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REPORT

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology

on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (COM(85) 113 final + final/2, COM(85) 145 final - Doc. C2-17/85) for a decision on a preparatory action for a Community Research and Development Programme in the field of Telecommunications Technologies - R & D in Advanced Communications-technologies for Europe (RACE) - RACE definition phase

Rapporteur: Mr Amédée E. TURNER

PE 97.978/fin.
Or. En.

By letter of 18 April 1985 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament to deliver an opinion, pursuant to Article 235 of the EEC Treaty, on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a decision on a preparatory action for a Community Research and Development Programme in the field of Telecommunication Technologies - R & D in Advanced Communications-technologies for Europe (RACE) - RACE definition phase.

On 6 May 1985 the President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Transport, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial policy, and the Committee on Budgets for an opinion.

At its meeting on 22 January 1985 the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology appointed Mr TURNER rapporteur for R & D developments in the field of telecommunications, as well as rapporteur on the expected proposal to the Council on RACE.

The committee considered the Commission's proposal and the draft report at its meetings of 22 April, 15 May and 23 May 1985.

At the last meeting the committee decided unanimously to recommend to Parliament that it approve the Commission's proposal without amendment.

The committee, after roll-call, then adopted the motion for a resolution as a whole unanimously.

The following took part in the vote: Mr SALZER, acting chairman, Mr ADAM, vice-chairman, Mr SELIGMAN, vice-chairman, Mr TURNER, rapporteur, Mr BONACCINI, Mr FORD, Mr KILBY, Mr KOLOKOTRONIS, Mr LINKOHR, Mrs LIZIN, Mr MALLET, Mr METTEN, Mr MÜNCH, Mr SPÄTH, Mr STARITA, Mrs VIEHOFF and Mr WEST.

The opinions of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy and the Committee on Transport are attached.

The opinion of the Committee on Budgets will be published separately.

The report was tabled on 30 May 1985.

The deadline for tabling amendments to this report will be indicated in the draft agenda for the part-session at which it will be debated. PE 97.978/fin.

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The Committee on Energy, Research and Technology hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution together with explanatory statement:

A

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

closing the procedure for consultation of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a decision on a preparatory action for a Community Research and Development Programme in the field of Telecommunications Technologies - R & D in Advanced Communications technologies for Europe (RACE) - RACE definition phase

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission to the Council (COM(85) 113 final + fin. 2)
 - having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 235 of the EEC Treaty (Doc. C2-17/85),
 - having regard to the report from the Commission to the Council (COM (85) 145 final),
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Energy, Research and Technology and the opinions of the Committee on Transport, the Committee on Economic, Monetary and Industrial Affairs and the Committee on Budgets (Doc. A2-58/85),
 - having regard to the result of the vote on the Commission proposal,
- (a) whereas the proposed programme is in line with the Framework Programme of the Communities and the aims and objectives of the Community strategy for science and technology as well as its strategy for promoting industrial sectors or new advanced sectors,
- (b) recognising the increasingly important role telecommunications is playing for the economies of Member States in general and concomitant developments,
- (c) whereas it is vital that Europe take into account the need to create jobs when defining its options for economic recovery,

1. Welcomes the initiative taken by the Commission to develop cooperation between national telecommunications authorities and the supply industry manufacturers, which is required to overcome historical national band telecommunications policies, to create a European policy for a European telecommunications market;
2. Points out that an integrated broad-band communication system for Europe is a vital requirement to maintain European competitiveness in the communications field and thus to help to attract general economic growth to Europe through the advantages of superior communications, as economic growth is attracted to those areas with the best communications;
3. Points out, furthermore, that attention should be paid to those aspects that could reduce regional disparities and create employment;
4. Considers that the later stages of the RACE programme will ultimately involve decisive social options, not only as regards research but also as regards equipment and infrastructure and that it will be necessary to achieve as broad a consensus as possible between all representative social organizations;
5. Notes that much work has been done already by representatives of the telecommunications authorities and the telecommunications supply industries of Europe to prepare comprehensive proposals for R & D projects to provide integrated broad band communications for Europe by 1995;
6. Considers that this Definition Phase, comprising three reference models and eight associated long-lead exploratory projects, should be commenced at once;
7. Hopes that as the European integrated broad band network (IBC) is developed priority will be given in the selection of projects to those involving groups of small and medium-sized private firms, universities and/or undertakings and which will make an impact on several Member States by guaranteeing the principle of European preference in the selection process;

8. Requests the Commission to report back to the European Parliament both on the preliminary results of the Definition Phase work within 12 months of its start, and with an evaluation of the alternatives available for the next phases;
9. Points out that the endorsement does not prejudge Parliament's opinion on the second and third phases of the RACE programme, which will be subject to separate reports by its competent committee;
10. Instructs its President to forward to the Commission and the Council, as Parliament's opinion, the Commission's proposal as voted by Parliament and the corresponding resolution.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

I. A EUROPEAN INTEGRATED BROAD BAND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICE

1. Broadband network means a communication system (based largely on optical fibre transmission and satellites) capable of carrying up to and above 1000 Megabits per second. This capacity and speed is required for the economic transfer of large volumes of data (text, voice, image), for instance computer links and video conferencing. An integrated network means that all European national networks operate on the same standards so that switching and other components in the network and standards for user terminals served by it are the same.

II. THE PRESENT POSITION OF EUROPEAN TELECOMMUNICATIONS

2. Each European country at present has its own network which is end-to-end compatible with the others, but the standards for switching components etc., though falling within agreed international recommendations of the CCITT, have many options so that the European supply industry has to manufacture separately for each national network.

3. The telecommunications authorities in each Member State require for their own operation with the rest of Europe end-to-end compatibility (a "gateway" system of compatibility); they do not for their own purposes need to require European standardisation of their components. However the supply industry, in practice, finds it impracticable to manufacture components (eg switching apparatus) according to the different options in each Member State and therefore has not been able to develop its technology with the economic advantages of a European-wide market. It has not proved economically viable to produce components for the network of another Member State in order to meet perhaps 10% of that market. Therefore, so far as the European market is concerned the supply industry has been based on the potentialities of each single Member State. Exports, notably to the USA market, where the demand is much greater for any particular standardised component, have therefore been

easier than to neighbouring European national markets. Hitherto this weakness of the European supply industry has not been a matter of direct concern to the European telecommunication authorities because they each have had a practical monopoly of demand in their own country, and had the option, if it should ever appear desirable, to look outside to US and Japanese suppliers.

4. At the present time and for many years ahead, the telecommunications authorities of Europe will be digitalising their traditional analogue systems; common end-to-end standards for Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) are already agreed, but recommended options remain in the ISDN system for standards on the components needed within any national network so that even with ISDN there will be no common set of standards for components within Member States.

5. It is foreseen that ISDN will be enhanced and progressively replaced by the telecommunications authorities to bring it up to broadband as and when necessary. RACE is concerned with this.

III. USA AND JAPAN

6. In the USA broadband technology has been given a very considerable boost by the USA Air Forces order for a network worth some billions of dollars. In addition a considerable number of broadband links have already been installed by operators connecting customer premises. In Japan the INS (Integrated Network System) already provides an optical overlay network, and customer premises are being connected with optical fibres. The investment already committed from 1982-95 has been \$120 billion.

IV. RACE AND RACE DEFINITION PHASE

7. The present report is concerned expressly only with the RACE Definition Phase. This comprises the creation of three reference models: one for an integrated broadband network, one for terminals and one for services to be provided on the network, and eight specific research projects on aspects of broadband networking, the results of which are necessary for validating the reference models and providing information for work with the models on evaluating technical and economic options for broadband communication in Europe.

8. The RACE programme itself comprises a very substantial agenda of possible research projects, which could be relevant to the creation of a European broadband network. The Definition Phase and main programme have been proposed and worked out by the suppliers research organisations and the telecommunications industry.

9. The reference models of the Definition Phase are intended to provide the information necessary to make decisions on the economic and technical factors which must be considered before subsequent work (in RACE itself) could be assessed and decided on. The Definition Phase should last 18 months from 1 July 1985.

V. THE PURPOSE OF THE THREE REFERENCE MODELS

10. It is generally agreed that a degree of broadband capacity will be required to provide sufficient speed and capacity to transmit complex computer data and for video conferencing at least for users in industry and commerce. The time scale of the growth of demand and the possible lines for technical solutions required will partly depend on the cost of the services and therefore the network and services reference models will be required to create reliable scenarios of requirements, demand, cost and timing. Such work should be done on a European scale in order to ensure that a true overall picture of the demand, timing, and technical requirement to meet European needs is obtained. Such an appreciation is of importance to both the telecommunications authorities and to the supply industry. The Commission has properly taken the initiative to ensure that this is done, realising that national models would give an insufficient picture. Information obtained from the terminals reference model will be of value to the supply industry.

11. Without a European focus, rendered possible by the reference models, there is the danger that different national telecommunications authorities will adopt different timetables and technical solutions which, though they would no doubt aim at achievement of end-to-end compatibility between different networks, would not be capable of producing common technical standards for components and offer sufficient to give the supply industry a common European-wide market.

VI LONG-LEAD TIME R & D (DEFINITION PHASE PART II)

12. This programme of eight projects is required first to check the practical feasibility of the reference models and secondly to provide technical information for use in these reference models, whose job it is to indicate what technical facilities would be required for each of the operations necessary in a broad band communications system. The projects in Part II of the definition phase will enable the operation of the reference models to discriminate between technical/economic options and provide costings for research and development required for them. In addition the technical nature of software options to be considered in the reference models operation takes up the subject matter of one of the eight long-lead time projects

13. The work required for input to the reference modes is:

(a) very high speed circuits - the choice of performance options for circuits of circuits is decisive for switching and functional performance of terminal component 'designs' in the communications system;

(b) high complexity-integrated circuits - examination of the technical option for data acquisition and presentation of visual, acoustic and other signals;

(c) integrated optoelectronics - the options as between optical and electrical processing for coding etc. based on assessments of technical/economic characteristics of silicon, gallium arsenide (etc) and optoelectronic hybrids;

(d) broad band switching - assessment of options between low dissipation space switching, time division switching and optical switching;

(e) passive optical components - assessment of alternative processing technologies for low cost mass production of lasers, photo diodes etc.;

(f) high bitrate long haul links - transmission capacity options concerning multiplexing components for long haul links;

(g) dedicated communication software - for examination of the technical/economic factors of high productivity of software development tools;

(h) large area-flat panel display technology - examination of low cost options for use in the terminals reference models.

VII SPECIFIC FACTORS RELEVANT TO THE VALUE OF THE REFERENCE MODELS AND 8
ASSOCIATED EXPLORATORY R & D PROJECTS - THE DEFINITION PHASE

14. There are a considerable number of factorss, many disputed or disputable, which already do and will radically affect the development of telecommunications in Europe in the next few years. They are all inevitably raised in consideration of RACE, with different emphasis arising according to different points of view and interests. Your rapporteur believes that uncertainties as to the future which exist at the present time can be significantly lessened by the information which the reference models and the associated exploratory projects can provide. Furthermore, work on these reference models over the next 18 months can lead to a greater degree of common approach to the future of European telecommunications and hence to agreement in relation to issues raised by the RACE programme itself.

15. The most important of the various views are:

(a) The interests of the telecommunications authorities are often perceived to differ in some respects from those of the supply industry. A European programme of harmonisation of standards for telecommunications hardware and software is vital if the European supply industry is to broaden its market. For the telecommunications authorities on the other hand only end-to-end compatibility between national networks is a vital need.

(b) For the telecommunications authorities satisfactory supplies from any source, European or otherwise is vital. The further development, at the expense of a purely European supply industry, of essentially non-European grouping or groupings where European interests are in a minority, could meet European telecommunication authorities' needs.

(c) In the European supply industry there are two current developments, on the one hand, technological and commercial link-ups with the US and Japanese industries are created, and on the other hand, the institution of technological and commercial cooperative groups between major undertakings in

German, Britain, France and Italy. It is very much in the interests of the latter that common European standards be agreed speedily for components (as distinct from mere end-to-end compatibility).

(d) The costs of research and development into broad band components is so great that no one national European market could justify the required expense. As a consequence, if a European market is not attained for components, the US and Japanese companies with their larger home markets and greater military and governmental commitment could better bear the cost of R & D and would be in a good position to pick off national European markets one by one.

(e) Faced with the problems of the development of the next stage of telecommunications the European supply companies could themselves be tempted to settle for secure, small national markets, rather than to attempt to effectively oppose the development in broad band telecommunications of national differences of standards.

(f) The deregulation of ATT in the USA has released new forces and altered alignments in the world market, and it is too soon to see how the supply industries will adjust. This renders information from the reference models all the more important.

(g) Some experts in the supply industries strongly feel that broad band developments in Europe must come sooner than 1995 as proposed by the Commission, and that the supply industry cannot wait for RACE.

(h) There is, on the other hand, a view amongst some experts in the telecommunications authorities that broad band will be economically viable only for industrial and commercial customers and the demand of these is not entirely cost-dependent and that, therefore, the need for optimal development of broad band is not urgent; it will be provided as and when customer demand insists. This and the lines of thought in (g) can be better assessed when the reference models are in being when a more definitive picture will be available of the scope, nature and timing of broad band in Europe.

(i) Nonetheless, if a telecommunications authority failed to lead demand for broad band, there seems little doubt that others would enter the market (in Britain where deregulation has been achieved) and perform in other Member States by one means or another if the relevant authority failed to respond.

(j) It is generally agreed that, as a whole, economic growth is attracted preferentially to areas of the world with the best communications; it should follow from this that laggard responsiveness to potential demand for broad band, for instance data transfer and video conferencing will inevitably affect the economic growth of Europe vis à vis the USA and Japan.

(k) There is a view that data transfer will continue to depend primarily on leased lines because of the danger of lack of secrecy and security in a publicly switched system. Again, the reference model will help to elucidate this issue.

(l) Enhancing ISDN to broad band will naturally depend to a considerable extent on existing standards, but there will also be a considerable degree of "green field" standardisation possible in the entirely new sphere of broad band. Naturally "green field" standardisation is far easier than harmonisation of existing technical standard. There is no agreement on the actual degree to which broad band will allow "green field" standardisation. This would be far clearer from work on the reference model.

(m) The cost of research and development personnel is high and there is no surplus of such personnel in Europe; thus there is some conflict as to the priority of allocation between companies' wider based projects.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

1. A considerable number of factors relevant to the development of European telecommunications are viewed differently by different interested parties at the present moment; new alignments in response to the perceived technical and market potentialities are taking place.

2. The further growth of coordination between European supply companies should be encouraged. It is clear that they comprise the accepted form of

R & D cooperation in Europe as at present commonly understood in high technology. However, those European companies who have put greater weight on links with US or Japanese companies must be enabled to cooperate fully in European R & D. There are likely to be many other cooperative developments; and indeed a number of new entrances into the supply industry are apparent. Clearly (however the new developments fare) a European-wide market for hard and software from broad band telecommunication with common standards is vital to all three of these developments.

3. At the present stage the research of the reference models and their accompanying 8 long-lead projects are vital before correct emphases can be identified for the resolution of the next steps towards a European broad band communications system. Over the next 18 months it is desirable that the various stresses and strains in the European telecommunications should be more widely understood outside the circles of those directly interested.

4. Then when it is appropriate to take long-term decisions on the suitability, nature, scope, timetable and order of priorities on the main stage of RACE or on whatever other steps are required for broad band development, decisions can be made in the light of work done on the reference models and their 8 exploratory projects comprised in the Definition Phase of RACE.

5. To make full use of the potentialities of the three reference models it is necessary to carry out also the 8 associated long-lead exploratory projects of the Definition Phase, because these are required in order to confirm the practical feasibility of the three reference models, and in order to provide the technical information required to be fed into them to obtain useful results.

6. The Definition Phase stands quite independently of the presently outlined main phase projects, and is necessary in order to propound European as distinct from national scenarios, for the future of European broad band developments. It would be inappropriate until the results of the Definition Phase start to become available to decide whether, or to what extent, the main phase of RACE is the appropriate answer for European broad band development and whether, or to what extent, other solutions will be required.

O P I N I O N

(Rule 101 of the Rules of Procedure)

of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy

Draftsman : Mr METTEN

On 22 April 1985, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy appointed Mr METTEN draftsman.

It discussed the draft opinion at its meetings of 21 May 1985 and adopted the conclusions unanimously.

The following took part in the vote : Mr SEAL (chairman); Mr BEAZLEY (vice-chairman); Mr METTEN (draftsman); Mr ABELIN, Mr AIGNER (deputizing for Mr Franz), Mr BESSE, Mr BEUMER, Mr BONACCINI, Mr CHABOCHE, Mr FALCONER, Mr de FERRANTI, Mr FITZSIMONS (present under Rule 93(2), Mr FRIEDRICH, Mr GAUTIER, Mrs van HEMELDONCK, Mr MIHR, Mr MÜHLEN (deputizing for Mr Wedekind), Mr PATTERSON, Mr PFENNIG (deputizing for Mr Raftery), Ms QUIN, Mr ROGALLA, Mr STARITA, Mr VISSER (deputizing for Mr Wagner) and Mr von WOGAU.

Background

1. In September 1980, the Commission put forward a series of recommendations in the field of telecommunications concerning the implementation of harmonization, the creation of a Community market for telematic terminals, opening up public telecommunications markets in general and establishing an Advisory Liaison Committee between the Commission and the Community telecommunications administrations. Parliament's generally favourable opinion on these recommendations¹ was based on a report by Mr Herman² from the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs. There was no immediate response from the Council.

2. The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs subsequently drew up an own-initiative report on the subject of telecommunications³, with Mr Leonardi as rapporteur. The report was a wide-ranging one, calling for the establishment of a European strategic plan for the sector and dealing with issues such as the financing of investment at Community level, European standardization, tariff policy, changing the basis of PTT regulation ("reregulation"), establishment of a major Community programme on telecommunications research, Community-wide infrastructure projects and the need for careful evaluation of social and regional impacts. To help in the preparation of this report, a hearing was held in Brussels on 19-20 December 1983. The Commission also published a couple of new communications to the Council⁴. Parliament's resolution⁵, based on the Leonardi report, was finally adopted on 29 March 1984. The Commission responded to Parliament by putting forward a set of initial proposals for an Action programme in May 1984⁶.

¹ (OJ No. C 144, 15.6.1981)

² (Doc. 1-138/81)

³ (Doc. 1-1477/83)

⁴ (COM(83) 329 final and COM(83) 573 final)

⁵ (OJ No. C 117, 30.4.1984)

⁶ (COM(84) 277 final)

3. Finally, in November 1984, the Council took some action on the proposals that had been put forward by the Commission when it issued⁷ Recommendations concerning the first phase of opening up access to public telecommunications contracts and the implementation of harmonization in the field of telecommunications. These important steps were followed by the agreement of the Industry Council of 17 December 1984 to a number of the general objectives outlined by the Commission:

- (a) creation of a Community terminals and telecommunications equipment market;
- (b) implementation of joint infrastructure projects;
- (c) execution of a development programme covering the technologies required for the establishment, in the long term, of broadband networks;
- (d) improvement of access for the Community's less-favoured regions to the advantages arising from the development of services and advanced networks;
- (e) coordination of negotiating positions within the international organizations concerned with telecommunications⁸.

Research and Development in Advanced Communications
Technologies for Europe (RACE)

4. It is in this wider context that the Commission's new proposals for a RACE programme must be judged. ISDN is being gradually introduced in European countries. Compared to traditional telecommunications networks, it will permit a wider range of new services to be made available (such as high-resolution videotext and teleconferencing). But technological development is so fast and so convergent (e.g. telecommunications, data processing and audio-visual

⁷ (in OJ No. L 298, 16.11.1984)

⁸ COM (85) 113 final/2, p.2

media are all converging), that ISDN will soon be outdated. As its capacity will be too limited and the transmission rate too low, in the 1990's there will be a need for a high-speed, high-capacity, low-cost integrated broadband circuit, on the development of which, for example, Nippon Telegraph and Telephone is already spending \$7 billion in 1984.

The exact form, however, which such an IBC might take is unclear. Part I of the Commission's proposed programme, therefore, consists of the development of a reference model, defining what such a network might be like as well as the necessary characteristics for the accompanying terminals. More detailed assessment of future applications would represent the third part of this definition phase.

5. Part II of the RACE programme would consist, instead, of the long-lead time exploratory R. and D. projects which is known to be necessary in any event for the development of the technologies of the future networks and which must be started as a top priority⁹.

The Commission has identified 8 areas for such selected exploratory R. and D., high-speed integrated circuits, high-complexity integrated circuits, integrated optoelectronics, broadband switching, passive optical components, components for high bitrate long-haul links, dedicated communications software and large-area flat-panel display technology.

6. The total cost of the RACE definition phase for the years 1985 and 1986 would be 42.9 million ECU, of which 22.1 million would be borne by the Community budget and the rest by national administrations and other participants at the national level.
7. The Commission's proposed timetable is for the RACE definition phase to be carried out in 1985/86 so that the future functional requirements of IBC could be established. From 1987 to 1992, Phase I would be put into operation, including IBC demonstrations from 1988. 1992 would see the start of IBC installation.

⁹ COM(85) 113 final/2, p.6

8. The RACE programme is clearly complementary to, and builds on, existing national and international programmes (for instance, COST and CEPT initiatives, as well as Community programmes such as ESPRIT). These links have been set out in a Commission working paper of November 1984 (TFTIT/2617/84). If the RACE programme is approved, certain adjustments to ESPRIT, for instance, are likely to be necessary.

9. A more in-depth appreciation of the programme and of the concept of IBC, as well as of the other elements in the proposed Community telecommunications strategy, will be contained in the forthcoming report on telecommunications to be prepared later this year within the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy.

10. Conclusions

The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Industrial Policy;

- (i) emphasizes the importance of the telecommunications industry for the buoyancy of the European economy and employment, not only because of the scale but also because of the nature of its production, arising from its contribution to the improvement of communications infrastructure;
- (ii) notes that technological developments mean that telecommunications infrastructure becomes obsolete much more rapidly, with the result that there has to be a return on the enormous R and D investment within an increasingly shorter period; because of this trend, an unfragmented domestic European market is a necessary basis for winning export sales;
- (iii) notes that information transmission (telecommunications) and data processing are making increasing use of the same technology and are becoming increasingly convergent; although the EEC has a reasonably strong telecommunications industry, it is exceptionally weak in computer technology;
- (iv) notes that in the US, the convergence of data processing and telecommunications into telematics has led to IBM, which is far and away the largest computer company, deliberately entering the telecommunications market, while the main telecommunications company, AT and T, is penetrating the data processing market; confronted with these giants' enormous R and D budgets (over \$2,000,000,000 each), European companies can only compete by a joint effort;

- (v) notes that its dominance of the market enables IBM to impose its own standards and specifications, because of the need for compatibility, and that as these are not publicized well in advance, its competitors are left lagging hopelessly behind in a very rapidly developing market; if this practice were to be extended to the telecommunications market, it would mean the end for a number of European companies;
- (vi) emphasizes, therefore, the importance of European cooperation in preventing a situation similar to that in the computer industry from developing in telecommunications and, where possible, in contesting IBM or AT and T dominance; this cooperation should at least lead to joint research and joint standards and specifications;
- (vii) cordially welcomes the Commission's proposal for advanced telecommunications R and D which envisages the definition of an integrated broadband network for the nineties and a start already being made on the requisite technological research; this proposal may count on the warm support of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Industrial Policy;
- (viii) hopes, however, that the Community will not neglect efforts for the promotion and further development of a narrowband network in the short term; IBC research under consideration will, however, also benefit ISDN;
- (ix) notes with satisfaction that the long-term research scheduled in the first phase of RACE ties in, and even partially overlaps, with the Eureka research programme recently proposed by the French Government which is intended to bolster and intensify European competition so that it does not become completely technologically dependent on the US and on Japan; this shows that it is possible to make the Eureka concept a reality by linking it to existing (ESPRIT) or proposed (RACE) EEC research programmes.

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COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT

Letter from the committee chairman to Mr PONIATOWSKI, chairman of the
Committee on Energy, Research and Technology

Subject: Proposal for a Council decision on a preparatory action for a
Community research and development programme in the field of
telecommunications technologies (R & D in Advanced
Communications-technologies for Europe) (RACE)
(COM(85) 113 final - Doc. C 2-17/85)

Dear Mr Poniatoski,

The Committee on Transport considered the abovementioned proposal for a
Council decision at its meeting of 23 and 24 May 1985.

The Committee on Transport would like to stress, first of all, that it
attaches the utmost importance to the development of advanced technologies in
the field of transport and telecommunications.

New technologies in these sectors, which fall within its terms of reference,
are among the questions of major importance listed in its programme of work
for 1985-1986, as adopted by the committee on 30 January 1985 (PE 94.242/fin.).

It will therefore be drawing up an own-initiative report on the various
aspects of the introduction of advanced technologies.

In this connection I should also like to draw your attention to the motion for a resolution which I tabled following our meeting in January on the role and use of advanced and new technologies in the field of transport (Doc. 2-1732/84 of 21 February 1985) which also gives an indication of the importance we attach to this subject.

The Committee on Transport welcomes this Commission proposal whose main aim is to develop advanced telecommunication services and networks by means of specific Community projects, and specifically, the setting up of a European integrated broadband network (IBC) which would unquestionably offer advantages not only in the field of transnational communications but also at regional and even local level (as stated by the Commission).

Our committee was asked to submit an opinion on 6 May 1985 and since we do not wish to hold back either the work of your committee, which hopes to adopt a report on this subject this month, or the Council, which referred in its letter of 18 April 1985, to the urgency of the matter, the Committee on Transport expresses its support for the proposal but retains the right to look into certain aspects of this matter in greater detail, if need be, in its own-initiative report.

Please regard this letter as the opinion adopted by the Committee on transport¹.

Yours sincerely,

(sgd) Georgios ANASTASSOPOULOS

¹ The following took part in the vote: Mr ANASTASSOPOULOS, chairman; Mr BUTTAFUOCO, vice-chairman; Mrs BRAUN-MOSER, Mr CORNELISSEN (deputizing for Mr K.-H. Hoffmann), Mr CRYER, Mr EBEL, Mr NEWTON DUNN, Mr TOPMANN, Mr VISSER and Mr van der WAAL.

