

PRESS RELEASE

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1486th Council meeting

- Industry -

Luxembourg, 29 April 1991

President: Mr Robert GOEBBELS

Minister for Economic Affairs  
of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg



29.IV.91

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Italy

Mr Guido BODRATO Minister for Industry

Luxembourg

Mr Robert GOEBBELS Minister for Economic Affairs

Mr Fernand BODEN Minister for Small and Medium-sized  
Businesses and the Self-Employed

Netherlands

Mr A. OOSTRA Deputy Permanent Representative

Portugal

Mr Luis MIRA AMARAL Minister for Industry and Energy

United Kingdom

Lord HESKETH Minister of State, Department of Trade and  
Industry

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Commission

Mr Martin BANGEMANN Vice-President  
Mr Filippo Maria PANDOLFI Vice-President  
Mr Antonio CARDOSO E CUNHA Member

29.IV.91

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THE EUROPEAN ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY - THE COUNCIL'S  
CONCLUSIONS

1. The Council received with great interest the communication from the Commission on the European Electronics and Information Technology Industry. In particular, it emphasized the importance of this industry from an economic and industrial and from an employment viewpoint, as well as with regard to its competitiveness.
  
2. The Council emphasized, in particular, the following points:
  - the effect that completion of the internal market, particularly with regard to standardizing and opening up public contracts, would have on demand and conditions of competition;
  
  - access to markets and technologies by European undertakings, including SMEs in the sector;
  
  - the need to take user interests into account;
  
  - the creation of equal conditions of competition between European undertakings and their main competitors and hence the need to ensure that markets operate competitively at world level. With this in view and with the aim of maintaining an open world market, the Council asked the Commission for in-depth studies to be carried out rapidly on the risks of distortion of competition on international markets, including the conditions of access to technology, investments and distribution networks;
  
  - conditions allowing increased co-operation between European undertakings, particularly as regards technology, by further implementing targeted

29.IV.91

ill/MM/dvw

pre-competitive R&D programmes and projects, while maintaining a high degree of competition;

- the need for and responsibility of undertakings to take the necessary initiatives and measures in order to benefit from past or future Community efforts.

3. The Council asked the Commission, in close consultation with a high-level working party, to deepen its analysis, to continue the dialogue with industrialists, users and investors and, on the basis of these, propose to the Council as rapidly as possible specific initiatives and measures which may be taken, while complying with the principles for Community industrial policy adopted by the Council at its meeting on 26 November 1990.

#### TEXTILE AND CLOTHING INDUSTRY

The Council agreed to examine in detail at its next meeting the recently submitted annual Commission report on the textile and clothing industry.

29. IV. 91

ill/MM/dvw

## BIOTECHNOLOGY

The Council heard a statement by Vice-President BANGEMANN presenting the Commission communication on the competitiveness of industries in the field of biotechnology in the Community.

That communication, whose purpose is to examine the development prospects for competitive biotechnology in the Community, defines a Community framework for industrial activities in this area and lists a series of measures deemed necessary to encourage the competitiveness of the industries using biotechnology.

The Council held a preliminary exchange of views on the communication, at the end of which it agreed to return to the matter at a future meeting.

## FUTURE OF THE ECSC TREATY

The Council heard a statement by Vice-President BANGEMANN setting out the Commission's political position on the matter, viz. to allow the ECSC Treaty to expire as scheduled in 2002, while ensuring that the coal and steel sectors are gradually taken over by the EEC Treaty.

Following an exchange of views the Council took note of the Commission communication. While appreciating the openness of the communication, it stressed the importance of consultation which was as broad as possible, involving contributions by all bodies directly concerned. The Council intends to resume examination of the issue once those consultations have been completed.

29.IV.91

ill/MM/dvw

SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

Revision of the action programme for SMEs

Following a discussion on the revision of the programme for the improvement of the business environment the Council confirmed the principle of a favourable position on releasing the addition ECU 25 million <sup>(1)</sup> for the action programme for small and medium-sized enterprises.

However, as some delegations wanted greater emphasis placed on craft industry enterprises and SMEs in the programme proposed by the Commission, the Council called upon the latter to provide the information desired in time for a Council meeting in June 1991 at which the decision on the ECU 25 million could be ratified.

Council Resolution on the action programme for small and medium-sized enterprises, including craft industry enterprises

"THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Considering the objectives of integrating and completing the internal market;

Considering the need to promote the development of small and medium-sized enterprises in the Community;

Considering Decision 89/490/EEC on the improvement of the business environment and the promotion of the development of enterprises, and in particular small and medium-sized enterprises, in the Community, and the actions already carried out on the basis of the funds allotted;

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(1) In addition to the ECU 110 million already earmarked for this programme.

29.IV.91

ill/MM/dvw

Whereas small and medium-sized enterprises are to a large extent able to benefit from the positive effects of the opening-up of the Community's internal borders, but whereas more account must be taken of their constraints and special characteristics in Community legislation as in the case of the programmes implemented in order to contribute towards economic and social cohesion in the Community,

HEREBY ADOPTS THIS RESOLUTION:

The Council:

1. Reaffirms the common will to make substantial and effective progress in the area of policies to promote SMEs.
2. Notes the continuing relevance of vocational qualifications and stresses the importance of continuing to develop initial and in-service vocational training and management training through existing Community programmes, with particular emphasis on preparation for the internal market, including linked work and training involving periods of vocational training in the enterprise.
3. Emphasizes the need to continue and intensify the reduction of administrative burdens and the simplification of formalities for enterprises, taking into account various initiatives, in particular in the fields of consumer policy, tax law, competition law, social legislation and environment policy.



29.IV.91

ill/MM/dvw

4. Would like the impact assessment sheet that accompanies draft Community texts likely to affect the organization, employment situation and profitability of enterprises, in particular SMEs, to be prepared accordingly.
5. Stresses the importance of improving the provision of information to, and consultation of, SMEs including craft industry SMEs, in particular through increased use of the trade organizations in the sectors concerned at the stage of the drawing up of programmes, directives, decisions and resolutions relating directly to their respective sectors.

In this context, calls upon the Commission to take account of the specific characteristics of certain occupations.

6. Would like co-operation between enterprises to be developed through optimum use of the existing instruments in order to facilitate access to new markets and new technologies.
7. Emphasizes the need to take into account the final recommendations of the Community Conference on the craft industry and small enterprises held in Avignon on 12 and 13 October 1990.
8. Emphasizes the importance of maintaining consistency between the various Community policies which have a direct or indirect effect on the interests of SMEs, including craft industry SMEs, and of avoiding any procedure or formality liable to impede their development.

The Council invites the Commission and where appropriate the Member States to take this Resolution into consideration."

29.IV.91

ill/MM/ih

## MESCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

### Anti-dumping

The Council adopted the Regulation imposing definitive anti-dumping duties in connection with the review of anti-dumping measures concerning imports of ferro-silicon containing between 10% and 96% of silicon by weight, originating in Brazil.

The duty, expressed as a percentage of the net free-at-Community-frontier price of the product before duty, is 39%, with the following exceptions:

- 12,2% is deemed adequate for products of the firm Rima Eletrometalurgia S.A., Belo Horizonte;
- exemption for the products of the following Brazilian firms, which have offered price undertakings accepted by the Commission:  
Companhia Brasileira Carbureto de Calcio, Rio de Janeiro; Companhia de Cimento Portland Maringa, Sao Paulo; Companhia de Ferroligas da Bahia - Ferbasa, Pojuca; Companhia Ferroligas Minas Gerais - Minas Ligas, Contagem; Companhia Italmagnesio S.A., Sao Paulo; Companhia Ferroligas Piracicaba Ltda, Sao Paulo; Companhia Paulista de Ferroligas, Sao Paulo.

### Occupied Territories

The Council adopted the Regulation on the tariff arrangements applicable to imports into the Community of products originating in the Occupied Territories.

The purpose of the Regulation is to improve the preferential treatment which the Community has granted since 1986 to the territories of the West Bank of the River Jordan and the Gaza Strip; it contains measures rapidly to improve access to the

29.IV.91

111/MM/ih

Community market for agricultural products - especially fruit and vegetables - from those Occupied Territories.

The Regulation provides inter alia - for certain periods - for the elimination in two equal instalments - on 1 January 1992 and 1 January 1993 - of customs duties on imports of the agricultural products covered by the Regulation, within the limit, as regards strawberries, of a tariff quota of 1 200 tonnes. Reference quantities are laid down for other agricultural products. Reduced customs duties, initially set in accordance with Regulation No 3363/86, still apply to volumes imported in excess of the tariff quotas.

#### Mediterranean countries

The Council adopted:

- the Regulation amending - as regards dried onions originating in Egypt - Regulation (EEC) No 3729/90 opening and providing for the administration of Community tariff quotas for certain agricultural products originating in Algeria, Marocco, Tunisia or Egypt;
- the Decision concerning the conclusion of the EEC-Malta Protocol extending the first stage of the EEC-Malta Association Agreement, signed at Brussels on 20 December 1990.

It will be recalled that this Protocol provides for the extension of the first stage of the Agreement up to 31 December 1991 and for subsequent automatic extensions from year to year unless it is denounced before 1 July of any year.

29. IV. 91

111/MM/ih

Telecommunications terminal equipment

After completing the co-operation procedure with the European Parliament, the Council adopted the Directive on the approximation of the laws of the Member States concerning telecommunications terminal equipment, including the mutual recognition of their conformity. The purpose of the Directive is to create the conditions for an open and unified market in a vital part of the telecommunications industry, which is one of the industrial mainstays of the economy in the Community.

The aim of the Directive is threefold:

- to execute the final stage in the implementation of the single market in telecommunications terminal equipment on the basis of the essential requirements defined in Directive 86/361/EEC;
- to apply, in the framework of the procedure for the placing on the market of terminal equipment, harmonized procedures in respect of certification, testing, marking, ensuring product quality and product control in order to ensure compliance with the abovementioned essential requirements;
- to ensure the right to connect terminal equipment lawfully placed on the market to public telecommunications networks without any additional procedure.

According to the Directive terminal equipment means equipment intended to be connected to public telecommunications networks, i.e.:

- to be connected directly to the termination of a public telecommunications network
- or

29. IV. 91

ill/MM/ih

- to interwork with a public telecommunications network being connected directly or indirectly to the termination of a public telecommunications network

in order to send, process or receive information.

Terminal equipment will have to satisfy the following essential requirements, where relevant:

- user safety, insofar as this requirement is not covered by Directive 73/23/EEC;
- safety of employees of public telecommunications networks operators, insofar as this requirement is not covered by Directive 73/23/EEC;
- electromagnetic compatibility requirements insofar as they are specific to terminal equipment;
- protection of the public telecommunications network from harm;
- effective use of the radio frequency spectrum, where appropriate;
- interworking of terminal equipment with public telecommunications network equipment for the purpose of establishing, modifying, charging for, holding and clearing real or virtual connection;
- interworking of terminal equipment via the public telecommunications network, in justified cases.

29.IV.91

ill/MM/ih

Draft supplementary and amending budget No 1/91 of the European Communities

The Council acted in second reading on draft supplementary and amending budget No 1/91 of the European Communities for 1991 with the European Parliament's amendments and proposed modifications on 17 April 1991.

It will be recalled that the draft mainly concerns Commission requests for additional administrative appropriations and budgetary guarantees for measures to assist certain third countries.

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