

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(93) 524 final

Brussels, 28 October 1993

THE YOUTH FOR EUROPE PROGRAMME

ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION

- 1992 -

I INTRODUCTION

1. The Youth for Europe Programme is an action programme for the promotion of youth exchanges in the European Community. The second phase of the programme was adopted by the Council Decision of the 29 July 1991, and covers the period 1 January 1992 to 31 December 1994 (1).
2. The Commission has presented three earlier reports on the Programme, covering its first phase of implementation (2).
3. This report covers the first operational year of the second phase and is based on the information provided by the National Agencies, who are responsible for the implementation of the Programme at national level in the Member States.

II THE STRUCTURE AND GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

4. The second phase of the Youth for Europe Programme comprises a range of incentive measures to promote the development of youth exchanges in the European Community, by increasing their number in all Member States and by attaching particular attention to the involvement of young people who have little opportunity to meet young people from other Member States.
5. The Programme is designed, in particular, to promote the participation of young people whose personal circumstances have previously prevented them from taking part in existing exchanges between Member States.
6. The Programme is also aimed at improving the quality of youth exchanges by diversifying the type of projects, achieving a better balance between the Member States and by providing youth workers involved in these exchanges with relevant training.
7. Youth for Europe exchange projects are targeted at the 15-25 age group. Additional measures are aimed at those able to generate a multiplier effect so that young people can derive the maximum benefit from their participation in exchanges.

(1) Decision 91/395/EEC of 29 July 1991, OJ L 217, p.25

(2) COM (90) 378, COM (91) 355, SEC (92) 1262

8. During its second phase, the Programme is articulated according to various actions designed to support and achieve its general objectives across the Member States :

- Action I.1 : direct support for youth exchanges;
- Action I.2 : voluntary service activities;
- Action I.3 : support for the organization of short study visits for youth workers;
- Action I.4 : support for training activities for youth workers, particularly at European level;
- Action I.5 : pilot projects;
- Action II : support for infrastructures designated by the authorities in each Member State, as responsible for the coordination of the Youth for Europe Programme at national level (National Agencies).

An estimated budget of 25 million ECU was initially earmarked for the financing of the second phase of the Programme from 1992 to 1994. Community budgetary provision for the period covered by this report amounted to 10 million ECU.

III THE OPERATIONAL AND ADVISORY INFRASTRUCTURE

9. According to article 4 of the Council Decision, the Youth For Europe programme is implemented by the Commission in active cooperation with the Member States.

The Youth For Europe Advisory Committee

10. The Commission is assisted in the implementation of the Programme by an Advisory Committee composed of two representatives from each Member State, appointed by the Commission further to nominations by each country. The Council of Europe and the Youth Forum of the European Communities are invited to attend the committee's meetings as observers.
11. The Advisory Committee met three times during the period covered by this report. It was consulted on the overall development of the Programme in the various Member States, in particular with regard to budgetary, evaluation and training aspects. The Committee was also informed of the implementation of the Priority Actions by the Commission.

The National Agencies

12. The Youth For Europe Programme was the first largely decentralized Community programme. According to the terms of the Council Decision, the Member States are responsible for the promotion, coordination and co-financing of its actions and accompanying measures. Each country was required to designate structures to this end (National Agencies). In Belgium, there are three "National" Agencies, one for each of the three language communities.
13. These structures were set up during the first operational year of the first phase of the Programme. Their essential task was to implement the Programme i.a. by establishing direct contact with young people in their own country, and by advice on the Programme, as well as its administration.
14. Compared with the first phase of the Programme, the period covered by this report shows a marked change in the work priorities of the National Agencies. As the Programme developed and became known by young people at all levels, the National Agencies have played a major role in providing guidance and consultancy for young people wishing to participate in the Programme, as well as in other transnational cooperation activities.
15. The communication and cooperation network between the National Agencies and between the Agencies and the Commission has grown in importance and efficiency. One joint working meeting was organised in 1992, dealing mainly with operational aspects of the second phase. Other matters dealt with concerned the enlargement of the programme to the EFTA/EEA countries.
16. As in previous years, a thematic seminar was organised in 1992 by the French National Agency and the Commission in St. Jorioz, in October 1992, on short study visits for youth workers. The seminar focused on the quality and the importance of the study visits in relation to the development of youth exchanges, and on suggestions for possible new elements and models to develop. Discussion on participation criteria and aims, and methodological and didactic contents resulted in a series of recommendations to the National Agencies.

Technical Assistance Unit

17. The Commission is assisted in the overall implementation of the Programme by a technical assistance unit, the Petra/Youth Bureau.
18. Further to a call for tender, the Petra Youth Bureau was established to assist the Commission in the implementation of the second phase of the Youth For Europe Programme and the Priority Actions in the youth field and also in the implementation of the second phase of the Petra programme.

19. In 1992 the Youth Unit within the Petra Youth Bureau assisted the Commission, in particular with the dissemination of information on Youth For Europe, the applications made by European non-governmental organisations to the Commission for financial support, the central management of Action I.3, the general monitoring and evaluation of the Programme, the overall coordination of European-level training courses, and the preparation and follow-up of Advisory Committee and National Agencies meetings. In addition, the Youth Unit provided advice to the National Agencies in all aspects related to the implementation of the Programme.

IV DEVELOPMENT AND RESULTS OF THE ACTIVITIES WITHIN ACTIONS I.1, I.2, I.3, I.4 AND I.5 OF THE PROGRAMME

Action I.1 : direct support for youth exchanges

20. Support is given to bi-, tri- or multilateral project-centred exchanges lasting at least one full week of programme and involving a group of 16 to 60 young people aged between 15 and 25 years, resident in the Member States. The projects must have an educational purpose and be theme-related. As explicitly stated in the Council Decision, priority in allocating support is given to exchanges which :
- are specially designed for young people with disadvantaged backgrounds;
 - bring together young people with different social, economic and cultural backgrounds;
 - make young people aware of the European dimension, for example through their multilateral nature;
 - stress the active participation of young people from the beginning of the project;
 - concern regions of the Community where few opportunities for exchanges are available;
 - concern young people living in peripheral areas and/or linguistic areas having a limited coverage.
21. According to the decentralized nature of the Programme, the National Agencies received, in 1992, the major part of the overall budget for the direct support of youth exchanges (see Annex 1).
22. Action I.1, the core of the Youth For Europe Programme, continued to attract the interest and the participation of young people throughout the Community. The further development of the National Agencies' working infrastructures enabled them to improve their response to the demand, the overall result being an increase not only in quantitative, but also in qualitative terms.
23. In quantitative terms, the National Agencies received three to four times more applications for youth exchange projects than in the previous year. This increase in demand was accompanied by an increase in the quality of the projects supported, the National Agencies had to assess applications in even greater detail in order to establish their relative quality.

24. During the first phase of the Programme, the main overall objective was to make the Programme known. At this stage, the disparity between the number of applications received and the financial means available obliged the National Agencies to apply priorities in the allocation of grants. The advice and guidance provided by the National Agencies added to the general improvement of quality.
25. Estimates based on provisional reports from the National Agencies indicate that some 30.000 young people have benefitted directly from the Programme in 1992 and that there has been an equal participation of young men and women.
26. On average, 30% of all participants who benefitted from the Youth for Europe Programme were young people who were not members of youth organisations and associations. The participation of youth organisations which have not earlier been involved in the Programme also increased, mainly at national and local level.
27. Bilateral exchange projects are still the most popular within Youth for Europe. However, an increase of 10% in tri- and multilateral exchanges should be noted.
28. As multilateral exchange project incur higher costs, an increase in the support of such projects has an impact on the financial provision available. For this reason, National Agencies which have already allocated 20% of their exchange budget for multilateral activities can forward further multilateral projects to the Commission for selection and grant allocation at central level.
29. The participation of disadvantaged young people continued to be a priority in the second phase of the Programme. The Council Decision clearly states that 1/3 of the budget should be allocated to exchanges for participants who are disadvantaged for socio-economic, geographical, cultural or physical reasons.
30. The attempts to improve the regional balance in youth exchanges across the Member States continued to be successfully in 1992. This did not only apply to Member States on the periphery of the Community, but also to the regional participation within Member States. It should be emphasized that National Agencies made considerable efforts to promote bilateral youth exchanges between countries with less tradition of exchanges activities.
31. The increase in the regional participation in the Programme is also due to efforts made by the National Agencies in finding appropriate partners abroad. The partner-finding system set up during the first phase of the Programme improved in efficiency during the period covered by this report.

Action I.2 : voluntary service activities

32. The Council Decision states that : "... Grants shall be made available on a experimental basis to support transnational projects enabling young people to take part in voluntary service activities in another Member State". In this context, "voluntary service activities" means activities in which young people devote their time and efforts to a cause of value to society, excluding similar activities which exist in some Member States in the framework of compulsory military service or as an alternative thereto". A report on the impact of the voluntary service activities during the first two-year experimental phase will be presented in 1993.
33. The Commission decided to encourage the diversification of activities, in order to be able to draw lessons from a broad variety of experiences, and also in order to consider as many interesting projects as possible.
34. The voluntary service activities supported within the Programme were not only limited to practical work, but also allowed for interaction between the participants and the hosting community. The quality of preparations of the participants before departure was one of the main selection criteria for grants, and importance was attached to the monitoring and support of the young people during their stay.
35. During the experimental phase, this Action was managed at central level. The National Agencies, however, were requested to distribute information, provide advice and guidance for participants and organisations. The National Agencies were kept informed of the projects selected.
36. Before launching this activity, the Commission invited representatives from the National Agencies, the Youth Forum of the European Communities and European NGOs to attend a meeting in January 1992, in order to provide necessary information and to establish a commonly agreed base for the operation of this activity.
37. In 1992, the Commission supported 37 voluntary service projects. The young people involved devoted their time and effort working in a variety of projects linked with environmental protection, development of youth exchange projects and youth networks, assistance to the elderly, local community work, street work, drugs prevention, the fight against racism and xenophobia. An overall evaluation of the impact of this Action in its first experimental year will be presented separately.

Action I.3 : short study visits

38. This Action is considered an important preparation and support for the implementation of Action I.1. Short study visits are primarily designed to enable multilateral groups of youth workers interested in the same topics and issues to meet potential partners and to get acquainted with each other's culture and youth work realities.

39. In 1992, the Commission allocated 400 bursaries to the National Agencies. The recruitment, selection and preparation of the participants, as well as the contents and the practical organisation of the visits were the responsibility of the National Agencies.
40. There is a growing trend towards organising study visits on a regional basis, and the National Agencies are increasingly assisted in this activity by bodies familiar with the respective regional youth services. The feedback from 1992, based on evaluation questionnaires, is very positive. Short study visits paved the way for a number of youth exchanges and some National Agencies give priority in supporting youth exchanges emerging from such visits.
41. The National Agencies received, on average, three times more applications than the number of bursaries available. As a consequence, stricter criteria had to be applied in the selection of participants. An important element was the subsequent role of participants to act as multipliers and to contribute to the quality of youth exchanges.

Action I.4 : support for training activities

42. The support for training activities of youth workers is allocated to activities bringing together participants from two or more Member States, or training related to youth exchanges.
43. In 1992, support for training courses was allocated to two series of activities : multilateral training activities submitted by European NGOs, and training courses organised by the National Agencies. Of the 18 applications received, 13 were approved, and 10 of these, involving 284 participants, were submitted by the National Agencies. The effort of National Agencies to organise bilateral training courses should be noted, as should be the fact that such courses led to contacts between youth workers from countries or regions who had not hitherto been able to cooperate.

Action I.5 : pilot projects

44. The Council Decision provides aid "... for pilot projects relating to youth workers, with the chief aims of :
 - making them aware of the situation of young people in other Member States;
 - enabling them to establish the contacts necessary for the organisation of exchanges;
 - promoting intercultural training".
45. Accordingly, two main strands of activity were launched : training and information material and systematic exchange of information between youth worker trainers and training institutions. Furthermore, other pilot projects directly linked to the development of youth exchanges and mobility in the European Community could also be submitted for funding.

46. In 1992, the Commission supported 5 projects, involving 405 participants. The projects supported focused on :
- developing a video-project on youth exchanges within the framework of the Programme;
 - a "Euro-Caravan" aiming at developing young people's knowledge of Europe and each others' countries of origin;
 - development of an experimental antiracist learning module to be used by youth organisations in general;
 - an experimental project aiming to develop the participants' professional skills and social and professional integration;
 - a multilateral pilot project for disadvantaged young people, focusing on the progress of a project from start to end in order to define examples of good practice for dissemination to future project organisers.
47. The organisations who received funding under this Action have been requested to submit a detailed report on the activities carried out. An overall evaluation will be available later this year.

Action II : support to National Agencies

48. The Council Decision specifies that the Commission shall provide support for the National Agencies in connection with the development of information, consultation facilities, coordination of activities, and the administration of grants for projects within the Youth For Europe Programme.
49. Throughout the year 1992, the National Agencies continued to disseminate information on the Programme to young people, exchange organisers and relevant bodies at local, regional and national level. Special attention was paid to the decentralisation of the information and the identification of specific information needs of certain target groups and on the means to respond to these needs.
50. The National Agencies played a major role as providers of advice and guidance to young people and youth organisations. The Agencies had to meet an overall increase of 20% in requests for consultation compared with the previous year. The National Agencies also responded to this demand by organising several types of training courses for youth workers, including :
- courses at regional and national level, bringing together youth workers and those responsible from youth structures;
 - bilateral training courses bringing together youth organisation representatives from two different countries, in order to encourage the development of bilateral youth exchanges;
 - multilateral training courses at European level, mainly focused on the development of intercultural learning.

51. In addition, the National Agencies started preparing for the future enlargement of the Programme to include the EFTA/EEA countries, i.a. by producing information material on the subject. This preparatory work also included the setting-up of an enlarged partner finding system, the planning of specific study visits and training courses, and practical measures enabling them to deal with this enlargement. The Commission provided supplementary grants for the support of each National Agency's preparatory activities in view of the enlargement of the Programme.

V FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

52. The first operational year of the second phase of the Youth For Europe Programme confirms the leading role of the Programme in the promotion of European youth exchanges in general. During 1992, the consolidation of the existing framework and the emergence of new networks and links, in the field of youth mobility and exchanges should be noted in particular, as well as the significant increase in demand, far exceeding the possibility of support provided by the budget available.
53. The Programme will continue to support youth exchange projects and the measures considered to be of great value and complementarity for its development and the increase of its quality. An increase in demand for Community financial aid can be envisaged in the years to come and the Commission, depending on the funds available, will try to meet young people's expectations and their needs in the field of action covered by the Programme.
54. The future enlargement of the Programme to the EFTA/EEA countries will bring another dimension to the Programme. Observers from the EFTA/EEA countries have already attended National Agencies and Advisory Committee meetings and are aware of the current Programme procedures. During 1993, these observers will be invited to attend similar meetings in order to prepare for the best possible implementation of the enlarged Programme.
55. In 1992, the Commission launched an external evaluation of the Programme, covering the first phase and the first year of the second phase. The evaluation covered an analysis of the operation and the structures of the Programme, the role and the degree of awareness of Youth For Europe in the various Member States, the degree of implementation of its objectives and the development of the measures supporting youth exchanges, in particular the short study visits and the training of youth workers. The evaluation report will be published during the first half of 1993.
56. During the first half of 1993, the Commission organised a third round of bilateral discussions with delegations from all Member States on the implementation and future perspectives of the Programme.

57. The second phase of Youth for Europe comes to an end on 31 December 1994. The Commission will submit a proposal for the third phase of the Programme before the end of 1993, taking into consideration the ratification process of the Treaty on European Union. When preparing this proposal, the Commission will take into account the present development and impact of the Programme, the results of its evaluation and the bilateral discussions with the Member States, as well as coherence and complementarity with other Community programmes and actions aimed at the transnational cooperation of young people.

77

**YOUTH FOR EUROPE PROGRAMME
BUDGET 1992**

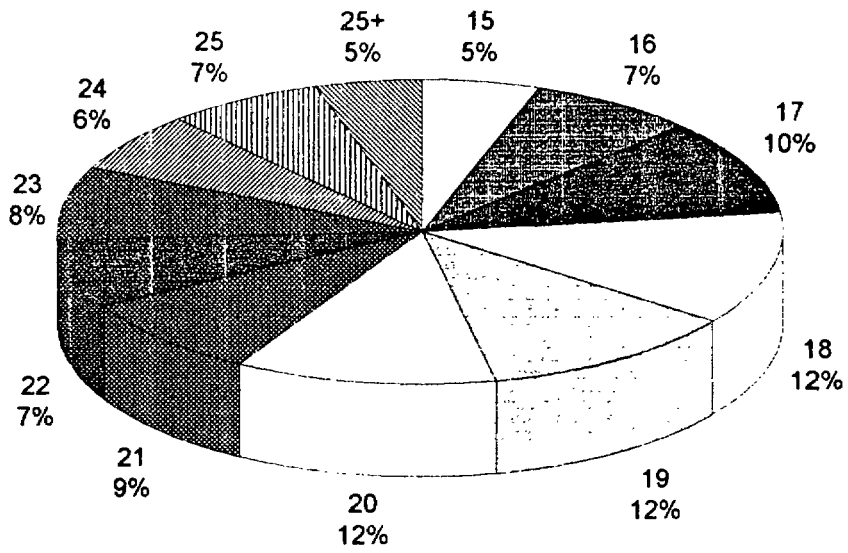
Action I.1	Direct grants to young people	7,180.000 ECU *
Action I.2	Voluntary service	120.000 ECU
Action I.3	Study visits	360.000 ECU
Action I.4, I.5	Professional development for youth workers and Pilot projects	340.000 ECU
Action II	European level activities and technical support	1,000.000 ECU
	National Agencies	1,000.000 ECU
Total estimated budget available for expenditure in 1992		10.000.000 ECU

* : this sum includes support for multilateral activities submitted by National Agencies and European NGOs (10%)

	Action I.1 : Financial aid for youth exchanges (1) by Member State	Action I.3 : Number of grants for the organisation of short study visits by Member State
B	269.493	25
D	1.081.985	55
DK	215.395	15
E	813.150	50
F	811.464	55
GR	328.232	50
I	988.524	50
IRL	211.451	15
L	147.665	50
NL	352.018	25
P	346.881	25
UK	895.742	55
EC	718.000	
TOTAL	7.180.000	400

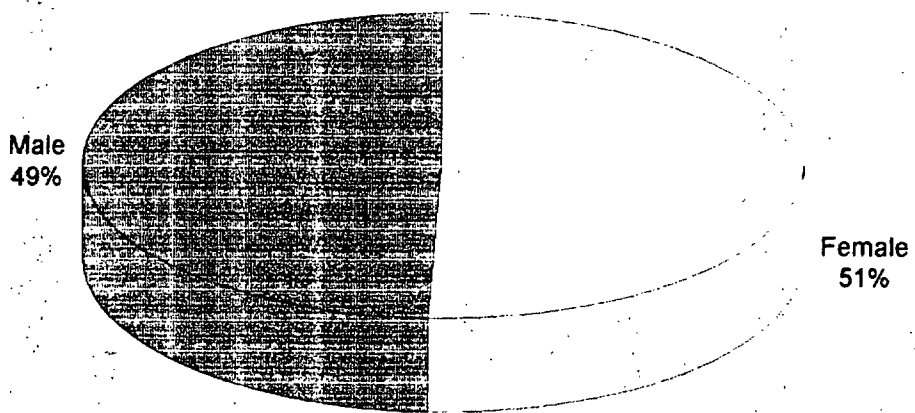
(1) : Grants calculated according to the parameters set down in article 3.A. of the appendix to the Council Decision of 29 July 1991 (91/395/EEC)

ACTION I.1
Breakdown of age of participants in % for 1992



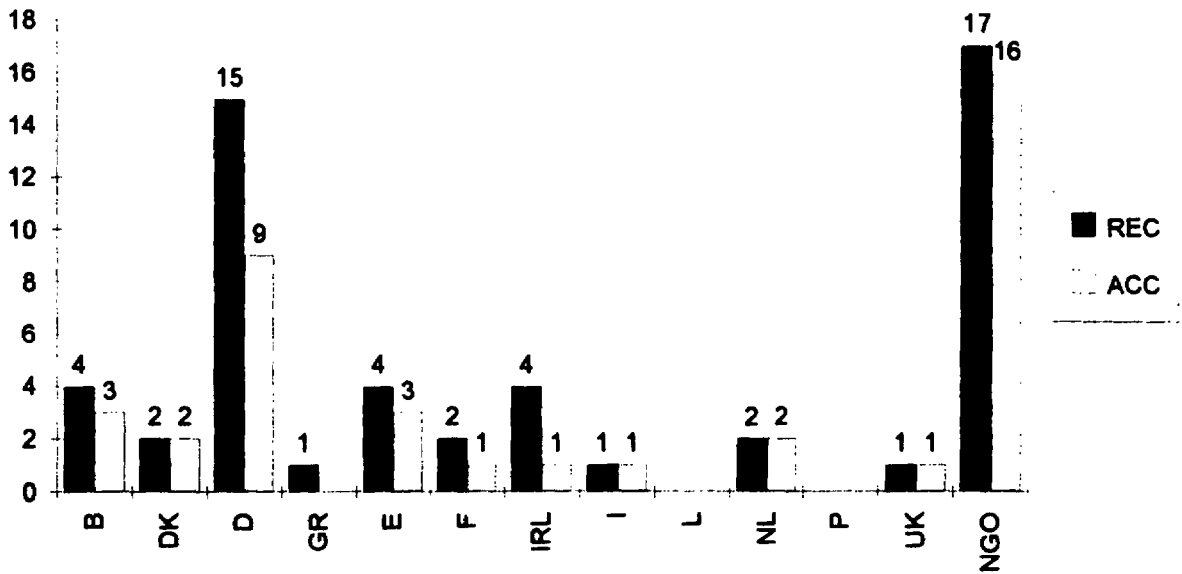
ACTION I.1

Gender of participants in % for 1992

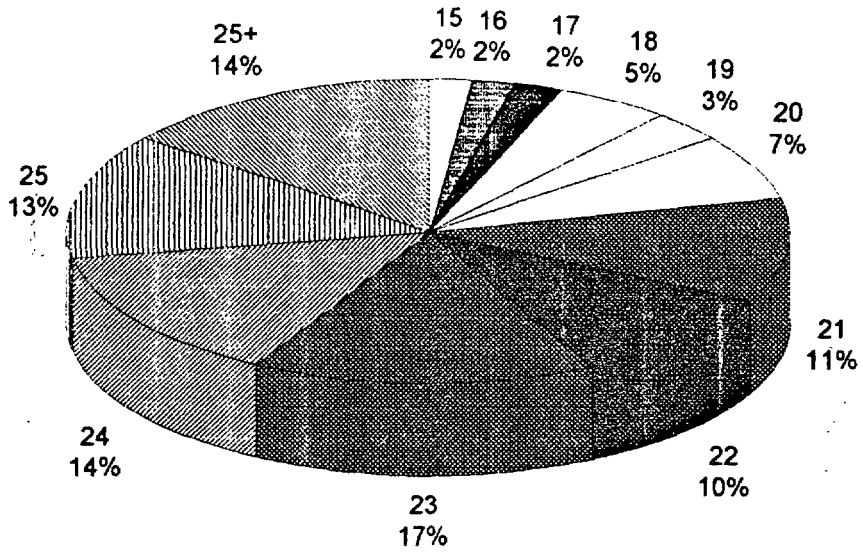


ACTION I.2

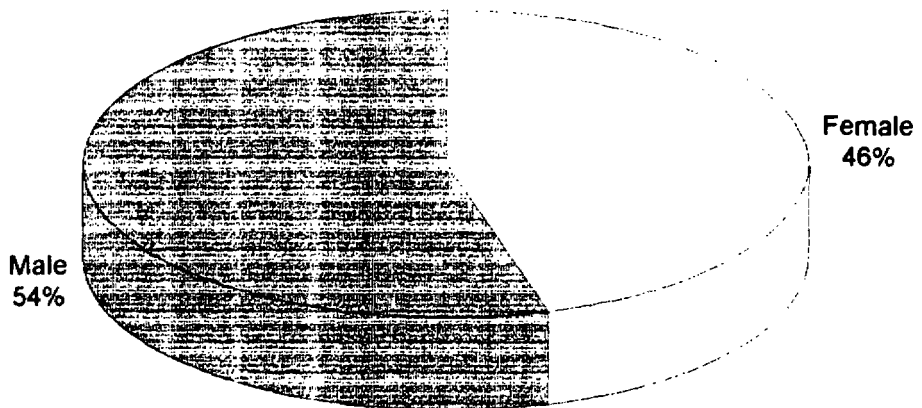
Projects received/accepted by Member State in 1992



ACTION I.4
Breakdown of age of participants in % in 1992



ACTION I.4
Gender of participants in % in 1992



77

ISSN 0254-1475

COM(93) 524 final

DOCUMENTS

EN

16

Catalogue number : CB-CO-93-559-EN-C

ISBN 92-77-60161-2
