



PRESS RELEASE

7471/93 (Presse 118)

1677th Council meeting

- RESEARCH -

Luxembourg, 30 June 1993

President:

Mr Svend BERGSTEIN,

Minister for Research and
Technology of the Kingdom of Denmark

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Jean-Maurice DEHOUSSE Minister for Science Policy and Scientific and Cultural Institutions

Denmark:

Mr Svend BERGSTEIN Minister for Research and Technology

Germany:

Mr Bernd NEUMANN State Secretary, Federal Ministry for Research and Technology

Greece:

Mr D. GLAROS Secretary-General

Spain:

Mr Elias FERERES State Secretary for the Universities and Research

France:

Mr François FILLON Minister for Higher Education and Research

Ireland:

Mr Seamus BRENNAN Minister for Science and Technology

Italy:

Mr Umberto COLOMBO Minister for Scientific Research

Luxembourg:

Mr Marc FISCHBACH Minister for Education

Netherlands:

Mr Ate OOSTRA Deputy Permanent Representative

Portugal:

Mr Manuel FERNANDES THOMAZ State Secretary for Science and Technology

United Kingdom:

Mr William WALDEGRAVE Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster with responsibility for Science

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Commission:

Mr Antonio RUBERTI Member

FOURTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME OF COMMUNITY RTD ACTIVITIES

The Council held an in-depth discussion of the Fourth Framework Programme of Community RTD activities on the basis of the formal proposal approved by the Commission on 16 June 1993 and in the light of an own-initiative opinion from the European Parliament.

The Council paid special attention to:

- the overall financial amount to be allocated to the Fourth Framework Programme;
- the breakdown of financial resources between the four activities under the Fourth Framework Programme (RTD programmes, international co-operation, dissemination of results, training and mobility) and between the main headings of the first activity.

At the close of the discussion the President concluded that major progress had been made towards a convergence of views by the delegations, although there was further work to be done. The Council requested the Permanent Representatives Committee to continue examining the Commission proposal in the light of the Council's discussions with a view to reaching agreement if possible by the end of the year.

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY RTD PROGRAMMES - Council conclusions

Following a new exchange of views between the Ministers on the management of Community RTD programmes, the Council approved the following conclusions:

"The Council:

taking into account previous exchanges of views between the Research Ministers, and in view of the coming decision on the Fourth Framework Programme and its implementation:

1. Recalls its conclusion of 29 April 1993, according to which detailed criteria and mechanisms should be established for cost-effective implementation and improved management of the Framework Programme in order to ensure that its objectives are fully met; reaffirms also its emphasis on the need for the improvement of procedures for systematic, independent and timely evaluation of the Framework Programme;
2. Welcomes in this respect the initiatives undertaken by the Commission with a view to improving the management of the EC research programmes and encourages the Commission to develop further such initiatives in time for the implementation of the Fourth Framework Programme;
3. Emphasizes that procedures and tools for programme implementation should as far as possible be simplified and harmonized in order to facilitate participation in Community research programmes, particularly by SMEs, and to allow for smooth, transparent and timely implementation of the Framework Programme; welcomes in this respect the circulation by the Commission of information bulletins on a regular basis;

4. Would welcome in particular, without prejudice to the quality and transparency of the selection procedure, improvements in specific areas, such as the shortening of delays between deadlines for receipt of proposals and start of selected projects and the provision of information to applicants on non-selected proposals;
5. Takes note of the Commission's intention to assess in further detail the possible benefits and disadvantages of decentralized management and possible further concrete measures that could be taken in this field, so as to enable Council to take a view on this issue as soon as possible;
6. Considers that possible new types of activities, for example thematic networks of excellence, concertation networks and consortia for integrated projects, as proposed by the Commission, need to be clarified further;
7. Reaffirms the importance of the role of programme committees in the management of Community RTD programmes, also in the assessment of projects; considers that co-ordination between the Commission and programme committees should be improved at all stages of implementation in order to create a real partnership and to increase efficiency; notes that the present conclusions are without prejudice to any future decisions to be taken on types of programme committees.
8. The Council invites the Commission to take account of the present conclusions of Council in the ongoing work to improve the management of Community RTD programmes and to keep the Council informed, in order to allow the Council to comment further on this issue in the future."

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS CONCERNING SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Social security for migrant workers

The Council adopted the Regulation amending Regulation No 1408/71 on the application of social security schemes to employed persons, to self-employed persons and to members of their families moving within the Community and Regulation No 574/72 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation No 1408/71 and Regulation No 1247/92 amending Regulation No 1408/71. These amendments take account of changes which have occurred in national legislations and adapt the Community Regulations in question in the light of experience acquired when implementing them.

Organization of working time

Following the political agreement reached at its meeting on 1 June 1993 the Council formally adopted, with the United Kingdom abstaining, the common position on the Directive concerning certain aspects of the organization of working time.

The common position contains minimum provisions relating to the following aspects:

- maximum weekly working time (48 hours, including overtime);
- daily rest (11 hours);
- breaks;
- weekly rest period (24 hours);
- paid annual leave (four weeks);
- length of night work (8 hours).

It also contains arrangements to protect workers in the case of night work.

The Directive provides for the possibility of laying down:

- reference periods for:
 - = weekly rest period;
 - = maximum weekly working time;
 - = length of night work;
- derogations from certain Articles in the Directive.

Fishing vessels

Following the agreement reached at its meeting on 1 June 1993 the Council formally approved the common position on the Directive concerning the minimum safety and health requirements for work on board fishing vessels. The French and United Kingdom delegations abstained.

The approved text concerns:

- new vessels with a length of 15 metres or over;
- existing vessels with a length of 18 metres or over;

The common position provides inter alia that:

- owners must ensure that their vessels are used without endangering the safety and health of workers;
- any occurrences at sea which affect or could affect the safety and health of workers must be described in a report to be forwarded to the competent authorities;
- vessels must, as regards compliance with this Directive, be subject to regular checks by authorities specifically empowered to carry out such checks;
- owners must ensure that any defects likely to affect the safety and health of workers are rectified;
- owners must ensure that vessels are cleaned regularly, that emergency and survival equipment is in good working order, and that account is taken of personal protective equipment specifications.

The common position also covers the provision of information and training as well as consultation and participation of workers.

It contains four Annexes laying down minimum safety and health requirements for:

- new vessels;
- existing vessels;
- life-saving and survival equipment;
- personal protective equipment.

Continuing vocational training

Following the agreement reached at its meeting on 1 June 1993 the Council formally adopted the Recommendation on access to continuing vocational training (see Press Release 6710/93 Presse 88).

Flexible retirement

Following the agreement reached at its meeting on 1 June 1993, the Council formally adopted the Resolution on flexible retirement arrangements (see Press Release 6710/93 Presse 88).

Development of vocational training

The Council adopted the Regulations amending

- Regulation No 337/75 establishing a European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training;
- Regulation No 1416/76 on the financial provisions applying to the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training.

Improvement of living and working conditions

The Council adopted the Regulations amending

- Regulation No 1365/75 on the creation of a European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions;
- Regulation No 1417/76 on the financial provisions applying to the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

OTHER MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONSRelations with the ACP and the OCT

The Council adopted the Regulations opening and providing for the administration of a Community tariff quota for rum, tafia and arrack

- originating in the African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP)(1993/1994);
- originating in the Overseas Countries and Territories, associated with the Community (OCT)(1993/1994).

From 1 July 1993 to 30 June 1994 rum, tafia and arrack originating in the ACP States may be imported into the Community free of customs duties within the limit of a Community tariff quota of 224 827 hl of pure alcohol.

For the same period, the tariff quota free of customs duties in the case of the OCT is 15 000 hl of pure alcohol.

Anti-dumping

The Council adopted the Regulation imposing a definitive countervailing duty on imports of ball bearings with a greatest external diameter not exceeding 30 mm, originating in Thailand but exported to the Community from another country, and definitively collecting provisional duty.

This countervailing duty, expressed as a percentage of the net free-at-Community-frontier price of the product, is 6,7%.

Relations with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe

The Council adopted a Regulation amending the PHARE Regulation. This amendment was made following the constitutional changes which have occurred in Czechoslovakia in order to include the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic following the break-up of Czechoslovakia.

Internal market

The Council formally adopted the common position on the amendment to Directive 89/686/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to personal protective equipment (PPE).

This amendment provides that Member States shall allow, for the period until 30 June 1995, the placing on the market and putting into service of PPE in conformity with the national regulation in force in their territory on 30 June 1992.

Moreover, whereas the absence of harmonized standards could lead to a situation in which an adequate degree of protection and conformity control as regards helmets for users of two- or three-wheeled motor vehicles was no longer ensured, the amendment provides for such helmets to be excluded from the scope of Directive 89/686/EEC pending the introduction of specific requirements for such helmets.

Agriculture

The Council adopted the Directive amending Directive 88/407/EEC laying down the animal health requirements applicable to intra-Community trade in and imports of deep-frozen semen of domestic animals of the bovine species and extending it to cover fresh bovine semen.

Relations with Norway and Sweden

The Council

- authorized the Commission to open negotiations with the Kingdom of Norway and the Kingdom of Sweden regarding an amendment to the Agreement on civil aviation;
- adopted the Decision on the amendment of the Agreement.

Fisheries

The Council adopted the Regulation on the submission of catch and activity statistics by Member States fishing in the North-West Atlantic.

This Regulation will apply as from 1 January 1994 and replaces Regulation No 3881/91 on the submission of nominal catch statistics by Member States fishing in the North-West Atlantic since that Regulation does not fully meet the requirements necessary for the Community to supply the NAFO Scientific Council with all statistical information as stated under the NAFO Convention.

Application of open network to voice telephony

Following the internal political agreement reached at the Council meeting on 10 May 1993 the Council formally adopted the common position on the Directive on the application of open network provision to voice telephony.

It will be remembered that this Directive forms part of the policy laid down by Commission Directive 90/388/EEC on competition in the markets for telecommunications services and by the Council framework Directive 90/387/EEC which is designed to harmonize conditions for access to and use of telecommunications networks throughout Europe by gradually applying open network provision in priority areas.

The first step in applying this framework Directive came on 5 June 1992 when the Council adopted a Directive on the application of ONP principles to leased lines.

The present Directive represents a further very important step in harmonization in this sector, since it concerns the largest and most economically significant service operated by telecommunications organizations.

The Directive has three main objectives:

- to lay down the rights of users of voice telephony services in their relations with telecommunications organizations;
- to improve access for all users, including providers of services, to the public telephone network infrastructure;
- to encourage the Community-wide provision of voice telephony services.

It should be stressed that for certain important aspects of voice telephony such as the quality of service, billing and the provision of additional voice telephony services, the Directive makes the Commission responsible for checking the Community-wide convergence of actions taken by the Member States to achieve the targets laid down and provides for a procedure enabling the Commission, with the help of a Regulatory Committee, to introduce binding measures in the case of insufficient convergence.

Bruxelles, le 29 juin 1993

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**NOTE BIO(93) 174 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE**

CONSEIL RECHERCHE (V. d'Udekem)

Le Conseil se tiendra à Luxembourg le mercredi 30 juin à partir de 10h00 sous la Présidence du Ministre danois de la Recherche et de la Technologie, M. Svend BERGSTEIN.

La Commission sera représentée par M. Antonio RUBERTI, Commissaire en charge de la Recherche, de la Formation et de l'Education.

Cette session du Conseil sera entièrement consacrée à l'examen de la proposition de la Commission pour le IVème Programme Cadre de Recherche et Développement Technologique de la Communauté et notamment à ses aspects financiers.

Rappelons que la Commission a proposé de consacrer 13,1 milliards d'ECU à ce IV Programme Cadre qui est destiné à couvrir l'ensemble de l'effort communautaire de recherche pour les années 1994-1998 (voir note P(93) 25).

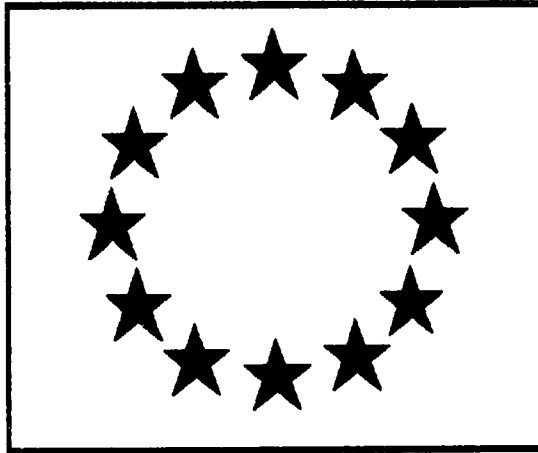
Le Commissaire A. Ruberti soulignera l'importance que représente une politique de recherche dynamique, dotée de moyens appropriés, pour la relance de la croissance en Europe, et partant la nécessité de progresser le plus rapidement possible afin de pouvoir aboutir à un accord sur cette proposition dès la fin de cette année.

Les Douze devraient par ailleurs adopter des conclusions relatives à la gestion des programmes communautaires de RDT.

Amitiés,



B. Dethomas



COMMISSION DES COMMUNAUTES EUROPEENNES
COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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Luxembourg, le 30 juin 1993

NOTE BIO(93) 174(suite 1 et fin) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

CONSEIL RECHERCHE DU 30 JUIN 1993 (Viviane d'Udekem)

1. Cette session du Conseil des Ministres de la Recherche a été consacrée à une discussion approfondie sur la proposition de la Commission pour le IV programme cadre de RDT de la Communauté.

Plus précisément, la discussion, qui s'est terminée par l'adoption de conclusions de la Présidence, a essentiellement porté sur la dotation financière globale du programme ainsi que sur la ventilation entre ses différentes actions et entre les différents domaines au sein de la 1ère action. Pour rappel : la proposition de la Commission vise à affecter 13,1 milliards d'Ecus à ce IV programme cadre qui est destiné à couvrir la totalité de l'effort de recherche communautaire pour les années 1994 à 1998 (voir note P(93)25 du 16 juin 1993).

Lors de son intervention, le Commissaire Antonio RUBERTI, en charge des Politiques de la Recherche, de l'Education et de la Formation, a insisté sur la nécessité d'une politique de recherche dynamique, dotée de moyens appropriés, pour contribuer à la relance de la croissance en Europe. Actuellement, l'effort de recherche dans la Communauté est inférieur à celui des Etats Unis et du Japon où, par ailleurs, une forte relance est annoncée dans ce domaine : en 1991, les fonds alloués à la recherche dans la Communauté représentaient 2% de son PIB alors qu'il était de 2,8% aux Etats Unis et de 3% au Japon.

Pour le Commissaire, "investir dans la recherche aujourd'hui, c'est renforcer la compétitivité industrielle européenne et permettre la création d'emplois demain. La progression dramatique du chômage dans nos pays avec les risques de marginalisation et les menaces pour la démocratie qu'elle entraîne, nous oblige à donner rapidement un signal positif. Il est essentiel à cette fin d'accélérer les travaux au sein des différentes institutions afin d'arriver à un accord sur le IV programme cadre avant la fin de cette année et en permettre la mise en oeuvre dès 1994.

C'est prioritairement en renforçant la coordination entre les politiques et actions de recherche menées en Europe que la recherche communautaire pourra contribuer de façon significative au renforcement de la compétitivité et à l'amélioration de la qualité de la vie dans la Communauté."

Au cours du tour de table qu'ils ont eu sur ce point, toutes les délégations ont souligné la nécessité d'assurer dans ce IV programme cadre au moins la continuité avec le niveau actuel de l'effort de recherche communautaire. Une très large majorité de délégations a estimé que la proposition de la Commission constituait une base de discussion raisonnable, certaines d'entre elles ne pouvant toutefois pas, au stade actuel, se prononcer sur un montant global précis.

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2. Par ailleurs, l'ensemble des Ministres ont félicité la Commission, et en particulier le Commissaire A. RUBERTI, pour les initiatives qu'il a prises en vue d'améliorer la gestion des programmes de RDT de la Communauté. Ces initiatives visent essentiellement à simplifier les formulaires, à améliorer la transparence des procédures, l'accès et la participation aux programmes ainsi que les procédures d'évaluation et de sélection des propositions

Plus concrètement, et à titre d'exemple, les mesures internes suivantes ont d'ores et déjà été prises et entreront en vigueur dès le 1er juil et:

- régularité des appels d'offres (4 fois par an à date fixe)
- simplification des formulaires de soumission de propositions
- rotation des experts au sein des comités de sélection des propositions.

M. RUBERTI a en outre annoncé son intention de diffuser dès cet automne un manuel pour la gestion des programmes communautaires de recherche.

Amitiés,

Bruno DETHOMAS

