

THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

TELECOM 95: successful connections

Nelson Mandela and Jacques Santer were among the keynote speakers at the opening ceremony of this October's world telecoms exhibition and forum, the seventh of this major event organised every 4 years in Geneva by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

The theme was 'Connect!' which reflected the show's main trend of rapid convergence between telecoms, computing and broadcasting.

This year a grand total of 189,671 people participated - including 133 ministers and 232 director-generals from all around the world, 662 Forum speakers, and over 2,000 press. 1,066 companies and organisations exhibited.

3,912 people took part in the Forum programme, in which the Strategies and Technologies summits focussed both on new technological developments and on the problems of communications in developing countries. Special emphasis was laid on the importance of including these countries in the newly-emerging Global Information Infrastructure. The Internet weekend at the Forum featured among other keynote speakers Vint Cerf, 'father of the Internet', and attracted considerable interest. /Cont/...

Completing the regulatory framework for a liberalised telecommunications market.

At the initiative of Commissioner Bangemann, the Commission has now adopted two proposals for legislation (both based on Article 100A) that constitute key elements of the future regulatory framework for the telecommunications sector, following liberalisation by 1 January 1998.

1. The first one, a proposal for a European Parliament and Council Directive, will, together with directive 9013881EEC (based on Article 90 of the Treaty), establish a common framework for general authorisations and individual licences granted by Member States in the field of telecommunications services.

While full competition will be introduced in the telecommunications sector in most Member States in 1998, authorisation regimes remain necessary in order to ensure that certain public interest objectives such as universal service are attained. At the same time no undue burdens must be imposed on market players.

In that context, the proposed directive sets up rules to be implemented at national level, together with the full application of competition principles, both for the procedures for the granting of authorisations or licences and the conditions that can be attached to these authorisations. Such a common framework should facilitate the exercise of freedom of establishment and freedom to provide services in the European Union for undertakings acting in the field of telecommunications.

2. The second text adopted is a proposal to update two existing directives for Open Network Provision (ONP): framework directive 90/387 EEC, adopted in 1990, describing objectives and procedures, and the ONP Leased Lines Directive, adopted in 1992.

The updating will enable them to take account of the introduction of competition after 1998, and to provide a common approach for the provision of important telecommunications services in the European Union.

The objective of the revised ONP framework directive remains the harmonisation of conditions for access to and use of public telecommunications networks and services, but the emphasis is on achieving this through voluntary observance of standards. The existing procedure, whereby standards can be made compulsory under certain circumstances, would be modified to include a period of public consultation before any decision was taken.

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Other highlights of the event were the Programme for Development, the NIC Pilot Project, and the '1 in 10' Smart House.

The Programme for Development aims to foster skills transfer and give participants the opportunity to learn about latest developments and their application. It provided invitations to 170 engineers and human resources specialists from 85 countries to come to Geneva on a week's fellowship in order to visit the exhibition, participate in the Forum, and concentrate on issues of immediate importance to their own countries in a special 3-day workshop.

The NIC Pilot Project offers exposure to worldwide markets for companies from newly industrialising countries. It provided free exhibition space to 13 such companies, selected on the basis of their innovative products and successful track record in their home markets.

The '1 in 10' Smart House demonstrated the latest innovations for use in the home to help disabled and elderly people.

The next in the series will be Telecom 99, at Palexpo in Geneva from 8 - 17 October, 1999.

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Commission adopts two proposals completing the regulatory framework for a liberalised telecommunications market. (continued)

The leased lines Directive requires that leased lines shall be offered and provided on request without discrimination to all users.

Non-discrimination applies to, *inter alia*, availability of technical access, tariffs, quality of service, provision time (delivery period), fair distribution of capacity in case of scarcity, repair time and availability of network information.

The revised ONP leased lines Directive will continue to require that the present minimum set of leased lines is available to all users in the EU from at least one organisation in each Member State. This obligation will be placed only on organisations with significant market power, as determined by the

national regulatory authorities in accordance with guidelines given in the Directive.

Requirements for advance publication of tariff changes will be removed and the requirement for cost orientation of tariffs will be relaxed where there is strong competition in the provision of leased lines.

A new annex identifies other types of high speed leased line whose provision is to be encouraged, and recommends suitable voluntary standards for connection to these types of leased line.

Information Society Forum: the current state of play

In accordance with the Bangemann Report, the conclusion of the European Council in Corfu and the Action Plan "Europe's way to the Information Society", the Commission decided to set up an Information Society Forum.

On February 1995 Mr. Bangemann, European Commissioner for Industrial Affairs, Information Technology and Telecommunications, was detailed to nominate the members and take responsibility for the Forum, in accordance with the Commission President and the Members of the Group "Information Society and Audiovisual". The Forum was set up on July 1995.

The aim of the Information Society Forum is to offer representatives from a wide variety of different groups an opportunity to contribute to an open discussion about the social aspects of the information society (see SEC(95) 278/2, 6, 7).

It acts as a "think tank" for the Commission on issues related to the development of the information society, and provides an opportunity for dialogue between all the players concerned.

The Forum's composition is based on the proposals received by the Member

States and the Community institutions concerned. It reflects Europe's diversity in terms of economic, social and cultural aspects, and the many interested parties. The 124 Forum members have been appointed for three years.

The Forum will produce an annual report assessing the progress made on the information society, which will be discussed and formally adopted at one of the two annual general meetings of the Forum. It will be published by the Commission.

Forum plenary sessions

At the inaugural meeting on 13 July 1995, the Forum elected Mrs. Birgitta Carlson (Telia AB Teleservices, Sweden) as chair and Mr. Roberto Carneiro (Televisão Independente - TVI, Portugal) and Mrs. Caroline Kerstiens (BEUC, Netherlands) as co-chairpersons.

On the basis of a theme paper prepared by the Commission, the members of the Forum discussed the definition and content of the themes and the organisation of the working groups.

Information Society Forum: state of play

(continued)

The Forum will meet in plenary sessions twice a year. The next plenary sessions are scheduled for January and July 1996 and will be co-chaired by Mr. Bangemann.

Themes and working groups

Six specialised working groups have been set up:

1. The Impact on the Economy and Employment
2. Basic Social and Democratic Values in the Virtual Community
3. The Influence on Public Services
4. Education, Training and Learning in the Information Society
5. The Cultural Dimension and the Future of the Media
6. Sustainable Development, Technology, and Infrastructure.

The first meetings of the working groups 5, 2 and 3 took place in Brussels on 11 and 12 September 1995;

Mr. Fritz Fernand Pleitgen (WDR-Westdeutscher Rundfunk, Germany), Mr. Aidan White (European Federation of Journalists, Ireland) and Mr. Jacques Wautrequin (Services Fédéraux Belges - Affaires Scientifiques, Techniques et Culturelles, Belgium), were respectively elected chair of the three groups. The second meeting of working groups 2, 3 and 5 is scheduled for 13, 14 and 15 November 1995.

Groups 1, 4 and 6 met for the first time on 25 and 26 September 1995 and Mr. Joan Majo (Institut Cataluño de Tecnologia, Spain), Mr. John Gray (Newark and Sherwood College, United Kingdom) and Mr. Claudio Carelli (Telecom Italia, Italy), were respectively elected chair of working groups 1, 4 and 6. The second meeting of working groups 1, 4 and 6 was scheduled for 14, 17 and 16 November 1995.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee, composed of the Forum's chairs, co-chairpersons and the chairs of working groups, will start work in December to coordinate the Forum's activity with a view to producing the annual report for the Forum's plenary session in July 1996.

For more information see below.

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TV standards directive signals TV lift-off towards information society

On 24 July 1995 the Council of Ministers adopted a new television standards Directive.

The Directive creates a regulatory framework of standards for the transmission of advanced television signals. It recognises that standards are an important element in establishing market confidence both on the part of market players and on the part of consumers but at the same time enables the widest range of advanced TV services to be offered as the market develops. It does not target the introduction of particular services and technologies, preferring a studied neutrality across the board.

Pay television is the fastest growing area of broadcasting and is expected to flower in the digital era. Indeed it is likely that the pioneering digital television services will be launched by pay-TV broadcasters. Conditional access is an important issue for this business because it guarantees security and enables broadcasters to collect subscription revenues from their customers. The Directive creates a common framework throughout the Union for conditional access to digital television services. At a practical level,

the directive will facilitate consumers being able to receive all their digital TV through one box, rather than having to clutter up their homes with lots of different, incompatible boxes to receive all the services they want.

Manufacturers must incorporate an open interface socket on all TVs with screens larger than 42cms. This is already happening with much equipment available today, but the intention is to guarantee that all citizens of the Union investing in new equipment will be able to connect digital TV decoders with problems.

The directive therefore supports the current trend towards making new technology products more consumer-friendly, or "Plug and play" as this is called.

Wide-screen TV is taking off throughout the European Union and the directive ensures that cable TV operators will deliver wide-screen services as broadcast in the 16:9 format. This is an important encouragement for consumers investing in the new 16:9 wide-screen sets.

"Now the market for digital television services can start in earnest", said Mr. Martin Bangemann.

"Consultation was the key to the process of obtaining agreement on standards and on the rules of the game necessary to develop this market. The European Digital Video Broadcasting Group did a good job by bringing together broadcasters, manufacturers and other players.

I am delighted that the European Parliament and the Council agree that this is the proper approach. The effect of the directive will be to ensure that consumer investments are protected through standardisation and related measures and that the market is free to evolve so that all sorts of exciting new series can be offered throughout the Union."

Healthcare and the information society: new G7 project feasibility studies

World-wide telecommunication networks are now facilitating the global pooling of healthcare information, medical knowledge, and access to best medical practice, independent of location.

In future this will bring better health and significant benefits to citizens, and help public health authorities to improve the effectiveness of the health system or to respond faster and more effectively to large-scale outbreaks of disease.

On this basis, the G7 ministerial meeting of February 1995 launched the G7 Global Healthcare Applications Project with the aim to show the potential of multimedia telematics (ie combined information and telecommunications technologies) for monitoring of public health and infectious diseases, for delivering emergency telemedicine, and for fighting against major health scourges like cancer and cardiovascular diseases - significant causes of death, disability and increasing health costs in industrialized countries.

The project also aims to promote joint approaches to issues such as privacy, security of data, health nomenclature, and the use of medical data cards.

In order to support the European component of this G7 Global Healthcare Applications Project, the European Commission decided to launch a series of feasibility studies.

The topics of these feasibility studies and the financial contribution of the European Union are listed below.

European Union funding (kECU)

Public Health Networks	200
Cancer Networks	400
Cardiovascular Networks	100
Cardiovascular Databases	300
Emergency Telemedicine	200
Data Cards	300

They will identify technical, social and economic issues and provide answers to enable a smooth implementation of interoperable telematics services for healthcare across Europe.

Additionally the studies will promote European collaboration in the medical field. They are being undertaken by consortia of universities, medical centres of excellence, the healthcare industry, user representatives, and public health authorities in the European Union. Overall they will improve quality control in the medical field. The studies will start to deliver their results in 1996.

The third global meeting of the G7 Global Healthcare Applications Project will take place in Ottawa, Canada, on 20 November 1995.

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INTERNAL MARKET

Interchange of Data between Administrations (IDA) programme adopted

In early November the IDA programme was adopted by the Industry Council. This three-year programme, which was identified as a key priority in the Bangemann Report on the Global Information Society, aims to boost the efficiency of the internal market by enabling administrations to exchange essential information via interoperable telematics networks.

Commissioner Martin Bangemann commented:

"In order to realise the internal market fully, with its requirement for the free

movement of goods, capital, services and citizens throughout the Member States, it is vital that national and European-level administrations are able to transfer the supporting information. The adoption of the IDA programme represents a significant advance towards the information society."

The IDA programme is intended to coordinate the development and implementation of telematics applications and services that allow governments and authorities to transfer information on such areas as

healthcare, social security, and employment services as well as on public procurement, trademarks, and customs.

It will also examine many of the remaining legal and technical stumbling blocks such as data protection, authentication of users, and the legal status of electronically transmitted information.

Council adopts Directive on protection of personal data

The Directive on the protection of personal data has been formally adopted by the Council of Ministers. It will ensure a high level of protection for the privacy of individuals in all Member States.

The Directive will help to ensure the free flow of Information Society services in the Single Market by fostering consumer confidence and minimising differences between Member States' rules.

The Directive will establish a clear and stable regulatory framework necessary to guarantee free movement of personal data, while leaving individual EU countries room for manoeuvre in the way the Directive is implemented.

Free movement of data is particularly important for all services with a large customer base and depending on processing personal data, such as distance selling and financial services. In practice, banks and insurance companies process large quantities of personal data inter alia on such highly sensitive issues as credit ratings and credit-worthiness. If each Member State had its own set of rules on data protection, for example on how data subjects could verify the information superhighways, cross-border provision of services over the information superhighways would be virtually impossible, and this extremely valuable new market opportunity would be lost.

The Directive aims to narrow divergences between national data protection laws to the extent necessary to remove obstacles to the free movement of personal data within the EU. As a result, any person whose data are processed in the Community will be afforded an equivalent level of protection of his rights, in particular his right to privacy, irrespective of the Member State where the processing is carried out.

To prevent abuses of personal data and ensure that data subjects are informed of the existence of processing operations, the Directive lays down common rules, to be observed by those who collect, hold or transmit personal data as part of their economic or administrative activities or in the course of the activities of their association. In particular, there is an obligation to collect data only for specified, explicit and legitimate

purposes, and to be held only if it is relevant, accurate and up-to-date.

The Directive also establishes the principle of fairness, so that collection of data should be as transparent as possible, giving individuals the option of whether they provide the information or not. Moreover, individuals will be entitled to be informed at least about the identity of the organisation intending to process data about them and the main purposes of such processing. That said, the Directive applies different rules according to whether information can be easily provided in the normal course of business activities or whether the data has been collected by third parties. In the latter case, there is an exemption where the obligation to provide information is impossible or involves disproportionate effort.

The Directive requires all data processing to have a proper legal basis. The six legal grounds defined in the Directive are consent, contract, legal obligation, vital interest of the data subject or the balance between the legitimate interests of the people controlling the data subject or the balance between the legitimate interests of the people controlling the data and the people on whom data is held (i.e. data subjects). This balance gives Member States room for manoeuvre in their implementation and application of the Directive.

Under the Directive, data subjects are granted a number of important rights including the right of access to that data, the right to know where the data originated (if such information is available), the right to have inaccurate data rectified, a right of recourse in the event of unlawful processing and the right to withhold permission to use their data in certain circumstances (for example, individuals will have the right to opt-out free of charge from being sent direct marketing material, without providing any specific reason).

In the case of sensitive data, such as an individual's ethnic or racial origin, political or religious beliefs, trade union membership or data concerning health or sexual life, the Directive establishes that it can only be processed with the explicit consent of the individual, except in specific cases such as where there is an important public interest (e.g. for medical or scientific research), where alternative

safeguards have to be established. As the flexibility of the Directive means that some differences between national data protection regimes may persist, the Directive lays down the principle that the law of the Member State where a data processor is established applies in cases where data is transferred between Member States.

The Directive also establishes arrangements for monitoring by independent data supervisory authorities, where necessary acting in tandem with each other.

In the specific case of personal data used exclusively for journalistic, artistic or literary purposes, the Directive requires Member States to ensure appropriate exemptions and derogations exist which strike a balance between guaranteeing freedom of expression while protecting the individual's right to privacy.

For cases where data is transferred to non-EU countries, the Directive includes provisions to prevent the EU rules from being circumvented. The basic rule is that the non-EU country receiving the data should ensure an adequate level of protection, although a practical system of exemptions and special conditions also applies. The advantage for non-EU countries who can provide adequate protection is that the free flow of data from all 15 EU states will henceforth be assured, whereas up to now each state had decided on such questions separately.

For their part, the Council and the Commission have made it clear that they consider that the European Union institutions and bodies should be subject to the same protection principles as those laid down by the Directive. The Member States must transpose the Directive within three years.

Copyright and related rights in the information society

On 19 July 1995, the European Commission adopted a Green Paper on copyright and related rights (rights of performers, phonogram producers and broadcasters) in the information society.

This Green Paper examines a range of issues arising from the impact of new technologies and the information society, notably the effect of measures in this area on the free movement of information society services.

After public consultation, the Commission will assess the need for EU-level measures, and the form these should take. The Green Paper is the first in a series of discussion documents concerning the information society the Commission will be issuing in the next few months.

Mario Monti, Commissioner in charge of the Internal Market, declared:

"This Green Paper will contribute to a wide debate with all interested parties on the definition of a clear, stable and coherent regulatory framework for the development of the information society.

Without a critical mass of services to use these networks, the significant infrastructure investment required for these information highways will not be forthcoming. But many of the new services and products will be viable only if an adequate level of protection is granted throughout the European Union.

The nature of future communications networks is such that these new services will not and should not be stopped at national frontiers.

"The question to be addressed is whether our existing Single Market rules are in themselves sufficient to protect the new information services. The same issues will have to be addressed at the international level," Mr. Monti added, "because we need a framework for cooperation to ensure the global development of the information society".

The EU has consistently favoured a high level of protection of intellectual property rightholders in order to promote creative work and innovation. The Commission is therefore keen that rightholders should benefit fully from

new technologies and so be encouraged to take advantage of the new opportunities presented by the information society. In addition, rightholders need effective instruments to fight piracy in the digital environment.

Moreover, the success of the information society in the EU depends on substantial investment rather than technological innovation - to a large extent the technology already exists. The investment required to establish the infrastructure for the information society depends on investors being convinced that a 'critical mass' exists of new services to be carried over the infrastructure.

Investment in these new interactive services, such as distance learning, remote healthcare, audio and video-on-demand and tele-shopping, itself depends on investors being satisfied that a suitable legislative framework exists.

In the case of the EU, such a framework must not only guarantee investors an adequate level of protection for their investment, but also reassure investors that there will be a Single Market within the free movement of information society services is ensured (i.e. without substantial differences in the rules and regulations applicable from one Member State to another).

The Directives on protection of personal data and on the legal protection of databases, (on which the Council of Ministers has agreed common positions, see separate articles below), are both important measures in the EU's legislative framework for the information society.

As regards intellectual property, the database protection directive already constitutes a major step forward for holders of copyright and related rights whose works and related matters will circulate on the information superhighway, as many of the new services will be offered from databases.

However, there is a wide range of other issues arising from copyright and related rights in the context of the information society which are not covered by the database protection directive or the other directives on

copyright and related rights. It is these other topics which are discussed in the new Green Paper.

Key issues are:

- digitisation of work and prior authorisation of rightholders;
- the borderline between "communication to the public" and "individual communication";
- electronic delivery and its effects on rental rights;
- broadcasting rights for particular rightholders;
- exclusive copyright protection in trans-border network services;
- management of rights for multimedia products and new services;
- identification and protection of digitised works;
- moral rights of rightholders;

The Commission is aware that these issues are also under discussion in individual Member States and third countries (such as the US).

A wide-ranging consultation process with interested parties will now take place on the basis of the Green Paper. In the light of these consultations, the Commission will make appropriate proposals for legislation and/or other measures during the course of 1996.

Apart from the Green Paper on copyright and related rights in the information society, the Commission is also due to issue shortly two other Green Papers concerning the legislative framework for the information society, one on audiovisual encryption and the other on commercial communications.

Postal services: Commission adopts legislative proposals

Postal services constitute an important element for the completion of the single market and for the development of the European economy. That is why the Council and the European Parliament asked the Commission to prepare a regulatory framework for the postal sector.

The proposed measures will guarantee, for the first time at Community level, the provision of universal service, while at the same time progressively opening up the postal market to more competition. Harmonisation in the postal sector will have to go together with gradual liberalisation.

In July the European Commission adopted a package of measures for the postal sector, proposed by Martin Bangemann, Commissioner in charge of Telecommunications and Postal Services, and Karel van Miert, Commissioner for Competition Policy.

The package consists of a "Proposal for a European Parliament and Council directive establishing common rules for the development of Community postal services and the improvement of quality of service" and a draft "Notice on the application of the competition rules to the postal sector".

The proposed Directive based on Art. 100A of the EC treaty provides for a mandatory level of universal service to be provided throughout the Community to all citizens, wherever they are located, at affordable prices and for a high degree of quality of service. These provisions are very important for remote areas and for peripheral regions of the Community. Currently, universal service obligations and quality of service are not always explicitly defined in national legislation or administrative rules, so that it is sometimes difficult to enforce them.

Member States will have to ensure affordability and cost-orientation for tariffs for universal service. However, Member States may decide that a uniform tariff be applied on their territory.

As regards quality of service, Member States will be responsible for the establishment of quality standards for domestic postal services. Assisted by an Advisory Committee composed of Representatives of the 15 Member States, the Commission will set out the quality requirements for intra-

Community cross-border services. Performance monitoring shall be carried out independently by external bodies and published at regular intervals.

As regards the European Committee for Standardisation will be entrusted with the rules for the harmonisation of technical standards, on the basis of Commission mandates.

Finally, in conformity with the principle of separating regulatory and operational functions, the proposed Directive requires the establishment of national regulatory authorities independent of the postal operators in all Member States.

Operators providing universal service will have to establish separate accounts for services open to competition on the one hand, and non reserved services on the other hand in order to avoid undue cross-subsidies.

In order to ensure the financial viability of universal service, the proposed Directive defines harmonised criteria for the services that may be reserved for universal service providers. In order to define the scope of the reserved services for domestic mail there are two criteria:

- A weight limit which is applicable for domestic mail that does not weigh more than 350 gr
- A price limit that is calculated as five times the tariff for a standard domestic letter in each Member State (normally a letter up to 20 gr).

Consequently, all domestic mail that is above the outlined thresholds will be liberalised.

Outgoing cross-border mail which is already de facto liberalised in most Member States will be excluded from the reservable services.

Direct mail and incoming cross-border mail continue to be reserved until 31 December 2000 if this is necessary for the financial viability of the universal provider. The Commission will, however, decide at the latest on 30 June 1998 if it is necessary to keep direct mail and incoming cross-border mail in the reserved area even after 31 December 2000, taking into consideration the development that has occurred in the postal sector in the meantime.

During the first half of the year 2000 at the latest, a major review will take place on the whole scope of the reserved area.

For this stage of the liberalisation the Directive foresees a safety-net which will ensure financing for universal services: Member States may introduce objective licensing procedures. The granting of licences could be supplemented by obligations to offer universal service and the resumption not to interfere improperly in reserved services. If an inequitable financial burden is imposed on a universal service provider, Member States may require other providers to make obligatory financial contributions to a specific fund established for this purpose.

As recognized by the Court of Justice of the European Communities, the competition rules fully apply to the postal sector.

The draft Notice, which complements the harmonization measures proposed by the Commission sets out the guiding principles according to which the Commission intends to apply the competition rules of the Treaty to the postal sector, in order to further the gradual, controlled liberalization of the postal market.

It sets out the approach it intends to take when addressing the compatibility of State measures restricting the freedom to provide service and/or to compete in the postal markets with the competition rules of the Treaty. In addition, it addresses the issue of non-discriminatory access to the postal network and the regulatory safeguards required to ensure fair competition in the sector.

The draft Notice will be published in the Official Journal for a public consultation within two months after its publication. Subsequent to the public consultation, the Commission intends to adopt the Notice in order to provide the actors in the sector with the necessary clarity about the application of the competition rules.

Commission confirms measures ensuring full competition in telecoms by 1998

On 19 July 1995, the Commission agreed two fundamental measures that together will shape the telecommunications market in Europe over the coming years.

1. Liberalising all telecoms services and infrastructure by 1998
2. Ensuring universal service and interoperability: Proposal for a Directive on Interconnection in Telecommunications

The first, a draft Directive (under Article 90 of the Treaty) implements the political agreement among Member States to liberalise all telecommunications services (i.e. including public voice telephony) and telecoms infrastructure by 1 January 1998, with transition periods for certain Member States. The principles not only safeguard the introduction of competition into these areas, but also allow for the required measures for safeguarding universal service in the Member States. It also calls on Member States to take the necessary steps before 1998 in order to ensure that markets are fully open by the agreed deadline. In particular it specifies that restrictions on use of alternative infrastructure should be lifted by 1996 (except for public voice telephony until 1998) and that licensing conditions and interconnection rules should be set down by 1997. Following the procedure chosen for the Article 90 cable and mobile drafts, this draft Directive is published for public consultation before full adoption by the Commission by the end of this year.

The second, a proposal for a Directive (based on Article 100A), sets out a harmonised framework for interconnection in telecommunications in the context of ONP, with the aim of ensuring universal service as interoperability of telecommunications services throughout the Union. It will enable new entrants to liberalised telecommunications markets to interconnect their facilities with those of the existing network operators.

The features which will be ensured by the proposed regulatory framework for interconnection are:

- application of the principles of transparency, objectivity, and non-discrimination to guarantee a fair deal in interconnection agreements in particular between new entrants and the powerful incumbent telecommunications operators;
- priority given to commercial negotiations between interconnection parties while reserving some conditions to be sent *a priori* by national telecommunications regulatory authorities;
- clear responsibilities for national regulatory authorities, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, including effective mechanisms for dispute resolution at the national and European level:

Issues addressed in the Directive include:

- Interconnection and universal

- service contribution
- Requirements for non-discrimination and transparency
- Principles for interconnection charges and cost accounting systems
- Accounting separation and financial accounts
- General responsibilities of the national regulatory authorities
- Essential requirements (security of network operations, maintenance of network integrity, interoperability of services, protection of data)
- Numbering (provision of numbers and numbering ranges for all public telecommunications services)
- Technical standards
- Publication of and access to information

This proposal will be subject to approval by the European Parliament and the Council, and should be implemented before 1998.

The two measures continue the balanced EU approach whereby liberalisation and harmonisation in the telecommunications sector are progressing hand-in-hand. They represent the core of a package of regulatory changes that the Commission is preparing for the post-1998 environment and are the results of extensive consultation with the sector over the past months. Other measures already announced in the Commission's communication on the Infrastructure Green Paper Consultations are expected to be published by the end of 1995.

Satellite Personal Communications: Commission proposes action

On 8 November the Commission approved a communication proposed by Commissioner Martin Bangemann for action at EU level on satellite and personal communications. Within a period of three years the following objectives should be ensured:

the selection of satellite PCS space segment operators, the adoption of

common and harmonised conditions for authorisations, and the establishment of dialogue and negotiations with third countries to facilitate international cooperation and remove hindrances to development.

This represents a significant opportunity for the EU mobile and space industry, with actual contracts

valued at approx 500 MECU, and potential ones at tens of billions of ecu.

A call for expressions of interest will be published in the Official Journal in the autumn of 1996.

Commission adopts Green Paper on Utility Models

A Green Paper on Utility Models was adopted by the European Commission, on the initiative of Internal Market Commissioner Mario Monti, on July 19, 1995. Utility model protection, a legal concept in the field of industrial property at a lower level than patents, is often used as a relatively quick and cheap means to protect technical inventions which are not particularly innovative (such as mechanisms or tools). The aim of the Green Paper is to invite contributions from Member States, the European Parliament and interested third parties on whether a Community initiative on utility models would be appropriate and if so, the form such an initiative should take (a number of options are outlined).

Legal protection of industrial property has an important role to play in encouraging innovation, and so in improving the competitiveness of EU industry. However, possible differences between Member States industrial property regimes should not distort competition or give rise to trade barriers within the single market.

With this in mind, the Community has for example already harmonised national rules and introduced EC level rules concerning trade marks (Directive 89/104 and Regulation 94/40), introduced supplementary protection for medicinal products (Regulation 1768/92), and, concerning industrial design protection, has proposed both a Directive to approximate national rules (COM(93)344) and a Regulation to introduce Community wide protection (COM(93)342).

What are utility models?

The Commission is now turning its attention to utility models. A utility model is a registered right which confers exclusive protection for a technical invention. It resembles a patent in that the invention must be new (it must possess "novelty") and must display a measure of inventive achievement (it must involve an "inventive step"), though frequently the level of inventiveness required is not as great as it is for patents.

Unlike patents, utility models are granted without a prior search to establish novelty and inventive step. This means that utility model protection can be obtained more rapidly and cheaply than patent protection, but that protection conferred is less secure. Utility model protection is often used as for smaller inventions and those with shorter life cycles.

Utility model protection is well established in Belgium (*brevet de courte durée*), France

(*certificat d'utilité*), Germany (*Gebrauchsmuster*), Italy (*brevetto per modelli di utilità*), the Netherlands (*zesjarig octrooi*), Portugal (*modelo de utilidade*), Spain (*modelo de utilidad*) and Greece. In the last four years, five more Member States have introduced a system of this kind (Ireland, Denmark, Greece, Finland and Austria), and the remaining Member States (United Kingdom, Luxembourg and Sweden) are considering the introduction of this type of protection.

In all Member States where utility model protection exists, its validity is limited to the territory of that Member State. The holder of such a right not only has to file a separate application in each Member State where he wants protection, but also is entitled to prevent third parties from importing goods protected by his right and which have been produced and marketed without his consent.

Why may Community action be necessary?

Comparative legal and economic studies on the legal protection of utility models were prepared for the Commission before it drafted the Green Paper. These studies covered not only the extent to which such forms of protection are used but also possible adverse effects on the free movement of goods and fair competition of the existing diversity of national rules.

An economic study, which covers 4000 companies and 1000 patent lawyers in 5 countries, shows that utility models are very frequently used by EU industry, in particular by small and medium sized enterprises with less than 500 employees.

However, EU enterprises (and in particular small and medium sized companies) reported problems in protecting utility models as a result of different legal provisions in different Member States (such as the degree of novelty required, whether or not the invention has to take a three-dimensional form or in some Member States, the absence of such protection). In particular, applying for protection of a utility model in another Member State is often difficult.

The economic study concluded that differences between Member States' utility model regimes restricted cross-frontier trade, in contradiction with the single market, and discouraged innovation. These results prompted the Commission to put forward the Green Paper on utility model protection.

The Green Paper, which includes a

summary of the studies undertaken for the Commission, concludes that there is a need for action by the European Union in respect of utility models, with the objective of ensuring rapid, simple and inexpensive protection for technical inventions that are short-lived and/or involve only a small inventive step, with rapid publication of rights granted.

Options

The Green Paper sets out a number of options for Community-level arrangements, including:

- a) a Directive to harmonise national protection systems (and introduce it in those Member States where it does not exist)
- b) not only harmonise national systems but also ensure pan-EU protection with a single application by means of mutual recognition of the protection granted by Member States
- c) a Regulation establishing a new Community protection right obtained with a single application but valid directly in all Member States.

A Directive and a Regulation could be both proposed, so as to ensure both harmonisation of national systems and a pan-EU system (the approach followed with trade marks and industrial design protection). The Green Paper also asks a number of questions related to the substantive rules to be incorporated in whatever legislative instrument the Commission opts for. Other options put forward during the consultation process would also be considered by the Commission.

Interested parties have been invited to submit their responses to the Green Paper, which includes a number of specific questions concerning the perceived need for Community action and the various options, before the end of 1995. The consultation process will then continue with hearings to be organised by the Commission in early 1996. On the basis of these consultations, the Commission will consider the most appropriate course of action.

PROGRAMMES IN ACTION

ACTS, Esprit and Telematics Applications programmes: EU funding helps speed the transition to the information society

Telematics Applications Programme

European Commission
DG XIII-C/E
Avenue de Beaulieu 29 (4/37)
B-1160 Brussels

Tel: +32 2 295.45.60
Fax: +32 2 295.23.54
e-mail: telematics@dg13.cec.be

ACTS Programme Information Desk

ACTS Central office
European Commission, DG XIII-B
200 rue de la Loi (BU 9 4/82)
B-1049 Brussels

Tel: +32 2 296.34.15
Fax: +32 2 295.06.54
e-mail via internet:
aco@postman.dg13.cec.be
Web: <http://www.terena.nl>
e-mail via Compuserve: 100302,2607

Information Technologies (Esprit) Programme

Information Desk
European Commission, DG III-F
200 rue de la Loi
B-1049 Brussels

Tel: +32 2 296.85.96
Fax: +32 2 296.83.88
e-mail: infodesk@dg13.cec.be
Web: <http://www.ecrc.de>

The Commission selected 588 actions and projects for funding under the ACTS (Advanced Communications Technologies and Services), Esprit and Telematics Applications programmes.

The programmes are part of the fourth RTD-Framework Programme (1994-1998).

The first call for the ACTS, Esprit and Telematics Applications programmes, announced on 15 September and 15 December 1994, attracted between them 2332 proposals and a total request for EU funding of 7.8 billion ECU.

The external evaluation process involved nearly 1000 evaluators in total. Their shortlist of the most highly rated proposals formed the basis for the Commission's services consultation with the three programme committees earlier this year.

These committees are composed of representatives from each EU member

state and associated country. The substantial overlap of membership between the three committees is of great benefit in developing a coordinated approach and avoiding duplication of effort.

The final list that emerged from these discussions was endorsed by the Commission in July 1995. Subject to the outcome of contract negotiations, the first projects will start in the near future.

The projects and other actions selected cover the development of advanced

communications systems and infrastructures, and trials of the new services these make possible (ACTS); work on the core underpinning information technologies (software, microelectronics, multimedia) and their integration into systems and applications (Esprit); and applications of information and communications technologies in specific areas such as education and training, healthcare, the environment and transport (Telematics Applications).

The breakdown between the three programmes is as follows:

	Proposals received	Funding requested (million ECU)	Proposals selected	Funding recommended (million ECU)
Telematics	1375	4373 MECU	290	424 MECU
Esprit	626	1593 MECU	179	307 MECU
ACTS	331	1930 MECU	119	459 MECU

ACTS 1994-1998: second Call for Proposals for RTD actions for the specific programme for research and technological development, including demonstration, in the field of advanced communications technologies and services (1994-1998)

The following text giving details of a new call for proposals was published in the Official Journal on 10 July 1995. The deadline for receipt of proposals is 1 March 1996 so applications can still be made. The text is printed in full below.

Please note that in section 5 concerning small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) one deadline has already passed, but further information on this point can still be obtained from the contact point.

1. Pursuant to the Decision by the European Parliament and the Council adopting the fourth framework programme of European Community activities in the field of research and technological development and demonstration (1994 to 1998) and to the Council Decision establishing the specific programme for research and technological development, including demonstration, in the field of Advanced Communications Technologies and Services (ACTS), the Commission of the European Communities is inviting proposals for RTD actions.

In conformity with Article 5(1) of the Council Decision establishing the said specific programme, a work programme has been drawn up by the Commission, detailing the scientific and technological objectives and types of RTD activities to be undertaken, and the financial arrangements to be made for them.

2. The objectives and the research, technological development and demonstration activities included in this present call for proposals cover the areas described in the work programme.

The legal entities referred to in Articles 1, 2 and 3 of the Council Decision on the rules for participation in the specific programmes as well as the JRC are invited to submit proposals.

Under this call proposals are invited within the objectives and scope of the ACTS Programme and relating, in particular, to the Projects taken up under the first call.

Proposals should address the

- Enhancement of involvement in the ACTS Programme
- Enlargement of participation (in particular providing opportunities for SMEs to join existing ACTS Projects);

- Horizontal Links bridging field trials supported in different programmes on national, EU and international level;
- Vertical Links bridging gaps between advanced communications trials in ACTS and user communities;
- Concerted Actions providing specific fora for consensus formation and the consolidation of the development of guidelines for the introduction of advanced services;
- Secondment of young engineers as "visiting scientists" with ACTS projects and National Host Organisations outside their country of origin.
- Consolidation of technological work
- Cellular Television and interactive Multimedia environment;
- Harmonized Control and Management in Photonic Networks;
- Optimization of integrated and scaleable High Speed Networks;
- Satellite components for 3rd Generation Mobile and Broadband Wireless Systems;
- Service creation process and experimental service development.

Deadlines

3. Proposals must be delivered to the Commission before March 1st, 1996 at 17.00 local time by mail, by courier, by hand or in appropriate electronic form to the address indicated in point 6.

4. Research and technological development activities will be addressed, in general, in shared costs RTD actions, in conformity with the modalities for implementation set out in Annex III of the Council Decision on the specific programme. Moreover, certain measures will be taken as measures appropriate for the specific programme or preparatory, accompanying and support measures or concerted actions as set out in the Council Decision and in the work programme.

The proposals will be subject to a selection procedure based on the criteria set out in Annex II of the fourth framework programme and in Article 4(3) of the Council Decision on the rules for participation in the specific programmes.

The RTD actions will be the subject of contracts within the scope of the Council Decision on the rules for

participation in the specific programmes, and their results will be disseminated in line with the principles set out in the Council Decision concerning rules for the dissemination of research results from the specific programmes of research, technological development and demonstration of the European Community.

5. Special provisions for organisations from Central and Eastern Europe and SMEs

Organisations from Central and Eastern Europe are eligible to be funded up to 50% of the costs of participation in ACTS RTD projects under the second activity of the 4th Framework Programme (Promotion of international cooperation in the field of Community research with third countries).

To assist SMEs in exploring the opportunities offered by joining ACTS projects, small grants covering not more than 75% of the costs incurred in the search for partners can be awarded on the basis of Outline Proposals submitted in the context of this second call by October 15th, 1995 and selected following an evaluation.

6. Detailed information concerning the procedure to follow for the submission of proposals (Information Package) and the contract that will be established in respect of selected proposals will be available on request from the Commission's services. The description of work undertaken in previous programmes and related activities will also be provided upon request.

All correspondence concerning this second call, as well as proposals for RTD activities, should be addressed to:

European Commission,
DG XIII-B/ACTS,
BU9 room 4/82
Rue de la Loi, 200
B- 1049 Brussels, Belgium
tel. : +32 2 296 34 15
facsimile : +32 2 295 06 54
Email via Internet:
aco@postman.dg13.cec.be
Email via CompuServe:
100302,2607

The use of electronic mail is strongly recommended.



TELEMATICS IN TRANSPORT: INTEGRATION ACROSS THE BOARD

In June 1995, the Council of Ministers approved a Resolution on the deployment of telematics in the road transport sector, and the European Parliament also approved a resolution on the deployment of telematics in all transport sectors, both taking into account the Commission Communication COM(94)-469 of November 4, 1994.

These resolutions promote the development of telematics applications to support traffic management and new value-added transport services, eg advanced vessel traffic management and information systems, systems for air and rail traffic management, for road, urban and multimodal traffic management, together with travel and traffic informatics services, rate guidance, advanced vehicle systems,

freight/fleet operation systems, etc.

Many different parties at various administrative levels (Community, national, regional, local) will be involved in the results of this action. By means of a "High Level Working Party", the Commission will convene representatives of the national administrations responsible for the deployment of telematics and will link in the group representatives of users, information and communications providers, industry, and transport operators in public/private partnerships, as was also proposed by the Bangemann Group.

The Telematics infrastructure and the services in these fields of transport will be developed in order to offer the people and businesses of Europe

increased efficiency, improved safety and a less polluted transport environment. The opening of the transport market for telematics services and products will considerably encourage the promotion of new public/private partnerships for implementing telematics applications in the sectors concerned, thereby creating new businesses and new jobs.

To contribute to this success, the Telematics Applications RTD programme within the 4th Framework Programme will support the development of the Transport Telematics Infrastructure through demonstration projects, and will promote priority telematic services in the transport sector.

Telematics Applications Programme results of 1st and 2nd Calls for Proposals; publication of 3rd call and a rolling call for support actions

The first call for proposals in the framework of the RDT specific programme in the field of Telematics applications of common interest (1994-1998) was issued on 15 December 1994 and closed on 15 March 1995. This call addressed many sectors of the programme: administrations, transport, research, education and training, urban and rural areas, healthcare, environment, language engineering, programme support actions and specific measures for SMEs.

It proved a real success both in terms of participation, Community funding and proposal quality. 1,375 proposals were received by the Commission; the Community funding request totalled 4,373 Mecu; and after evaluation 335 proposals - of which 31 on a reserve list - were shortlisted.

The Commission adopted its decision on 26 July 1995 concerning the evaluation of these 335 proposals for RTD actions eligible for Community contribution for a total amount of 423.905.000 ECU. The 304 (31*) shortlisted proposals are shared out amongst the different sectors as follows:

- 19 (7*) proposals in the Telematics for Administrations sector
- 75 (6*) proposals in the Telematics for Transport sector
- 14 (6*) proposals in the Telematics for Research sector
- 23 (9*) proposals in the Telematics for Education and Training sector
- 32 proposals in the Telematics for Urban and Rural Areas sector
- 70 proposals in the Telematics for Healthcare sector
- 17 (3*) proposals in the Telematics for Environment sector
- 25 proposals in the Language Engineering sector
- 29 proposals concerning Programme Support Actions.

Amongst these proposals, 24 projects address specific SMEs issues.

(*) on a reserve list

Second Call for Proposals: results

The second call for proposals for the Telematics Applications Programme was issued on 15 March 1995 and closed on 15 June 1995. It addressed the following sectors (or part of them): telematics for libraries, telematics engineering, language engineering, information engineering and

programme support actions.

The Commission received 330 proposals which were evaluated in June/July 1995.

The Commission adopted its decision in October 1995 on the evaluation of 91 proposals (of which 24 are on a reserve list) eligible for Community contribution for a total amount of 54.552.000 ECU.

The 91 (24*) shortlisted proposals are shared out amongst the different sectors as follows:

- 25 (12*) proposals in Telematics for Libraries
- 11 (3*) proposals in Telematics Engineering
- 4 (2*) proposals in Language Engineering
- 23 (6*) proposals in Information Engineering
- 4 (1*) proposals concerning programme support actions.

(*) on a reserve list

Third Call for Proposals

Furthermore, the third call for proposals for the Telematics Applications Programme has been published in the Official Journal C240 or S176 of 15 September 1995 and will

Telematics Applications Programme

results of 1st and 2nd Calls for Proposals; publication of 3rd call and a rolling call for support actions (continued)

close on 15 January 1996. This call addresses the following sectors (tasks): Research (support measure RE 5.3), Education and Training (task ET 1.7 and tasks ET 3.1 to 3.3. support measures), Healthcare (accompanying measures supporting user groups - task HC 5.1-, support measure concerning integrated services for resource management - task HC 2.2), Disabled and Elderly People (all tasks), Language Engineering (all tasks).

In total, an indicative amount of 61 MECU has been estimated for this call.

For the disabled and elderly people sector, a notice announcing the organisation of an information day on 9 October 1995 and a call for expression of interest was published in the Official Journal of 15 June 1995. The Commission received about 750 expressions of interest, the results of which will be compiled and made available to the interested public.

Rolling Call for Proposals

A rolling call for proposals for support actions of the Telematics Applications Programme has been opened on 15 September 1995 (OJ C240 or S176 of 15.9.1995) and will last until 15 June 1998. This call addresses tasks

concerning awareness, dissemination of results and promotion of telematics, international cooperation and training.

The information package relating to these calls is available upon request from the address below.

Contact:
European Commission - DG XIII
Telematics Applications Programme
Proposals Office
200 rue de la Loi (BU29 4/41)
B-1049 Brussels
Fax: +32-2-295 23 54
E-mail: telematics@dg13.cec.be
ftp://www.echo.lu/pub/telematics/call/proppack.exe

Health Telematics at MEDICA '95: Düsseldorf, 22-25 November

Out of more than 100 projects funded as part of the Telematics Applications Programme within the Third and Fourth RTD Framework Programme in the area of health, a considerable number will be presented at MEDICA '95. Held in Düsseldorf, Germany from 22-25 November 1995, this is the world's largest trade fair and exhibition on medicine.

A permanent feature of the fair is MEDICA-Medienstrasse ('Media street'), the most important annual medical software exhibition, which will display the latest developments in the area of medical software. These include the radical new possibilities in diagnosis and treatment now being offered by image banks, multimedia, virtual reality, information superhighways and telemedicine.

In particular MEDICA-Medienstrasse will present the projects funded under the Health Telematics programme of the European Union. Software developers and doctors from all over the EU will be unveiling their new programmes under the banner "Health Telematics: EU projects show the way to the future". Projects to be presented include:

- TANIT (Telematics for Anaesthesia and Intensive Therapy);
- OPHTEL (Telematics in Ophthalmology);
- HERMES (Telematics Healthcare - Remoteness and Mobility Factors in Common European Scenarios). This will focus on emergency and high-dependency telemedicine applications and will include services for passenger airlines, European holiday resorts, ambulances, high-risk new-borns, ambulatory cardiology patients and on-call doctors/nurses/midwives;
- SCENE/CARDI ASSISTED ultrasound support for cardiac diagnosis and treatment;
- MANSEV (Market Authorisation by Network Submission and Evaluation): improving the market authorisation process for human and veterinary medicinal products through using a telematics application;
- ATIM/VATAM (Assessment of Information technology in Medicine): an inventory of methods and tools used for the technological assessment of information technology in medicine in general, and for imaging and knowledge-based systems in particular.
- DIABCARE: an automatic and anonymous comparison of data on the quality of diabetes therapies through a telematics application.

The annual MEDIZIN software competition will also take place, in which prizes are awarded to the most promising software developments (with the second prize sponsored by the EU).

Special programme presentations are envisaged at 14.00 h on 22 and at 11.45 h on 24 November 1995.

For further information, please contact the addresses below.

Contact:
Medisoft GmbH, P.O. Box 900 649
D-60446 Frankfurt
tel: +49 69 774 321 fax: +49 69 772 341

Contact:
Dr. Gottfried Dietzel
European Commission
DG XIII
200 rue de la Loi (BU29 3/51)
B-1049 Brussels
Belgium
fax: +32 2 296 66 40

Information Engineering announces projects for 1996-1998

A total of 25 new Information Engineering projects have been selected following the 2nd Call for Proposals under the Telematics Applications Programme. The Information Engineering sector of the call attracted 1012 participations from EU Member States and non-EU countries, including a strong contribution from SMEs, industry, telematics services suppliers and user organisations representing both professionals and end-users.

The Commission has allocated approximately 20 MECU to funding the new projects which will have a duration of 1-3 years. In total, twenty-one pilot applications and four support actions were selected, with seven of the new pilots stemming from feasibility

projects carried out under last year's Exploratory Actions in Multimedia Publishing. Negotiations are currently under way to conclude contracts with the new projects with a view to a January 1996 start date.

The new pilots cover a diversity of applications in key areas such as electronic newspapers and magazines, multimedia catalogues, multimedia asset trading, scientific and medical publishing and technical documentation and services. Specific subject areas which the pilots address include:

- multimedia access to cultural information
- geographical mediation systems
- publication of electronic multimedia materials
- multimedia interactive catalogues
- information systems for working and training
- multimedia local newspapers
- multimedia brokering
- multimedia in industrial design.

Each pilot covers a range of research tasks in the workprogramme, with a major emphasis on user needs and behaviour, multimedia information repositories, improved retrieval environments, information visualisation and presentation, and flexible information delivery.

Contact:

European Commission
DG XIII/E-1, Office C4/024
Bâtiment Jean Monnet
L-2920 Luxembourg
Tel: +352 4301 34195
Fax: +352 4301 34959
E-mail: telematics@mhsg.cec.be

Exploratory actions in multimedia publishing concluded

The exploratory actions in multimedia publishing, initiated in 1994 and comprising a series of feasibility studies and projects, have recently reached their conclusion. The purpose of these actions was to prepare the ground for subsequent activity in the Information Engineering sector of the 4th Framework Telematics Applications Programme. The studies covered areas of significant relevance to the sector, including: available networks, information transactions, project management, telepublishing, usability, non-text retrieval, influential technologies and corporate publishing.

The 22 feasibility projects covered a range of domains including multimedia asset trading, advertising, STM

publishing, multimedia catalogues, technical documentation and services, and electronic newspapers and magazines. Project consortia included major European publishers, research organisations, specialist SMEs and user groups.

Fact sheets for the feasibility projects and studies are available from the European Commission, or via the World Wide Web.

Feasibility projects:

http://www.echo.lu/programmes/en/fact_sheets/factproj.html/

Studies:

http://www.echo.lu/programmes/en/fact_sheets/elpubproj.html/

The projects and studies ran in parallel, with emerging results from the studies being communicated to project contractors via a programme of concertation and dissemination. There was frequent interaction between the projects, with meetings between different consortia to discuss common

requirements, in certain cases leading to a merger of projects. The 22 projects and 8 studies are now complete and all have submitted final deliverables. Following a formal review, which will include an assessment of each final report by a panel of external reviewers, Information Engineering will publish the final reports of the studies and a selection of public deliverables from the feasibility projects. These will be made available both as printed reports and in electronic format via the World Wide Web.

Contact:

European Commission
DG XIII/E-1, Office C4/024
L-2920 Luxembourg
Tel: +352 4301 34195
Fax: +352 4301 34959
E-mail: telematics@mhsg.cec.be

GIS project fact sheets available

An information pack describing eight projects funded by the IMPACT 2 programme to develop practical applications of geographic information system (GIS) technology is now available from the address below. The fact sheets, which include colour graphics illustrating each project, are also accessible on the I'M-Europe WWW server (<http://www.echo.lu/>).

The projects described are being supported under Action Line 4 (Supporting strategic information initiatives) of the IMPACT programme. Following a Call for proposals in

November 1992, project selection was carried out in two phases: a six-month Definition Phase involving 28 projects and an 18-month Implementation Phase, which began in August 1994, involving the eight pan-European projects featured in the information pack.

The projects explore the use of GIS technology across a range of applications in business, commerce, industry and education. Project descriptions are accompanied by a list of the consortia and contact details for all participants. The pack also contains background information on GIS technology, EUROGI (European Umbrella Organisation for Geographic Information) and the use of GIS in the European Commission. In addition,



general topics relevant to all the projects are addressed such as finding data, project management, marketing, technology issues, and multimedia and interactivity.

Contact:
IMPACT Central Office
European Commission, DG XIII/E
Bâtiment Jean Monnet
L-2920 Luxembourg
Tel: +352 3498 1222
Fax: +352 4301 32847
e-mail: impact@echo.lu

GI2000: Towards a European Geographic Information Infrastructure

Geographic information (GI) is a complex, rapidly growing and important part of the information society with many applications in international and national government, business and research. GI is important because of the content and value of electronic spatial information for planning, land management, marketing studies, environment, renewable energy resources, emergency services, health care, political analysis and many other uses.

Although new GI technologies and applications are developing rapidly, future growth in Europe is hampered by major differences in the way GI is collected, stored and distributed in the different countries and in different sectors of government and commerce. The major impediments to the widespread and successful use of GI in Europe are not technical but political and organisational. The lack of a European mandate on GI is retarding the development of joint GI strategies, causing unnecessary costs and stifling the development of new goods and services.

The situation can be improved through a European Geographic Information

Infrastructure (EGII). The EGII would take the form of a stable, European-wide set of agreed rules, standards and procedures for creating, collecting, exchanging and using GI. The EGII would also ensure that a broad platform of European base data is readily available so that every market niche is open to every entrepreneur, existing data can be combined to provide valuable information and new data can be added effectively and immediately.

During 1995, following requests from a number of Member States, the Commission has initiated actions leading to a coordinated approach to GI in Europe. DG XIII has coordinated a series of high-level meetings in Luxembourg of a Strategic Forum to consider the issues involved and draw up recommendations for the way forward. The recommendations include a communication to the EU Council of Ministers.

The EGII policy document, "GI200: Towards a European Geographic Information Infrastructure", explains what GI is and why it is important for Europe to have an appropriate infrastructure. It describes who collects, disseminates, uses and profits from GI in Europe. Europe's strengths and weaknesses with respect to GI are examined, as are the legal issues and bottlenecks. Finally, the strategies and political and legal issues involved in setting up the EGII are proposed and explored, with recommendations for further action.

The policy document is available on request from the address below and is also accessible on the I'M-Europe WWW server (<http://www.echo.lu/>). The Commission invites comments on the content of this document.

Contact:
European Commission, DG XIII/E
Bâtiment Jean Monnet (C4 /28)
L-2920 Luxembourg
Tel: +352 4301 32187
Fax: +352 4301 32847
e-mail:
martin.littlejohn@lux.dg13.cec.be

I'M-Europe stimulates interest in information market activities

I'M-Europe, one of the Commission's World Wide Web (WWW) servers, has attracted considerable interest during its first year of operation since September 1994. The month of September 1995 saw a total of 144,780 total document accesses, representing a fivefold increase over the same month last year. The server has shown a high level of dynamism in terms of coverage, quality and innovation and is now a major player in the dissemination of information and provision of services related to the European electronic information services market.

I'M-Europe was launched by ECHO (European Commission Host Organisation) within the IMPACT programme. One of its objectives is to promote public awareness of the activities of DG XIII (e.g., INFO2000, IMPACT 2, Fourth Framework Programme including Language Engineering, Information Engineering and Telematics for Libraries, and Information & Communication Technologies Partnership activities). A second, and equally important,

objective is to provide a medium of communication with the major target groups for EU initiatives in the aforementioned areas, and thereby to encourage participation. From the outset, the server has been providing details of Community research programmes and other initiatives related to the information market, including Calls for proposals, information days, etc. Online registration is available for certain events. The server also offers three online discussion forums (I'M-Europe, GI2000 and Generic Services Teleforum) to stimulate information exchange among the players in the information services market. The content of I'M-Europe complements that of the Commission's main WWW server EUROPA as well as of the ISPO and CORDIS servers, appropriate hyperlinks being established with all three.

The recent development of a generic WWW gateway within I'M-Europe to all ECHO databases provides user-friendly graphical access, eliminating the requirement for users to master a command language.

The network of IMPACT National Awareness Partners (NAPs) is also using the Internet to advantage to raise its profile and increase public

awareness of EU and national initiatives throughout Member States. As part of their NAP networking activities, the organisations involved are gradually implementing WWW servers with a corporate image and common home pages, and offering a large number of hyperlinks to I'M-Europe. By working together, I'M-Europe and the NAPs aim to offer a coherent multilingual WWW network across Europe. This will serve the needs of the main players in the information market in general, and the multimedia industries in particular.

The URL (address) for I'M-Europe is: <http://www.echo.lu/>. Enquiries should be e-mailed to: webmaster@echo.lu.

Contact:
ECHO
B.P. 2373
L-1023 Luxembourg
Tel: +352 3498 1200
Fax: +352 3498 1234
e-mail: echo@echo.lu

From scribe to screen: what direction will training take?

Formerly limited to assisting management and eliminating repetitive tasks, today information technologies (IT) play a role in aiding complex functions in all professions. Recognising the interrelationship between IT and research and training, and taking into account the new technologies' relevance to competitiveness and quality of life, the challenge set for the European Union by the White Paper of December 1993 in the context of the information society is the mastery of information - a new sociological commodity.

Within the framework of IMPACT 2, DG XIII/E organised on 19-20 July 1995 in Luxembourg an important workshop attended by about 100 participants representing the

information content industry, universities and various sectors of industry. The objective was, on the one hand, to analyse the results of the experimental training actions undertaken within IMPACT 2 and, on the other hand, to define the orientation of training and education actions in the new programme INFO2000 (1996-1999).

Without exception, the participants recommended the Commission to continue developing actions that exploit synergy between INFO2000 and DG XXII's programmes SOCRATES and LEONARDO, cooperative actions such as are already undertaken successfully with COMETT by the UETP and NAP networks.

Three important recommendations for 1996-1999 emerged from this workshop:

- To develop the training of specialists in multimedia technologies and in information law in order to improve

the quality of the information content industry

- To develop management-level training for SMEs in order to develop competitiveness
- To develop the training of primary school teachers in order to make the best use of apprenticeship

The proceedings of the workshop are available from the address below.

Contact:
Mr D. Deberghes
European Commission, DG XIII/E
Bâtiment Jean Monnet (B4 /24A)
L-2920 Luxembourg
Tel: +352 4301 34725
Fax: +352 4301 33190

Third Call for proposals in Language Engineering

The Language Engineering sector of the Telematics Application Programme launched its third call for proposals on 15 September 1995 with a closing date of 15 January 1996. Priority assistance will be given to:

- Innovative pilot application projects exhibiting a broad European scope, a significant user dimension, and a clear deployment and exploitation potential. These projects will concentrate on the integration, validation and deployment of well-mastered language technologies. Proposals addressing the needs of elderly and disabled people are welcomed.
- Leading-edge pilot application projects contributing to the emergence of an open Information Society through research and demonstration efforts aimed at countering information under- and overflow resulting from the growing availability of multilingual multimedia content over broadband

and mobile communication networks. These projects will foster the consolidation of novel language technologies and their integration into multimedia information and communication products and services. RTD will aim at the next generation of telematics applications, and will feature focused, goal-oriented research efforts.

There is a specific effort in this call to encourage proposals falling within the scope of and contributing to global G7 projects in the area of multimedia information access and management. These proposals are expected to bring together researchers, information providers and system integrators, and to co-operate closely with on-going and planned European and international initiatives in the field

Horizontal and support actions will address pre-normative standards and guidelines; assessment of language components to be integrated into larger telematics products and service; European conferences and exhibitions; and user surveys in several countries and socio-economic sectors.

Documents relative to this call can be obtained from the Telematics Help Desk (see below) or from the WWW at

URL <http://www.echo.lu/>. All specific enquiries regarding the Language Engineering sector will also be handled at the address below.

Contact:

European Commission, DG XIII/E-5
Bâtiment Jean Monnet (B4-002)
L-2920 Luxembourg
Fax: +352 4301 34999
e-mail: telematics@mhsg.cec.be

Coming soon - ECOSOC opinions online

In the last quarter of 1995, a new database will be launched by the Economic and Social Committee (ECOSOC) and hosted experimentally on ECHO (European Commission Host Organisation).

Within the European institutions, ECOSOC produces opinions on draft Community legislation. The Committee has 222 Members representing employers, workers and other interest groups such as farmers and consumers. Committee opinions are prepared after referral by the Council or on "own initiative". In some specific areas, ECOSOC performs an observation and monitoring role (e.g., ECOLABEL, Internal Market Observatory).

ECOSOC establishes and reinforces contacts with socio-economic interest groups of the Member States and of third countries who have concluded agreements with the EU. Through its sponsor organisations, ECOSOC plays a crucial role in briefing the citizens on EU legislation and action and provides a vital link between the process of European integration and society as a whole.

The new database will contain the full text of all ECOSOC opinions. Initially, coverage will start from January 1995. Texts will be available in all working languages. The database will also contain the full text of the ECOSOC monthly bulletin in English and French. This publication includes a summary of all opinions and the corresponding Commission proposition. It also provides a comprehensive overview of other ECOSOC activities.

The database will from the outset

feature a graphical user interface, which will also permit users to automate login procedures and prepare queries offline. The introduction of a generic interface makes it accessible from the World Wide Web. The database will include the following fields: Date, Time, References, Rapporteur, Co-rapporteur and Language.

The ECOSOC database will be available free-of-charge. In addition, it is planned to disseminate key documents of the Economic and Social Committee on the World Wide Web.

Contact:

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Legal Advisory Board on the Internet

The European Commission's Legal Advisory Board (LAB) was established to increase awareness of the legal challenges facing the creation of a European information market. The legal framework needs to adapt to the changing requirements of the information society in areas such as intellectual property and access to information.

Up-to-date information on LAB activities appears regularly on DG XIII's I'M-Europe WWW server (<http://www.echo.lu/impact/lab/en/labdocs.html>), where a comprehensive listing of LAB documents is available and specific items can be ordered online.

Because of the low cost of electronic diffusion, the WWW site will from time

to time include additional documents not available from the LAB Secretariat on paper. The first such "guest" document is "Convergence and Trans-European Networks: some policy problems" by Prof. Jean-Claude Burgelman.

In addition, since the summer of 1995 the home page of Strathclyde University Law School has provided a host for the presentation of reports and articles prepared by the Legal Advisory Board. This co-operative venture enables the work of the LAB to be disseminated to a wider audience in an easily accessible form.

As well as browsing for news items, reports on meetings and workshops, conference proceedings and LAB documents, Internet users accessing the site have the opportunity to obtain background information in a section entitled 'What is The Legal Advisory Board?', to view the list of LAB members and to order LAB documents online.



Another feature provided is the facility for users to receive an e-mail message each time the LAB home page changes.

The URL for the Strathclyde University Law School server is as follows:

<http://www.strath.ac.uk:80/Departments/Law/diglib/ec/>

Contact:

IMPACT Central Office
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New series "Libraries in the Information Society"

The Telematics for Libraries sector of the Telematics Applications Programme is introducing a new series of attractively presented studies on the theme "Libraries in the Information Society". The first four studies, which will become available before the end of 1995, are as follows:

- "Library performance indicators and library management tools" by Suzanne Ward, John Sumsion, David Fuegi and Ian Bloor (EUR 16483, price to be determined)

In the case of libraries, performance measurement refers to an analysis of inputs and outputs relating to the provision of an information service. Ideally, the costs and internal functions behind the service should be evaluated as well as the services themselves.

The conclusions of this study isolate not only the educational and technological barriers which have hampered more widespread use of performance measurement techniques, but the need to evaluate libraries on a financial level in addition to the better known service-oriented measures.

- "Chipcard use in libraries and information webs. Recommendations to create intelligent libraries in Europe" by Jaap Akkermans and Andrew Davies (EUR 16135, Ecu 7)

This report argues that chipcards will have a dramatic effect on both current and future library services. Verifying the identity of the library client, creating new means of payment, securing the delivery of documents, and segmenting the customer base are all examples of the potential for chipcards in library services.

- "Artificial neural networks for information retrieval in a libraries context" by Dr ir. Johannes C. Scholtes (EUR 16264, Ecu 33)

This study provides the state-of-the-art of the application of artificial neural network (ANN) technology to information retrieval (IR) with particular emphasis on bibliographic information in a libraries context. It assesses the quality of ANN-based approaches to IR.

- "Business analysis of the library systems market in Europe" by KPMG (EUR 16212, Ecu 8.5)

The study includes two surveys, first of libraries and secondly of system suppliers. Thirty libraries were interviewed, drawn from a cross-section of forward-thinking and relatively advanced libraries in EU Member States. Twenty systems suppliers were interviewed, including five not based in the EU.

The study provides background information on the evolving library systems market in Europe, with a view to encouraging indigenous library systems suppliers to participate more actively in collaborative R&D projects.

The above publications may be bought from EUR-OP's local agents in your own country. For a complete of EUR-OP local agents see overleaf.

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PROTECTION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Further to the ESPRIT call issued on 15 December 1994 in the Multimedia Domain (Domain 3, Task 3.7) two new complementary ESPRIT projects are being launched. Their aim is to co-

ordinate and facilitate the emergence of practical compatible technical solutions for protecting Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in the information society. Both projects are

monitored by DG III-F6 in close cooperation with DG XIII and DG XV-E4 (Authors' rights & related rights).

ESPRIT Project N° 20676 - IMPRIMATUR

(Intellectual Multimedia Property Right Model and Terminology for Universal Reference)

IMPRIMATUR represents the interests of content providers, users, IT and telecoms companies, and brings together major European and American participants with a view to building an international consensus on common rules and standards in IPR protection. This process will be achieved through:

- the setting-up of Special Interest Groups (SIG) in the business, legal, technical and standards areas,
- the organisation of a series of major international conferences aimed at consensus building in the four SIG areas,

- the implementation of an IPR managed server in order to conduct a series of trials and experiments with Electronic Copyright Management Systems (ECMS).

If you are interested in participating, please get in touch with the project contact (see below).

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ESPRIT Project N° 20460 - COPEARMS

(Co-ordinating Project for Electronic Authors Right Management Systems)

The primary objective of COPEARMS is to assist "vertical projects" concerned with IPR management and co-financed by the EC to take advantage of the experience of the earlier ESPRIT project 5469 - CITED (Copyright in Transmitted Electronic Documents).

This is in order to implement interoperable Electronic Copyright Management Systems. A related objective of the project is to carry out a

standardisation process necessary for ECMS interoperability together with the vertical projects and in close cooperation with IMPRIMATUR.

Project contact

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R & D FOR CULTURAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

ESPRIT project N° 21671 the EVA-CLUSTER

The "EVA-CLUSTER" project aims to create a 'Special Interest Community', providing significant assistance to EC IT projects in the cultural systems field. This is to enable them to collaborate more effectively and thus help improve Europe's current strong position in the emerging world-wide markets for Cultural Information Systems. Such assistance will include the dissemination of available results by hard copy as well as electronic newsletter over the WWW.

Although the EVA-CLUSTER is being launched as a "working group" part of the accompanying measures within the multimedia domain of the ESPRIT programme, its scope goes beyond the specific objectives of this programme.

All interested parties should approach the project contact mentioned below.

Project contact

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EUROPEAN CO-ORDINATION IN THE MULTIMEDIA DOMAIN

ESPRIT Project N° 20559 - MAGNET

Multimedia Action Groups Network

MAGNET aims to provide a European platform allowing the existing national "Multimedia Special Interest Groups" (SIGs) to co-ordinate actions in the multimedia area. At the moment they represent seven European countries.

These SIGs have a common goal of harmonising and supporting their activities at the national and European level, thus ensuring that all relevant actors (users, suppliers, manufacturers, research & academic institutions, public administrations and their legislatures) keep pace with and take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the rapidly

growing and fast changing multimedia domaine.

Although MAGNET is being launched as a "Working group" part of the accompanying measures in the multimedia domain of the ESPRIT programme, its scope of action goes beyond the specific objectives of this programme.

All interested parties should approach the appropriate contact person mentioned below.

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Contact persons for the national SIGs of MAGNET

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STANDARDISATION

ETSI: custodian for DVB descrambling system

The European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) has been named custodian for the distribution of technical information on the common descrambling system agreed by the European Project - Digital Video Broadcasting (DVB). The system will be incorporated into integrated receiver decoders (IRD) or conditional access subsystems (CAS). These are designed to unscramble programming services which charge a fee to viewers and are broadcast using the DVB source coding and transmission specifications.

The European Project - Digital Video Broadcasting (DVB Project) comprises 180 manufacturers, broadcasters, infrastructure providers and national administrations, and adopts specifications for digital video broadcasting. These specifications are currently in the process of adoption as part of formal European standards by ETSI and (concerning television receiver standardisation) its partner organisation, CENELEC.

The DVB Custodian Agreement has been drawn up between ETSI and the four developers of the common scrambling system: Canalt SA and the

Centre Commun d'Etudes de Télédiffusion et Télécommunications (CCETT) of France, Irdeto, Netherlands, and News Datacom, UK. The agreement and the related licence agreement set the terms for the grant of licences for the common descrambling system. They delegate to ETSI on behalf of the developers, the granting of licences and the disclosure of confidential information relating to the system.

Under these agreements, there will be a two-step procedure before information about the system can be given to potential licensees such as descrambling component manufacturers or conditional access systems providers:

1. when applying for a licence, an applicant must provide ETSI with evidence of his ability to use the technology and confirm that he has not engaged in audiovisual piracy (as defined in Recommendations of the Council of Europe);

2. ETSI will apply for an export or other governmental licence.

The licensee will obtain a non-exclusive, non-transferable right and licence to use the common descrambling system on a world-wide basis; A one-off royalty payment of 1000 ECUs will be payable to the developers of the system and an administrative fee of the same amount to ETSI.

A complementary scrambling technology is soon to be finalised. The four developers and ETSI will then agree arrangements for the distribution of information about it.

The full procedure for granting a licence and its terms are set out in the DVB Licence Agreement which may be obtained from ETSI, attention Mr. J. Ketchell, from the address below.

Contact:

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Contact for DVB Licence Agreement:

Mr. J. Ketchell, ETSI

DVB Project contact:
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European Standardisation conference: obstacle or opportunity for the information society?

7-8 December, Mandelieu la Napoule, France

A major opportunity to consider the future of standardisation is on offer at a forthcoming conference organised by the three European standardisation organisations, CEN (the European Standards Committee), CENELEC (the European Electrotechnical Standards Committee), and ETSI (the European Telecommunications Standards Institute).

The conference will outline results from the past year and progress made towards creating the technical

standards necessary for a market entering the age of the information society. It also aims to explain the benefits of standards for business, professional bodies and government departments, and the role of the standardisation organisations. A representative of the European Commission's DGIII will give the EC viewpoint, and presentations will be made by senior international representatives of industrialists and users worldwide.

The target audience is people with responsibility for standardisation policies and the development of telecommunications equipment or products using information and communication technologies. About 300 delegates are expected to attend

over 2 days. Proceeding will be translated simultaneously into English, French and German. For more information contact the address below.

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EUROPEAN DIMENSION

UK SMDS user forum established

An inaugural meeting of the UK SMDS User Forum (Switched Multimegabit Data Services) took place at the offices of Interconnect Communications Ltd (ICC) on Tuesday 4 July. Participants included BACS, Barclays Network Services, Chemical Bank, TSB, UKERNA and United Biscuits. This forum is the first to be established for users of broadband services. It will be affiliated to the European SMDS Interest Group (ESIG), enabling the forum and its members to interact directly with the suppliers of SMDS equipment and services and SMDS user forums in other European countries also affiliated to the ESIG. The ESIG stated that International SMDS services can only benefit from an international user community working in harmony to develop common platforms.

Switched Multimegabit Data Services (SMDS) is a connectionless broadband service launched by British Telecom (BT) in the UK in January 1994. SMDS currently works over a DQDB technology platform but is easily upgraded to ATM as BT introduce ATM technology. Users can obtain data rates ranging from 0.5Mbits/s to 25Mbit/s. The service, using a common specification platform, is also available in the USA, Australia, Germany and other European countries from the respective PTOs.

BT, who were invited to attend the inaugural meeting, stated that they look forward to a professional working relationship with the UK SMDS User Forum. BT have offered to host the next meeting of the forum at their Hemel Hempstead premises.

Membership of the forum is expected to reach 50 blue chip users by the end of 1995 and grow to over 100 by the end of 1996. John Roberts of ICC,

currently the chairman of the European SMDS Interest Group, was elected chairman of the user forum for its initial period of growth. He said that the objectives of the user forum would be to focus on ways in which companies could take advantage of emerging broadband services as they become available. SMDS can be used effectively to communicate with both suppliers and customers, and it is the development of this mode of thinking which will make the forum a powerful commercial influence for major UK and international businesses.

Contact:

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Fax: +44 1291 627119

1995 IEEE Workshop on Nonlinear Signal and Image Processing

The 1995 IEEE Workshop on Nonlinear Signal and Image Processing was held at the Porto Carras resort in Neos Marmaras, Greece on June 20-22, the second in a series of international workshops on these topics.

The first was held in January 1993 in Tampere, Finland, and the third will take place in September 1997, in Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island, Michigan, USA.

The workshop was chaired by Dr. Ionnis Pitas, Professor at the Department of Informatics, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece and was under the auspices of IEEE (CAS and SP Societies) and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and also sponsored by NAT, a longterm research project of the European Union.

It was attended by 265 research and scientists from all over the world who presented 258 papers in 23 regular poster and oral sessions as well as 15 special sessions.

These papers were selected out of 440

papers submitted for consideration to the workshop, after a review process carried out by independent reviewers.

The papers presented gave a state-of-the-art overview in a wide range of topics, including Signal and Image Processing and Analysis, Image Coding and Compression, Image Restoration, Mathematical Morphology, Fuzzy Signal Processing, Computer Vision, Artificial Intelligence, Neural Networks, Systems and Telecommunications.

In-depth presentations of important/emerging research topics were given by five invited speakers: Dr. Bensasson, Dr. Egger (on behalf of Professor. M. Kunt), Professor T.S. Huant, Professor. C. Nikias, and Professor. A. Venetsanopoulos.

The relaxed atmosphere of Porto Carras seaside resort, as well as the social activities boosted friendly discussions and exchange of ideas among people working in the area of nonlinear signal and image processing.

Proceedings of the workshop are accessible through the World Wide

Web and in a printed 2-volume version.

Furthermore they will be soon available on CD-ROM. To obtain the CD-ROM or the printed version, please contact Professor I. Pitas at the address below:

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The Commission agrees to Franco-Italian aid scheme for a Eureka project

The Commission has approved a Franco-Italian aid scheme of up to 47 million ECU to support the PLANET project (Production Line for Automotive New Electronic Technologies). This aims at designing

a totally automated assembly line for the production of electronically-controlled fuel management systems.

The PLANET is a EUREKA research project which will be carried out by Marelli Autronica in Italy and France, in cooperation with other companies in Spain and in France and with university departments in the United Kingdom, in Ireland, in Spain and Portugal.

The Italian authorities are supporting Marelli Autronica S.p.A. to a

maximum of Lit 30,817 million (14.3 MECU), whereas the French authorities have awarded a maximum of 33.4 FF million (5 MECU) aid to Marelli Autronica France.

As the scheme conforms to the Commission's policy for State aid for R&D based on the Community framework for this, the Commission decided not to raise objections to the aid in application of articles 92.3.C of the EC Treaty and 61.3.c of the EEA Agreement.

INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

Fourth Framework Programme: Israel to be first non-European participant

On 27 September 1995 a new trade agreement was initiated in Brussels by the State of Israel and the European Union. An agreement enabling Israeli organisations to participate in the R&D programmes of the EU was also decided upon. Israel will thereby become the first non-European participating country in the Fourth Framework Programme. She will contribute to the programme on an annual basis at a similar proportional rate as the other members, based on her Gross Domestic Product. This contribution will be about an additional 1%, that is, about 28 million ECU per year.

The agreement is expected to be initiated in November. However, since ratification by the Parliaments could take into next year, a special arrangement is being made to allow participation to begin from 1 January 1996. It is therefore feasible for Israeli organisations to participate in the current open calls.

With a population of five and a half million, Israel has one of the fastest expanding economies in the world, growing at over 5% per annum, with the majority being in the high technology industries and services. It is estimated that in the telecommunications field, Israel has close to 5% of the world market. Many Israeli companies are world leaders in both information technology and telecommunications.

Examples of Israeli Telecoms companies include Telrad, Tadiran, ECI Telecom, Elbit, Bezeq, the RAD Group, Teledata, Lanoptics, Fibronics, Efat Technology, Lannet, DSP Telecommunications and Nice Systems. In addition, Israeli subsidiaries of major world players, such as Motorola Telecommunications Israel carry out R&D and manufacturing.

In 1994, the sales of the various sectors of the Israeli electronics industry grew 13% to \$5.2 billion and exports grew by 17% to reach \$3.75 billion. This industry employs about 38,000 people including 22,000 engineers and technicians of which 13,000 are university graduates.

Israel has an advanced cable TV industry with many companies supplying equipment and related technology. With well over 90% of homes passed and a cable penetration in excess of 50% of households, there is heavy investment in R&D.

In the IT field, Israel has a broad collection of organisations and leads in the area of computer security and virus detection as well as multilingual word processing and educational software. Major software companies include Magic, Netmanage, Formula Systems, Aladdin Knowledge Systems, Edusoft, Eliashim Microcomputers, 4th Dimension Software, Shany Computers, Mercury Interactive and others. Other R&D facilities in Israel include those of IBM, Digital, Hewlett Packard and Microsoft.

In microelectronics, most of the major world players have R&D facilities as well as manufacturing in Israel. This includes Intel and National Semiconductor as well as Israeli-owned companies such as Tower Semiconductor.

Israel is also a major player in related areas such as multimedia publishing with world leading technologies and companies such as Scitex and Indigo.

Israel has several outstanding academic Institutions such as The Technion, The Weizman Institute, Tel Aviv University, Bar Ilan University, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Ben Gurion University of the Negev.

Further information about this agreement and opportunities for collaboration with Israel organisations can be obtained from the contacts below.

For industrial organisations:

contact:

Yair Amitay

MATIMOP

The Israel Industry Centre for R&D

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For universities and research institutes

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PUBLICATIONS

European Telecommunications Standardisation and the Information Society

The European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) has published a new guide to developments in the field of telecommunications and information technology, designed to accelerate the growth of the information society.

With a foreword by Martin Bangemann, Commissioner for Industry, IT and Telecommunications, it contains articles from the top telecommunications experts of Europe, describing some of the most important topics which will change the way we live in the 21st century.

They explain the benefits and effects of the information services and applications which are being developed in ETSI and which form the backbone of the emerging information society.

Examples and case studies have been used to illustrate the benefits from the user's point of view.

ETSI's work programme includes over 2000 standardisation work items aimed primarily at creating a unified

and harmonised European market for telecommunications products and services.

At the same time, its work contributes to the global standardisation effort. This publication provides an overview at ETSI's work and also offers a comprehensive picture of telecommunications developments in the sector as a whole.

There are three types of article: the first category outlines the telecommunications megatrends identified by ETSI's Programme Advisory Committee, which can be regarded as the main directions in which developments in telecommunications are heading.

The second type of article describes the standards created by ETSI and how the Institute functions, highlighting the way in which ETSI operates as an incubator for new ideas.

It cites GSM (the Global System for Mobile communications) and Euro-ISDN as examples of developments

born from the cross-fertilisation of ideas within ETSI.

The final set of articles offers profiles of products and services available to users in the European telecommunications market which are the results of the implementation of standards by manufacturers and service providers.

Limited numbers of softback-copies of European Telecommunications Standardisation and the Information Society are available free from ETSI (see below). The full text is available on the World Wide Web: <http://www.etsi.fr>.

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fax: +33 93 65 47 16
Internet: secretariat@etsi.fr
<http://www.etsi.fr/>

European Handbook for Open Systems (EPHOS)

The EPHOS Handbook, publicised in the last edition of the News Review, is composed of a set of booklets in English, price 100 ecu per set. Orders may be placed with the EPHOS Awareness Office (see address below).

Some translated versions will also be published by the national publications offices in due course.

Additionally, in October, as part of its handbook series, EPHOS issued a new booklet on Local Area Networks Module version 1.0, price 10 ecus.

For further information on EPHOS contact the European Commission.

Contact:

Frank Vernon Jorgensen
European Commission
DGIII-B2
200 rue de la Loi
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Belgium
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fax: +32 296 95 00

To order publications, contact the EPHOS office.

Contact:

EPHOS Awareness Office
Xcoms International
54 rue d'Angoussart
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tel: +32 10 41 11 72
fax: +32 10 41 17 42

The European Context for Assistive Technology

Vol I in AT Research series



Edited by: I Placencia Porrero and R Puig de la Bellacasa
1995, 459 pp, hard cover, ISBN 90 5199 220 3; price NLG200; £62; DM180; US\$120

This book reports on the second congress organised by TIDE (Technology Initiative for Elderly and Disabled People), a Community Programme on subjects from the Fourth Framework Programme on RTD and demonstrations of the European Commission. It covers three major areas:

- i) R&D activities and the effectiveness of Assistive Technology products and services;
- ii) market issues and trends; social, legal and economic factors; information and service delivery; industrial interaction, cooperation and transfer;
- iii) advanced research and development projects and methodological innovations.

The book also deals with alternative displays, augmentative and alternative communications, gesture analysis, hearing and speech, orientation and navigation, as well as electronic documents, intelligent environments, multimedia, robotics, sensors, telecommunications and broadcasting, and virtual reality.

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for information on publications and orders:
e-mail: market@ios.nl
<http://www.iospress.nl/iospress>

Personal Communications Networks: Practical Implementation

By Alan Hadden

Published by Artech House Publications providing a single-source reference for PCN/PCS services and developing mobile services. Hardcover c.285 pp, ISBN 0-89006-762-7, Order Book J4762, price £45.

The concepts, competitive positioning, business and technical issues necessary for deployment and successful operation of personal communications networks and services are the subject of this new book. It is aimed at engineers, marketers, regulators, manufacturers,

analysts and researchers requiring knowledge and understanding of existing/developing PCN/PCS systems.

The book contains a comprehensive overview of PCN/PCS services and a review of their prospects and opportunities worldwide. Grounded in the author's own real-world experiences in implementing the world's first commercial PCN system, this practical guide covers regulatory issues, service provisioning, competitive differentiation and marketing, technology requirements, standardisation activities, system and handset design, and investment needs. Opportunities for the development of

personal communication services in Europe, North America and the Asia-Pacific region are reviewed and prospects for the future competitiveness of existing and developing systems are examined.

Contact:
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Fax: +44 171 630 0166

Latin American Telecoms to 2000

Published by Financial Times Telecoms and Media Publishing, 200 pp, ISBN 1 85334 315 3, price £315 (Europe).

This new report provides a detailed analysis of the fast developing telecoms market in Latin America, which is set to be worth \$50 billion by 1997.

It assesses the following key topics:

- privatisation and liberalisation
- digital switching and infrastructure
- regional market for infrastructure and terminal equipment
- satellite and mobile communications
- VANS (Value-Added Networks)
- choosing telecoms hubs.

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AGENDA

ONLINE/CD-ROM Information 95: 5-7 December 95, Olympia, London

With the introduction of true interactivity, online information has changed for ever. Electronically distributed information has become more accessible, more complex and more powerful than ever before. Billed as the world's largest information event of its kind, Online/CD-ROM Information 95 is the industry's leading forum for dealing with electronic information - its provision, distribution, management and use. The conferences and exhibition represent the electronic equivalent of international book fairs - but with the added bonus of bringing together both sellers and buyers, so is a key platform for the launch of electronically-available media products. The exhibition offers a combination of traditional publishing practices with cutting-edge electronic developments,

and is a major showcase for information professionals from all over the world. Themes include multimedia, interactive TV, and home information systems.

Exhibitors include:

- online and CD-ROM database publishers
- online vendors and hosts
- Internet connectivity, software and services suppliers
- suppliers, producers and manufacturers of CD-ROM authoring and retrieval systems
- CD-ROM and optical disc producers
- CD-ROM drive manufacturers
- information suppliers and brokers
- library systems developers
- traditional 'hard copy' publishers
- booksellers
- industry associations, government and educational establishments
- value-adding services

Internet World International (Winter) will occupy an entire floor and can be contacted on: <http://iwi.-learn.com>. For more information on the conference and exhibition see details below.

Contact:

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fax: +44 (0) 1865 736 354
Internet e-mail:
conference@learned.uk
marketing@learned.uk
<http://www.learned.co.uk/online95>

Mobiles in Eastern Europe: 12- 13 December 1995, Prague, Czech Republic

A conference on mobile telecommunications in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union will take place from 12-13 December at the Hotel Forum Praha, in Prague, the Czech Republic.

It will bring together representatives of international industry with policy makers and operators from across the region and covers effective marketing,

tariffing and the distribution of GSM and NMT to all the main customer segments.

The five main topics of the conference are:

- regulatory developments
- marketing strategies
- tariff packages
- distribution channels
- fraud minimisation

For information on registering on hotel accommodation, or on obtaining documentation for those unable to attend the conference in

person please contact the address below:

Contact:

Gian Walker Esq.
Programme Manager, Mobile
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Les autoroutes de l'information - enjeux et défis: colloque franco- québécois

Lyon, 6-8 December 95

Held under the auspices of the French and Canadian governments, the above conference will take place in Lyon, France. It aims to bring together experts from both sides of the Atlantic and provide an opportunity to reflect and exchange views on five major information society themes:

- political visions and technological perspectives in Quebec, France, Europe and the French-speaking world
- new informatics environments and their legal framework

- fundamental values in the virtual environment
- intellectual property and information highways
- information highways and French-speaking areas.

In addition there will be a plenary session entitled 'What information society?'. Keynote speakers are drawn from French, Swiss and Canadian government, research and industrial circles. The European Commission will also be represented, and presentations made by Mr V Parajon Collard, Acting Director-General of DGXIII, and Serge Lustac, DGXIII Luxembourg.

Jean-Paul Ducasse, Head of Library

and Documentation Services, Institute of Political Studies, Lyon, and Jacques Frémont, Professor of Public Law and Director of the Centre of Research in Public Law, University of Montreal, are the technical advisers to the conference.

For further information see below.

Contact:

Mr Ducasse
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e-mail: ferreira@univ-lyons2.fr
URI: <http://iep.univ-lyon2.fr/jcartier.html>

AGENDA

TTI 96 - Technology Transfer and Innovation conference: London, 1-3 July 1996

Calls for papers for this major international conference next year were issued in the autumn and the final deadline for decisions on acceptance will be made by 22 December 95.

The conference aims to encourage innovation in industry and commerce, especially in SMEs, and to identify successful means of implementation.

Its target audience is decision-makers and practitioners involved in the exploitation of new ideas in industry, government and academic circles.

Keynote speakers include Mr G-C Grata, head of Directorate D, DGXIII,

and Mr H C Jones, Deputy Director-General, DGV, European Commission, as well as heads of industry, commerce, research institutes and government bodies from Europe, Canada, Australia and Korea.

During its three days at the Queen Elizabeth II Centre, London, TTI 96 will:

- demonstrate good practice in innovation;
- examine models of effective continuing professional development
- highlight developments in science and technology and consider how they can be translated into improved processes and products.
- The themes of each day are: Helping industry innovate; People and Innovation; Technology Opportunities.

For more information contact the address below.

Conference Secretary
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