

RESEARCH

37(20)

S/T Agreement with Australia

S/T Agreement with Canada

The Council adopted two decisions concluding the Agreement amending the Agreement for scientific and technical cooperation between the European Community and Australia on the one hand, and between the European Community and Canada on the other hand.

The objective of these amendments is to widen the application of the Agreements to all research areas covering

- implementation of research, technological development and demonstration programmes, by promoting cooperation with and between undertakings, research centres and universities, and
- stimulation of the training and mobility of researchers in the Community, as far as networks between infrastructure operators and related research projects are concerned.

EDUCATION

TEMPUS III Programme

The Council adopted the Decision adopting the third phase of the trans-European cooperation scheme for higher education TEMPUS III: 2000-2006.

The aim of this programme is to promote, in keeping with the guidelines and general objectives of the PHARE and TACIS programmes for economic and social reform, the development of the higher education systems in the eligible countries through the most balanced cooperation possible with partners from all Member States of the Community. More specifically, TEMPUS III is intended to help the higher education systems in the eligible countries to address issues relating to the development and re-shaping of curricula in the priority areas:

- reform of higher education structures and establishments and their management;
- development of training leading to qualifications, with a view to making good the shortage of high-level skills needed in the context of economic reform, particularly by improving and increasing links with industry.

INTERNAL MARKET

Liability for defective products - Extension to primary agricultural products

The Council unanimously adopted the Directive extending the producer's liability without fault for defective products to primary agricultural products and game, which were not included in the scope of the original Directive 85/374/EEC.

The Directive seeks to achieve a two-fold objective: increase consumer protection, as mentioned in the Luxembourg European Council's declaration on food safety; and strengthen the internal market by removing distortions of competition, while maintaining the balance between consumers' and producers' interests, and by increasing legal certainty.