

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

7315/90 (Presse 105)

1419th Council meeting

- RESEARCH -

Luxembourg, 29 June 1990

President: Mr Michael SMITH,
Minister of State for Science
and Technology
of Ireland

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

Belgium:

Mr Hugo SCHILTZ Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for
the Budget and for Science Policy

Denmark:

Mr Bertel HAARDER Minister for Education and Research

Germany:

Mr Jürgen TRUMPF Ambassador, Permanent Representative

Greece:

Mr Stavros DIMAS Minister for Industry, Energy
and Technology

Spain:

Mr Juan Manuel ROJO ALAMINOS State Secretary for the Universities
and Research

France:

Mr Jean VIDAL Ambassador, Permanent Representative

Ireland:

Mr Michael SMITH Minister of State for Science
and Technology

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Italy:

Mr Antonio RUBERTI
Minister for Scientific Research
and Technology

Luxembourg:

Mr René STEICHEN
Minister attached to the Ministry
of Scientific Research

Netherlands:

Mr P.C. NIEMAN
Ambassador, Permanent Representative

Portugal:

Mr Luis VALENTE DE OLIVEIRA
Minister for Planning and
Territorial Administration

Mr José Pedro SUCENA PAIVA
State Secretary for Science
and Technology

United Kingdom:

Mr Douglas HOGG
Minister for Industry and Enterprise

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Commission:

Mr Filippo Maria PANDOLFI
Vice-President

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SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL CO-OPERATION WITH THIRD COUNTRIES

The Council heard a statement from Vice-President PANDOLFI presenting two Commission communications on scientific and technological co-operation with third countries - one relating to general aspects and the other to co-operation with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

After expressing its appreciation for the Commission's submission of these two communications, the Council held an initial policy debate in which delegations were able to comment on the matters raised therein.

At the close of the debate, the Council asked the Permanent Representatives Committee to study the communications closely, taking account of the comments by the various delegations, and to submit draft detailed conclusions for adoption in time for its next meeting. The conclusions should give the Commission detailed guidelines for Community policy in this area and indicate what the Community's policy towards third countries should be in practice, particularly in view of the provisions on implementing the third framework programme (1990-1994).

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE R & D FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME (1990-1994)

The Council took note of a communication from the President giving information on meetings he had held with his colleagues on implementing the framework programme of Community activities in the field of research and technological development, and of certain comments by Vice-President PANDOLFI.

The Council noted that its proceedings would give priority to studying proposals for specific programmes. The proceedings would be conducted in close co-operation with the Community Institutions to enable specific programmes to be adopted efficiently and quickly in accordance with the relevant conclusions of the European Council.

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CO-OPERATION IN THE FIELD OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH (COST) AND CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN STATES

The Council adopted the following Resolution concerning co-operation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research (COST) and Central and Eastern European States.

"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES:

Having regard to the Resolution of the Council concerning COST and the European Communities adopted on 20 June 1989,

Having regard to the conclusions of the European Councils of 8 and 9 December 1989 and 28 April 1990 in respect of Central and Eastern European countries and to the statement adopted by the Council on 23 April 1990 in relation to the additional contribution the Community can make to these countries under its research policy;

Having regard to the letter of 19 June 1990 addressed to the President of the Council by the Chairman of the COST Senior Officials Committee;

Whereas the COST Senior Officials Committee has examined a proposal relating to COST and Central and Eastern European States undergoing reforms,

Whereas COST Type B projects are already open to participation from non COST states, in particular other European states, on a case-by-case basis;

WELCOMES the possibility of progressively including as members of the COST framework Central and Eastern European countries undergoing reforms based on the founding principles of democracy, pluralism and the rule of law. R & D co-operation with such countries should have clear scientific justification

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and be mutually beneficial and should take place after a careful examination of the overall implications of such an enlargement;

RECOGNIZES the advantages of broadening the scope of COST co-operation by their inclusion;

ENCOURAGES the COST Senior Officials Committee and the Commission to undertake, in liaison with the countries concerned, a thorough examination of the modalities involved, including the possible adjustments to the COST framework which may prove necessary, and to inform Council of the results of this examination."

SPECIFIC PROGRAMME CONCERNING THE PREPARATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OPERATIONAL EUROTRA SYSTEM

The Council adopted its common position on the proposal for a Decision adopting a specific programme concerning the preparation of the development of an operational EUROTRA system.

The purpose of the programme, which has an appropriation of ECU 10 million for two years - including the cost of five staff - will be to complete the first stage towards developing an advanced-design operational automatic translation system capable of processing all the official Community languages. The specific aims of the programme will be as follows:

- (a) Creation of the conditions for the transition to an operational system
 - implementation of a development, testing and research environment capable of supporting large-scale systems;

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- extension of the linguistic coverage and large-scale testing of the analysis and synthesis modules for all languages covered by EUROTRA;
- the definition of common methods for large-scale development for machine translation and other applications involving natural language;
- experimentation and evaluation of relayed transfer, using an interface structure as pivot;
- research, prototype implementation and evaluation of new linguistic models aimed at the improvement of the interlinguality of the interface structure and control of overgeneration;

(b) Advancement of work on lexicography and terminology

- definition of common methods and tools for the integration of existing lexical and terminological collections;
- participation in the definition of international standards for textual, lexical and terminological data.

(c) Training and co-operative projects

- training of researchers and engineers through a grant scheme;
- setting up, experimentation and evaluation of co-operation schemes between research institutes and industry.

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The indicative breakdown of the amount of ECU 10 million deemed necessary for the execution of the programme is as follows (in ECU 1 000):

System development structure	2 000
EC contribution to the national research teams	4 000
Shared-cost research projects	3 000
Training, subsidies, evaluation	1 000
TOTAL	10 000.

SPECIFIC RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN THE FIELD OF
TRANSPORT (EURET) 1990-1993

The Council adopted its common position concerning the proposal for a Decision adopting a specific research and technological development programme in the field of transport (EURET) 1990-1993.

The programme, which has an appropriation of ECU 25 million for three years - including a staff of six - will cover the following areas:

- competitiveness: improving the effectiveness and competitiveness of transport systems and of the corresponding industries by reducing costs and improving performance, the quality of the service and management of the different systems and their components;
- safety: improving the safety of modes of transport and working conditions;
- protection of the environment: reducing the harmful effects of modes of transport on the environment.

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Community research into transport should be devised in the interest of the entire Community transport system, for the benefit of each mode and with a view to consistent stimulation. It should help in decision-making regarding transport policy, research and transport-related industry policy.

Given the complexity and the size of the transport sector, the EURET programme will embrace a small number of priority research topics.

The EURET programme will have three specific objectives:

- optimum network exploitation,
- logistics,
- reduction of harmful external effects;

the details of these and the indicative breakdown of funds (in million ECU) will be as follows:

1.	OPTIMUM NETWORK EXPLOITATION	16,5 (66%)
1.1.	Cost benefit and multicriteria analysis for new road construction	0,5
1.2.	European rail traffic management conception	5,0
1.3.	Design and assessment of a vessel traffic management system	3,0
1.4.	Trials in automated air/ground data exchange for air traffic management systems in Europe	5,0
1.5.	Study on the controller work station in air traffic management systems in Europe	3,0

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2. LOGISTICS	7,5 (30%)
2.1. Economic scenario and demand projections for freight transport in the Community	0,5
2.2. Economic and technical research into the transfer of goods - Design and evaluation of rapid transfer systems	3,0
2.3. Optimization of manpower in maritime transport	3,0
2.4. Taking human factors into consideration in the man/ship system	1,0
3. REDUCTION OF HARMFUL EXTERNAL EFFECTS	1,0 (4%)
3.1. Improved methods for evaluating the road safety of car and trailer trains	0,5
3.2. Assessment of the driving safety of possible truck and trailer combinations	<u>0,5</u>
	25,0

HUMAN GENOME ANALYSIS - PROGRAMME 1990-1991

Following completion of the co-operation procedure with the European Parliament, the Council adopted the Decision adopting a specific research and technological development programme in the field of health: human genome analysis (1990-1991).

The aims of the programme, which has an appropriation of ECU 15 million for two years - including the cost of a staff of two - are the use and improvement of new biotechnologies in the study of the human genome for a better understanding of the mechanisms of genetic function, as well as the prevention and treatment of human diseases. In the pursuit of these objectives, optimal co-operation will be sought with the programmes of non-member States and international organizations.

At the same time measures will be taken to develop an integrated approach to the ethical, social and legal aspects of possible applications of results obtained through the programme to ensure that they are not misused and also, with prenormative aspects in mind, to establish a set of bioethical principles to be followed in the developments to come.

Alteration of germ cells or any stage of embryo development with the aim of modifying human genetic characteristics in a hereditary manner is excluded from the programme objectives.

The technical content of the programme provides for precompetitive Community research, covering the setting up and reinforcement of networks of European laboratories, and training, intended to allow the use of modern technologies for the study and setting up of the human genetic map as well as

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possible medical applications of the knowledge gained: there are also plans to set up ordered clone libraries of human DNA.

The indicative internal breakdown of funds in million ECU is as follows:

Improvement of the human genetic map	3,3
Physical mapping (ordered clone libraries)	3,4
Data processing and data bases	2,2
Improvement of the methods and bases for the study of the human genome	2,2
Training	1,9
Ethical, social and legal aspects	1,0
Management and staff	1,0
TOTAL	15,0.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Decisions in the energy sphere

As a result of the substantive agreements reached at its Energy meeting on 25 May 1990, the Council formally adopted:

- the Regulation concerning the promotion of energy technology in Europe (THERMIE programme) 1990-1994;
- the Directive concerning a Community procedure to improve the transparency of gas and electricity prices charged to end-users;
- the common position on the proposal for a Directive on the transit of electricity through transmission grids.

(See Press Release 6519/90 Presse 70 of 21.5.1990)

Framework Regulation on food aid

After resolving the problem regarding the "Comitology" Decision of the procedure to be adopted for the Committee provided for by the framework Regulation on food-aid policy and food-aid management, the Council definitively adopted the Regulation, which was otherwise due to expire on 30 June 1990.

At the same time, the Council definitively adopted two related Regulations on the implementation of storage programmes and early warning systems (Regulation No 2507/88) and the implementation of co-financing operations for the purchase of food products or seeds by international bodies or non-governmental organizations (Regulation No 2508/88), which were also valid only until 30 June 1990.

Latin American and Asian developing countries

The Council adopted the Decision setting general guidelines for 1990 for financial and technical assistance to Latin American and Asian developing countries.

The guidelines are very similar to those of previous years. As far as future years are concerned, the Council has already begun to study a communication from the Commission in which it proposes, inter alia, to lay down guidelines on a multiannual basis from now on.

Relations with the OCT

The Council adopted the Regulation derogating from the definition of the concept of "originating products" to take account of the special situation of the Netherlands Antilles with regard to chemical-proof overalls of CN Code 6210 10 99.

Customs union

The Council adopted the Regulations:

- opening and providing for the administration of autonomous Community tariff quotas for certain chemical products (1990).
- increasing the volume of the Community tariff quota opened for 1990 for

- = a certain variety of synthetic polyalphaolefins,
- ferrochrome containing more than 6% of carbon by weight.

Appliances burning gaseous fuels

The Council adopted the Directive on the approximation of the laws relating to appliances burning gaseous fuels (cooking, heating and hot water production appliances, etc.).

The aim of the Directive is to harmonize national provisions concerning safety and energy conservation for appliances burning gaseous fuels, thereby ensuring elimination of barriers to trade.

System for the rapid exchange of information on dangers arising from the use of consumer products

The Council adopted the Decision extending the Community system for the rapid exchange of information on dangers arising from the use of consumer products until the entry into force of the Directive on general product safety which will take its place.

The system is designed to cope with cases of serious and immediate danger to consumers occurring when everyday products are either not manufactured to the required standard or are badly designed in the first place.

Annual and consolidated accounts - exemptions for small and medium-sized companies

The Council adopted the common position on the amended proposal for a Directive amending Directive 78/660/EEC on annual accounts and Directive 83/349/EEC on consolidated accounts with respect to the exemptions for small and medium-sized companies and to the publication of accounts in ecus.

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The purpose of the Directive is to permit Member States further to extend the derogations already provided for by the 4th Directive and the 7th Directive in favour of SMUs, in accordance with the general policy of reducing unnecessary charges for these undertakings.

Annual accounts and consolidated accounts - scope

The Council adopted the common position on a proposal for a Directive aimed at extending the scope of Directive 78/660/EEC on annual company accounts and Directive 83/349/EEC on consolidated company accounts.

Life assurance - second Directive

The Council adopted the common position on a second Directive co-ordinating provisions relating to the freedom to provide direct life assurance services and amending Directive 79/267/EEC.

The purpose of this Directive is to supplement the "first" life assurance Directive (Directive 79/267/EEC) and to facilitate the effective exercise of freedom to provide services in this area, granting policy-holders complete liberty to avail themselves of the widest possible market.

As regards the essence of the Directive, it can be stated that:

- it lays down specific provisions on access to and exercise of activities in implementation of the freedom to provide services;
- it stipulates the powers and methods of control of the supervisory authorities;

- it provides for the possibility of postponed application in respect of group insurance on the one hand and the rules governing the freedom to provide services via brokers on the other;
- the tax régime applicable is that of the Member State of the commitment, i.e. that of the policy-holder.

Relations with the EFTA countries

The Council adopted the Regulation on the application of Decisions No 1/90 of the EEC-EFTA countries Joint Committees amending Protocol No 3 concerning the definition of the concept of "originating product" and methods of administrative co-operation, following the suspension of customs duties applicable by the Community of Ten and the various EFTA countries to imports from Spain.

Common agricultural policy

The Council adopted the Directive amending Directive 81/851/EEC on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to veterinary medicinal products.

Fisheries policy

The Council adopted the Regulation amending for the third time Regulation No 4047/89 fixing, for certain fish stocks and groups of fish stocks, the total allowable catches for 1990 and certain conditions under which they may be fished.

With a view to allaying the difficulties of Irish fishermen, the Regulation provides for an increase from 50% to 65% in the maximum quantity of scad which may be fished before 1 September.

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ECSC

The Representatives of the Governments of the Member States of the ECSC, meeting within the Council, adopted the Decision on certain measures applicable in respect of State-trading countries with regard to trade in iron and steel products covered by the ECSC Treaty.

Bruxelles, le 28 Juin 1990

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CC. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

PREPARATION DU CONSEIL RECHERCHE DU 29 JUIN 1990 (V. D'UDEKEM)

Le Conseil Recherche se réunira le vendredi 29 Juin 1990 à Luxembourg. La réunion débutera à 10h sous la présidence de M. Smith, Ministre adjoint au Ministère de l'Industrie et du Commerce d'Irlande. Le Vice-Président PANDOLFI représentera la Commission.

Les trois premiers points à l'ordre du jour sont des propositions de décision du Conseil arrêtant chacune un programme spécifique de R&D :

1. Analyse du génôme humain :

Programme de R&D dans le domaine de la santé (ligne 1.1 du Programme Cadre RDT 1987-1991), d'une durée de deux ans (1990-1991), portant sur un montant de 15 MECU.

L'objectif de ce programme est de favoriser l'utilisation et l'amélioration des biotechnologies nouvelles pour l'étude du génôme humain (ensemble complet du matériel génétique qui incorpore les instructions décrivant chaque être humain) en vue d'améliorer nos connaissances en génétique humaine, ainsi que la prévention et le traitement des maladies humaines.

Parallèlement aux activités de recherche, des actions seront entreprises en vue de l'élaboration d'une approche intégrée des aspects médicaux, éthiques, sociaux et juridiques des applications possibles des résultats obtenus grâce au programme afin d'éviter qu'ils ne soient utilisés de manière abusive, ainsi que dans le but prénormatif de créer un ensemble de principes bioéthiques à suivre dans les développements à venir. L'altération des cellules germinales ou de tout stade de développement embryonnaire dans le but de modifier de manière héréditaire les caractéristiques génétiques de l'homme est exclue des objectifs du programme.

Le programme avait fait l'objet d'une position commune du Conseil lors de la réunion du 15 décembre 1989. Le Parlement européen a rendu un avis en deuxième lecture le 16 mai dernier. Ce point figure en point A à l'ordre du jour; il devrait donc être adopté à l'unanimité.

2. EURET :

Programme de R&D dans le domaine des transports (ligne 2.3 du Programme Cadre RDT 1987-1991), d'une durée de trois ans, portant sur un montant de 25 MECU.

L'objectif du programme est l'optimisation de l'exploitation des réseaux de transport, l'optimisation de la logistique et la réduction des effets externes nuisibles.

Le Parlement Européen a rendu le 13 juin un avis sur le programme en première lecture.

3. EUROTRA :

Programme de R&D dans le domaine de la linguistique (ligne 8.4 du Programme Cadre RDT 1987-1991), d'une durée de deux ans, portant sur un montant de 10 MECU.

Les objectifs du programme sont la préparation du développement d'un système opérationnel de traduction automatique EUROTRA à partir du prototype EUROTRA, le développement des méthodes et des outils permettant de réutiliser les ressources lexicales dans les applications informatisées et la préparation de normes pour les données lexicales et terminologiques. Le Parlement Européen a rendu durant sa session de juin un avis sur le programme en première lecture.

Le quatrième point à l'ordre du jour porte sur la coopération scientifique et technologique (ST) avec les pays tiers. Sous ce point, les documents suivants seront pris en considération :

- deux communications de la Commission au Conseil sur la coopération ST de la Communauté, l'une à l'égard des pays tiers en général, l'autre à l'égard des pays d'Europe Centrale et Orientale en particulier (cfr. note P(90) 42); les communications ont été adoptées par la Commission le 13 juin 1990. Elles ont pour objectif de stimuler un débat sur ce sujet au sein des Institutions communautaires;
- une résolution du Conseil sur la coopération dans le domaine de la recherche ST (COST) et les pays d'Europe Centrale et Orientale.

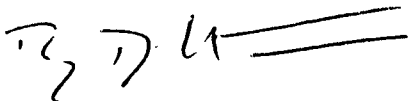
Le cinquième point à l'ordre du jour est relatif au troisième Programme-Cadre de R&D de la Communauté (1990-1994).

Le troisième Programme-Cadre de R&D ayant été adopté formellement par le conseil le 23 avril dernier, ce sont les propositions de programmes spécifiques (propositions de décision du Conseil adoptées par la Commission le 25 avril 1990) mettant en oeuvre ce Programme-Cadre qui seront examinés sous ce point. Jusqu'à présent, le Parlement Européen n'a rendu en première lecture aucun avis sur ces propositions. Au Conseil ce vendredi, il n'y aura ainsi qu'un échange de vue sur les aspects horizontaux des propositions.

Sous divers, le ministre allemand, M. Riesenhuber, fera une présentation des conséquences de l'unification allemande dans le domaine de la recherche.

Amitiés,

B. DETHOMAS



Luxembourg, le 29 juin 1990

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CC AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

CONSEIL RECHERCHE (V. d'UDEKEM)

Les douze ont adopté aujourd'hui à l'unanimité le programme spécifique de recherche et développement (R&D) Analyse du génôme humain. A l'unanimité également, les Etats membres ont adopté une position commune sur les programmes R&D EURET et EUROTRA.

Le Conseil a accueilli très favorablement les communications de la Commission en matière de coopération scientifique et technologique de la Communauté avec les pays tiers, d'une part, les pays d'Europe Centrale et Orientale, d'autre part. Le COREPER a été chargé d'étudier les communications en profondeur et de soumettre au prochain Conseil Recherche, c'est-à-dire le 24 septembre 1990, des conclusions détaillées. Le Conseil a également proposé que soit repris le débat sur les dossiers pays tiers déjà sur la table du Conseil.

En ce qui concerne le troisième Programme-Cadre R&D, le Conseil a souligné l'intérêt d'une collaboration efficace entre les différentes Institutions notamment dans le cadre de la procédure de coopération en cours pour l'adoption des programmes spécifiques mettant en oeuvre ce troisième Programme-Cadre.

Un échange de vue sur les aspects horizontaux des différentes propositions de programmes spécifiques sera à l'ordre du jour du Conseil Recherche du 24 septembre 1990.

Amitiés,

V. d'UDEKEM

