12269/X/70-E

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

research and technology

bulletin published by the press and information services of the commission of the european communities

REPRODUCTION AUTHORIZED

Brussels, 20 July 1970

No. 63

** The United States appears to be concerned about the European countries' project for STANDARDIZING ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS ON A EUROPEAN SCALE. It has now submitted to the International Electrotechnical Commission, in which all the industrialized countries in the world are represented, a proposal for world-level harmonization of electrical standards, and in particular electronic components. A brief summary of the present situation will be found in an ANNEX.

** On 16 July 1970, the first meeting was held in Brussels of the group of senior government officials instructed by the Council of Ministers of the Community to study in detail the Commission's memorandum on COMMUNITY INDUSTRIAL POLICY (see "Research and Technology" No. 48).

More particularly, the group's terms of reference are to examine:

- the possibility and methods of effectively establishing a common market in certain advanced technology and capital goods sectors (if appropriate, coordination of the public authorities' purchasing policies);

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- measures likely to promote technological progress and development in the Community (possibility of Community-wide orders for development purposes);
- measures calculated to facilitate transnational mergers and realignments of firms within the Community (establishment of a procedure for Community-level coordination on problems concerning the restructuring of industries, etc.);
- organization of solidarity in the Community in order to improve technological cooperation with non-member countries;
- concerted action by member countries with respect to external investments;
- the possibility of establishing a flexible legal formula for enabling closer ties to be set up between firms;
- the territorial aspects of industrial policy (regional policy);
- coordination and rationalization of the Community instruments for financing economic development;
- the role of public enterprises in the Community's industrial policy.

** Four new TECHNICAL NOTES, each summarizing a result obtained under Euratom research programmes, have been issued by the Commission of the European Communities. The purpose of these texts is to enable industrial firms to assess the prospects for industrial exploitation of the results described. The subjects of these new technical notes are as follows:

No. 5/C:	Feed device
No. 484:	Process and device for determining the value of leakages from containments
No. 573/789:	Thermoelectrical temperature indicating method
No. 1293:	Device for electropolishing metal samples.

** In reply to a written question from Mr Vredeling, a Dutch member of the European Parliament, the Commission of the European Communities has recently published two tables showing JAPANESE INVESTMENTS IN THE COMMUNITY. These tables will be found in ANNEX 2.

** In reply to a written question which had been put by Mr Vredeling and Mr Boersma, Dutch members of the European Parliament, concerning the construction of turbogenerators in the Netherlands, the Commission of the European Communities restates its view with regard to PUBLIC CONTRACTS:

...

"The earmarking of certain public or semi-public contracts for the domestic industry may sometimes be found to be in line with the immediate interests of Member States. However, the only result of such action in the long run may be, as the Commission pointed out in its memorandum on the Community's industrial policy, to deprive the Community industry of the benefits inherent in the availability of a wide internal market. The Commission is pursuing, with all the resources at its disposal, its campaign to secure the OPENING-UP TO THE FULL OF MARKETS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY in those sectors where free movement of goods, genuine competition and market transparency are not in operation.

** A colloquium on the PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTS AT WORK, sponsored by the Commission of the European Communities, is to be held at Luxembourg from 21 to 23 October 1970. This colloquium will provide an opportunity for experts to exchange views and experience concerning the promotion of INDUSTRIAL SAFETY AND HYGIENE.

European-scale standardization of electronic components

The United States appears to be concerned about the European countries' project for standardizing electronic components on a European scale. It has now submitted to the International Electrotechnical Commission, in which all the industrialized countries in the world are represented, a proposal for world-level harmonization of electrical standards, and in particular electronic components.

The fact is that in this sector, under the impetus of France, Germany and the United Kingdom, things are moving in Europe. The European committee for the coordination of electrical standards (CENEL), in which both the Community and the EFTA countries are represented, has instructed a working group, the CECC (Cenel Electronic Components Committee) to define European standards for electronic components. The CECC comprises representatives of the standardization institutes and industrial associations of ten European countries, namely, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

At the same time another European committee (ECQAC), whose membership includes representatives of the public authorities, is engaged in establishing quality control rules for these European standards.

Six governments (those of Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal and the United Kingdom) have already stated that they are willing to accept the standards and control procedures to be defined by these two bodies. There will accordingly be a reciprocity agreement between these countries for recognizing conformity certificates as well as labelling identity in respect of the products concerned. The other European countries whose experts are taking part in the work have shown themselves to be interested and may be expected to align themselves with their partners in the near future.

There can be no doubt that this harmonization of specifications and control procedures, which is to be gradually extended to all industrial components, will stimulate the movement of such products, the characteristics of which will be better known, throughout Europe.

On the other hand, American component manufacturers employ internal specifications (required by NASA or the US Defence Department) which enable them to offer as being of "space grade" components sold on the European market. This form of publicity is a paying proposition and the American manufacturers are anxious to maintain this state of affairs. The introduction of a (competitive) European label is liable to incur their resentment.

Hence it is that the United States has asked to take part in the work of the CECC. This request has so far not been complied with (it would immediately have meant bringing in Japan and perhaps other countries). However, the CECC has agreed to keep the United States informed at regular intervals of the progress of its work.

The European countries' idea is not, of course, to shut out the rest of the world for ever, or even to set up protectionist measures; however, there must not be too many countries involved in the necessary "running-in" of the system. And experience at European level would appear to be an essential first step before possibly extending to the rest of the world the standardization process being attempted by European manufacturers of electronic components.

At all events, the proposal submitted by the United States to the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) for harmonizing electrical standards on the world level has been received with interest. The IEC must now decide whether it is competent to work out a world system of standardization and put it into application.

If it decides that it can do this, it will be confronted with the question of selecting the standards to be used for the purpose; here it is probable that the European countries will have proposals to put forward and uphold.

Direct investments by Japan in each of the Member States of the European Communities (in millions of dollars)					
	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Belgium & Luxembourg	2	0	2	2	1
France	0	0	0	5	[3]
Germany	1	1	0	1	6
Italy	[2]	[0]	[2]	[1]	[2]
Netherlands	0	0	0	1	1
COMMUNITY	5	1	4	10	13

The figures between square brackets represent estimates by the Statistical Office of the European Communities

Direct investments by Japan as a proportion of the total direct investments by non-member countries in the Member States of the European Communities (in percentages)					
	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Belgium & Luxembourg	2.2	0	1.6	1.2	0.7
France	0	0	0	5.6	1.1
Germany	0.2	0.2	0	0.3	3.0
Italy	0.8	0	0.7	0.4	0.6
Netherlands	0	0	0	0.4	0.4
COMMUNITY	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.9	1.1