

No. 9/89  
March 22, 1989

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## E.C. COUNCIL EXPANDS RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMS

The E.C. Council of Ministers recently adopted four specific research and technological development programs aimed at advancing the industry and energy sectors. A total of 683 million European Currency Units (ECU)\* has been allocated to finance their implementation for the period 1989-1992.

The programs are described below.

**BRITE/EURAM** (Basic Research in Industrial Technologies for Europe). 1989-1992: 499.5 million ECU.

This program is a follow-up to BRITE which was launched in 1985 to boost the competitiveness of Europe's traditional manufacturing industries (cars, chemicals, textiles, aircraft, shipbuilding, etc.) through application of new production technologies.

Brite/Euram now extends this goal to production of advanced materials and aeronautics. The expanded research program covers:

- technologies for advanced materials (high temperature ceramics, superconductors, special glass, light alloys, composites etc.);
- advanced testing techniques for feasibility and quality control;

\* 1 ECU = \$1.12 on March 9, 1989

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- membrane science and technology, powder metallurgy, surface treatment etc.;
- advanced design and manufacturing techniques;
- aeronautics (acoustics, aerodynamics, advanced embarking and propulsion systems).

The program will foster joint projects between businesses (large and small-to-medium sized enterprises (SMEs)), universities and research centers of the member states. The projects must involve at least two industrial partners from two different countries. On average, the E.C. Commission will contribute up to 50 percent of the costs incurred. SMEs are particularly encouraged to participate and can receive up to 75 percent funding from the Commission.

**JOULE** (Joint Opportunities for Unconventional or Long-term Energy Supply). 1989-1992: 122 million ECU.

This is the fourth Community program to be implemented in the area of non-nuclear energy and rational uses of energy. Its objective is to promote the development of diversified and environmentally safe technologies that would make the Community more self-sufficient in terms of energy supply and more competitive in the energy technology sector.

The program will finance projects to:

- construct demonstration models showing supply and demand for energy resources, interaction of energy uses with the environment and internal market impact on energy;
- promote energy saving in buildings, combustion and industrial processes, fuel cells and high temperature superconductors;
- improve all techniques involved in the exploitation and conversion of fossil fuels;
- promote renewable sources of energy, in particular wind energy, solar energy (development of photovoltaic cells based on crystalline or amorphous silicon), biomass, hydro-electric and geothermal energy (using "hot dry rock" technology).

**OPTIMUM USE OF LARGE SCIENTIFIC FACILITIES.** 1989-1992: 30 million ECU.

Many of the large scientific facilities of the member states are underused because researchers are restricted to those in their home country. This program aims to remove obstacles to cross-frontier research by granting the necessary financial support to large-scale facilities in return for their agreement to give temporary access to scientists and researchers working in universities, public research centers and industrial laboratories. The program will also reinforce the existing compatibility of Europe's scientific equipment in its ongoing specialization and pursuit of highest performance.

The program was conceived in close connection with SCIENCE (Stimulation of the International Cooperation and Interchange Needed by European Research Scientists) and will be implemented with the aid of CODEST, a committee of high-level specialists advising the Commission.

**DECOMMISSIONING OF NUCLEAR INSTALLATIONS.** 1989-1992: 31.5 million ECU.

This plan is part of the Community's ongoing efforts to close up to 50 plants by the year 2000 which are no longer productive or safe. Since the program was launched in 1979, 17 installations have been shut down.

The new budget will be used to:

- initiate four major decommissioning projects (at Sellafield, England; Gundremmingen, West Germany; Mol, Belgium and Cap de la Hague, France) and several pilot projects in other member states;
- test new techniques for the safer dismantling of nuclear installations;
- treat waste construction materials from dismantled installations (steel, concrete and graphite);
- improve techniques for the reduction of occupational radiation exposure during dismantling;
- adopt remote or semi-autonomous handling systems;
- assure the professional security of displaced plant managers or advisors to the Community on nuclear energy policy.

The E.C. Council also reached common positions (political agreement in principle) on six new specific programs. The programs will be re-examined in a second reading by the European Parliament before returning to the Council for a final decision. Under the current proposals, these programs and their budgets would be:

**Mast** (Marine Science and Technology). 1989-1991: 50 million ECU;

**Flair** (Food Linked Agro-Industrial Research). 1989-1993: 25 million ECU;

**Monitor** (Strategic analysis, forecasting and evaluation, in matters of research and technology). 1989-1992: 22 million ECU;

**Value** (Dissemination and utilization of results of Community research). 1989-1992: 38 million ECU;

**Doses** (Development of Statistical Expert Systems). 1989-1992: 4 million ECU;

**Eurotra** (automatic translation system for the official Community languages): 7 million additional ECU until June 30, 1990.