

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES  
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

6776/92 (Presse 101)

1585th Council meeting

- Telecommunications -

Luxembourg, 5 June 1992

President: Mr Joaquim FERREIRA DO AMARAL

Minister for Telecommunications of the  
Portuguese Republic

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium

Mr Jan DE BOCK Deputy Permanent Representative

Denmark

Mr Helge ISRAELSEN State Secretary for Ecclesiastical Affairs and Communications

Germany

Mr Christian SCHWARZ-SCHILLING Federal Minister for Posts and Telecommunications

Greece

Mr Dimitri STAMATOPOULOS Secretary-General at the Ministry of Telecommunications

Spain

Ms Héléna SALGADO Secretary-General for Communications

France

Mr Emile ZUCCARELLI Minister of Posts and Telecommunications

Ireland

Mr Brendan KENNEALLY Minister of State at the Department of Tourism, Transport and Communications

Italy

Mr Francesco TEMPESTINI

State Secretary at the  
Ministry of Posts and  
Telecommunications

Luxembourg

Mr Alex BODRY

Minister for Posts and  
Telecommunications

Netherlands

Mr A. OOSTRA

Deputy Permanent Representative

Portugal

Mr Joaquim FERREIRA DO AMARAL

Minister for Telecommunications

Mr Carlos Silva COSTA

State Secretary at the Ministry of  
Transport and Telecommunications

United Kingdom

Mr Edward LEIGH

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State,  
Department of Trade and Industry,  
(Consumer Affairs and Small Firms)

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Commission

Mr Filippo Maria PANDOLFI  
Mr Jean DONDELINGER

Vice-President  
Member

ACTION PLAN FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF ADVANCED TELEVISION SERVICES IN EUROPE

The Council discussed the proposal for a Decision establishing an action plan for the introduction of advanced television services in Europe.

At the end of discussions, the Presidency drew the following conclusions:

- "1. The Council discussed the draft Decision establishing an Action Plan for the introduction of advanced television services in Europe, submitted by the Commission following the approval of Directive 92/38/EEC on the adoption of measures for the satellite broadcasting of television signals, recognizing the importance of the work already carried out by COREPER and the Working Party of Economic Counsellors.
2. Recognizing that the draft under discussion forms an integral part of the agreement reached in December 1991, the Council invites COREPER to continue work on the draft Decision with a view to its adoption in the second half of 1992.
3. As the Opinion of the European Parliament has not yet been delivered and as the framework for the financial perspective for 1993-1997 remains to be defined, the Presidency notes with satisfaction the Commission's willingness to release as rapidly as is legally possible the figure of ECU 33 million entered in the budget for 1992 in order to permit the immediate submission of projects for examination in collaboration with the Member States.

4. The Presidency meanwhile notes the possibility of consensus being reached on the basis of the following guidelines:
- the Action Plan should focus on promoting services in the 16:9 format (D2-MAC or HD-MAC standard) with a view to establishing a critical mass such as to permit the development of advanced television services in Europe;
  - the Action Plan should focus on the range of integrated operations directed towards providing a television service to the consumer rather than on the various elements in isolation;
  - the Memorandum of Understanding, although an essential part of the development strategy for advanced television services in Europe, does not encompass contractual agreements, with the result that eligibility for the envisaged funding will not be dependent upon the signing of that Memorandum;
  - the indicative nature of the allocation of resources to the various elements in the chains of production of services must make it flexible enough to be adjusted to genuine needs, in particular in terms of programme production;
  - the Member States must be guaranteed adequate participation in the administration of the programme through a committee with an appropriate status;
  - the concept of dual degressivity is recognized as the general principle of the method of funding the services, and it must be ensured, without prejudice to the criterion of quality, that there is a balanced allocation

in geographical and linguistic terms which takes into account the difficulties in responding in the short term of the regions with the weakest audio-visual capacities."

GREEN PAPER ON POSTAL SERVICES

The Council took note of the Commission's presentation of the Green Paper on the single market in postal services, a discussion document intended to open the debate on the Community postal services sector, and in particular the prospects for its liberalization.

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OTHER DECISIONS IN THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR

Development of the Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) in the context of trans-European networks in the European Community

The Council adopted the Resolution reproduced below:

COUNCIL RESOLUTION  
of 5 June 1992

on the development of the Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN)  
in the Community as a Europe-wide telecommunications  
infrastructure for 1993 and beyond

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community,

Whereas Council Recommendation 86/659/EEC <sup>(1)</sup> calls for the co-ordinated introduction of the Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) in the European Community;

Whereas the Council Resolution 89/196/04 <sup>(2)</sup> calls for the availability of a set of Europe-wide compatible ISDN offerings to be implemented in the context of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the public telecommunications network operators;

Whereas Council Directive 90/387/EEC of 28 June 1990 on the establishment of the internal market for telecommunications services through the implementation of open network provision <sup>(3)</sup> calls upon the Council to adopt a specific Recommendation on ISDN; whereas Council Recommendation 92/ /EEC <sup>(4)</sup> invites Member States to implement on their territory harmonized access arrangements and a minimum set of offerings, which will therefore have a significant impact on the development of ISDN;

Whereas the European Council agreed at Maastricht on the importance of Trans-European networks, including in the field of telecommunications, where ISDN may play an important role as an advanced network;

Whereas the Commission's "Third Annual Progress Report on the co-ordinated introduction of ISDN in the European Community" establishes the status of the implementation of ISDN in the Member States;

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(1) OJ No L 382, 31.12.1986, p. 36.

(2) OJ No C 196, 1. 8.1989, p. 4.

(3) OJ No L 192, 24. 7.1990, p. 1.

(4) See page....of this Official Journal.



Whereas the same report proposes to focus the efforts for the co-ordinated introduction of ISDN in the Community towards the implementation of the EURO-ISDN; <sup>(1)</sup>

RECOGNIZES:

1. the role which the availability of a coherent set of harmonized ISDN standards plays as an important prerequisite for the implementation of the EURO-ISDN and the significant progress which the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) has made in this area;
2. the efforts already undertaken by the public telecommunications network operators within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding on ISDN;
3. the importance of developing ISDN in the context of Trans-European networks;

CONSIDERS THE FOLLOWING MEASURES AS NECESSARY:

4. to finalize and adopt the EURO-ISDN standards as a highest priority for ETSI, taking into account the subsequent adoption by the Community of appropriate Common Technical Regulations in this area;
5. to continue with the co-ordination of the introduction of ISDN within the Community and to focus these efforts on the rapid introduction of the EURO-ISDN;
6. to promote EURO-ISDN at a world-wide level;

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(1) The term EURO-ISDN is used to address an ISDN implementation fully based on harmonized European standards and in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding on ISDN.

INVITES THE PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK OPERATORS TO:

7. develop, harmonize to the extent suitable and publish migration plans from currently existing ISDN offerings to the EURO-ISDN, taking into account technical and commercial issues;
8. examine further harmonization in respect of the introduction and integration of packet-switched services in the context of ISDN;
9. study the feasibility of an alignment of the national ISDN signalling systems;
10. contribute, in co-operation with the other interested parties, to the identification of cross-border communication requirements arising from the completion of the internal market and the specific role which ISDN can play in that area;
11. collaborate with third-countries network operators on interconnection experiments;

INVITES THE COMMISSION AND THE PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK OPERATORS TO:

12. proceed with appropriate consultations with users and manufacturers, to review the progress on implementing EURO-ISDN;

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES TO:

13. encourage the rapid introduction of EURO-ISDN, taking into account the application of the Open Network Provision (ONP) principles in this area;

INVITES THE COMMISSION TO:

14. intensify consultations and develop appropriate initiatives concerning the implementation of ISDN, taking into account the general framework of Trans-European networks;
15. continue to promote the identification of user requirements in the context of the European ISDN User Forum (EIUF);
16. identify and promote the application of ISDN communication means for small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular for transnational applications, in the context of the internal market;
17. promote a European-wide ISDN terminal market, in particular by the development of appropriate standards ensuring interoperability and interchangeability;
18. analyze the possibilities for a specific support to the introduction of EURO-ISDN in the less favoured regions.

Application of open network provision to leased lines

Following the completion of the co-operation procedure with the European Parliament, the Council formally adopted the Directive on the application of open network provision to leased lines. The text of the Directive is in line with the common position adopted by the Council at its meeting on 18 and 19 December 1991.

Provision of harmonized ISDN (Integrated Services Digital Network) access arrangements and a minimum set of ISDN offerings

Pursuant to Directive 90/387/EEC on the establishment of the internal market for telecommunications services through the implementation of open network provision, the Council adopted the recommendation on the provision of harmonized ISDN access arrangements and a minimum set of ISDN offerings in accordance with Open Network Provision (ONP) principles.

Harmonized provision of a minimum set of Packet-switched Data Services

Pursuant to Directive 90/387/EEC on the establishment of the internal market for telecommunications services through the implementation of open network provision, the Council adopted the recommendation on the harmonized provision of a minimum set of Packet-switched Data Services (PSDS) in accordance with Open Network Provision (ONP) principles.

MISCELLANEOUS DECISIONS

Relations with Hungary, Poland and the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic

- Generalized preferences scheme

In view of the conclusion and entry into force of the interim agreements on trade and trade-related matters with Hungary, Poland and the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, the Council adopted the Regulation withdrawing those countries from the lists of beneficiaries of the Community's generalized preferences scheme as from 1 March 1992.

Textiles

- Recommendation for a Council Decision authorizing the Commission to negotiate protocols on quantitative arrangements on trade in textile products with Poland, Hungary and the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic.

The Council authorized the Commission to begin negotiations with Poland, Hungary and the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic with a view to concluding new protocols on trade in textile and clothing products.

Protocol No 1 on Textile and Clothing Products appended to the association agreements signed on 16 December 1991 with those three countries provides for negotiations for the conclusion of new protocols on quantitative arrangements and related issues governing trade in textile products, to be negotiated as soon as possible taking into account wherever possible of developments in the situation in the Uruguay Round. These new protocols will replace the bilateral agreements on textile products which the Community concluded with those

three countries, which expire at the end of December 1992.

The new protocols will provide for "association" type import arrangements covering textile categories 1 to 123, and will incorporate quantitative restrictions on direct and outward processing traffic imports, a double checking system, administrative arrangements (in particular relating to consultations, mutual exchange of information and fraud prevention and detection), and a safeguard mechanism. The protocols will be concluded for a minimum period of five years, starting from 1 January 1993. The agreements concluded with the countries in question will take account both of their exceptional circumstances and of the economic interests of producers in the Community textile sector.

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Bruxelles, le 9 juin 1992.

BIO(92)148 AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX  
CC. AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

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CONSEIL TELECOM du 5 juin 1992  
(E. Olivi)

Plan d'action pour l'introduction de services de télévision avancés en Europe.

Le Vice-Président Pandolfi a présenté la proposition de décision de la Commission concernant le Plan d'action en rappelant le cadre général dans lequel la proposition s'insère, c'est-à-dire :

- la décision unanime du Conseil Télécom de décembre 91 invitant la Commission à présenter ce plan en vue de stimuler le lancement rapide d'un nombre significatif de services de télévision avancés;
- l'importance d'un débat sur les éléments essentiels de ce plan de façon à dégager des orientations communes, même si une décision formelle ne peut aujourd'hui intervenir en l'absence d'avis de la part du Parlement Européen;
- les aspects budgétaires du Plan font partie du paquet Delors II et relèvent donc du Conseil Affaires Générales; toutefois il est opportun que les Conseils spécifiques procèdent à l'examen de la cohérence entre les besoins spécifiques et les moyens financiers nécessaires.

Le but du Plan d'action, a indiqué M. Pandolfi, concerne la création d'une masse critique de service de télévision, sur laquelle il a fait état des estimations effectuées par la Commission. L'enveloppe financière avancée par la Commission est basée sur l'évolution des coûts supplémentaires pour les émetteurs, les opérateurs par câble et la production des programmes par rapport à cette "masse critique". M. Pandolfi a aussi rappelé le principe de la "double dégressivité" des aides financières et les 3 piliers de la stratégie communautaire :

- la directive sur les normes de transmission de télévision par satellite décidée par le Conseil le 11/5/92;
- le Mémorandum of understanding (MOU), qui va être signé prochainement et qui représente la volonté des opérateurs économiques concernés de promouvoir sur le marché les nouvelles normes de manière concertée;
- les mesures d'accompagnement prévues par le Plan d'action.

Le débat au Conseil a permis d'atteindre un vaste consensus sur l'approche proposée par la Commission, sans pour autant que des engagements sur les aspects budgétaires ne soient pris par les délégations nationales.

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Au cours de la Conférence de presse le Vice-Président Pandolfi a dit que le Conseil a fourni "le signal que la Commission attendait" et qu'ont pu être définis certains éléments qui intègrent la proposition de la Commission, à savoir :

- le format 16:9 sera une condition requise pour les services bénéficiant du plan d'action;
- les engagements de caractère contractuels ne seront pas inclus dans le MOU (qui devient une déclaration d'intention) mais dans le cadre du plan d'action;
- le pourcentage indicatif pour la production de programmes (25 %) est trop faible;
- une attention particulière doit être portée aux régions géographiques ou linguistiques à faible capacité audiovisuelle.

Les conclusions de la Présidence (elles n'ont pu être adoptées par le Conseil à cause de l'opposition de la délégation britannique) entre autres invitent le COREPER à continuer les travaux en vue de l'adoption du texte en automne prochain et prend acte de la volonté de la Commission de dégager à ce moment le montant de 33 MECU prévu dans le budget 92.

#### Livre vert sur les services postaux

Le Vice-Président Pandolfi a présenté le Livre Vert. Toutes les délégations ont exprimé le plus vif intérêt pour ce travail. La Commission présentera des propositions opérationnelles au cours des prochains six mois.

#### Autres décisions

Ont été adoptées en points A :

1. Une recommandation concernant le développement du réseau numérique à intégration de services (RNIS)
2. Une résolution concernant le RNIS.
3. Une recommandation concernant la fourniture de données à commutation de paquets.
4. La directive concernant l'application aux lignes louées de l'ONP.

Amitiés,

Bruno DETHOMAS.