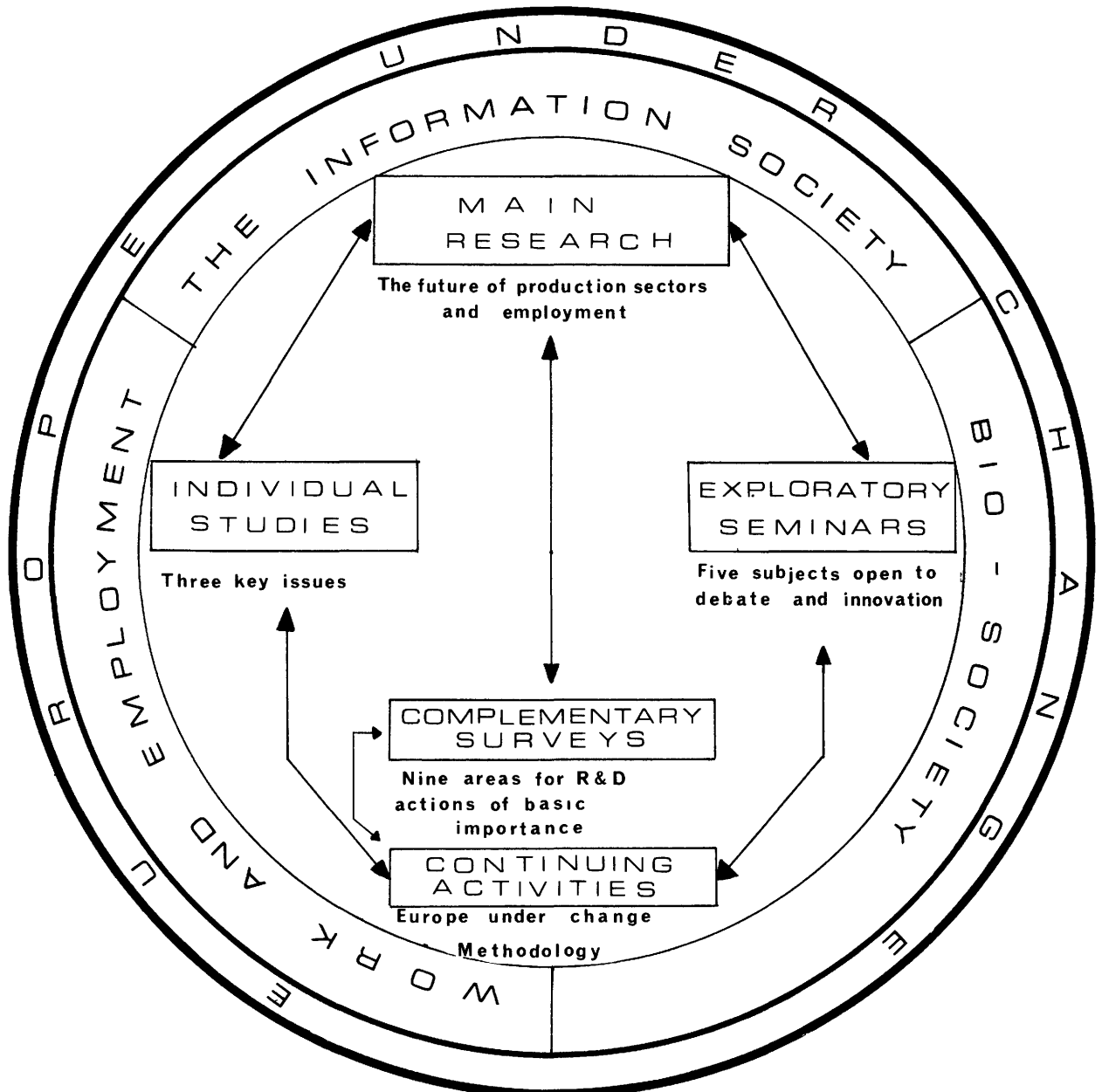
**COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES**  
Directorate-General Research, Science and Education  
Rue de la Loi 200 - B-1049 Brussels

Table 1. FAST WORK PROGRAMME: BY THEME AND TYPE OF ACTIVITY

	MAIN RESEARCH	COMPLEMENTARY SURVEYS	EXPLORATORY SEMINARS	INDIVIDUAL STUDIES
(A) WORK AND EMPLOYMENT	<p>(1) Regional prospects for employment in Europe</p> <p>(2) Sectoral prospects: some case studies</p>	<p>(3) Bio-mass based energy sources. Impact on employment and regional development</p> <p>(4) Taxation, social changes and employment</p> <p>(5) The productivity question</p>	<p>(6) Attitudes to work</p> <p>(7) Social innovation in the 80's</p>	<p>(8) The future of service employment</p>
(B) INFORMATION SOCIETY	<p>(1) Microelectronics innovations in the context of international division of labour</p> <p>(2) The potential of information-technologies for job-creation</p>	<p>(3) Long-term options and forecasts for transport</p> <p>(4) Representation and sharing of power in an information society</p> <p>(5) Impact on the way of life</p>	<p>(6) Distribution of benefit and risks associated with micro-electronics applications</p>	<p>(7) To be defined</p>
(C) "BIO-SOCIETY"	<p>(1) A Community strategy for European biotechnology</p>	<p>(2) Manpower and training implications of the expansion of bio technology-based industries</p> <p>(3) Social acceptability of biotechnology-based activities</p> <p>(4) Implications for the third world of biotechnology</p>	<p>(6) Mapping the social and political choices that may be created by progress in biotechnology</p> <p>(7) Environmental engineering. Future prospects</p>	<p>(5) To be defined</p>

diagram2

# STRUCTURAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES



INFORMATION FOR RESEARCHERS AND RESEARCH CENTRES IN FORECASTING

TIME TABLE: End of January 1980 the description of the study programme will be send out on request.

Up to April 10th 1980 FAST calls for tenders and accepts propositions.

For more detailed information , please write to :

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D.G.XII - FAST  
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