

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(74) 1440 final

Brussels, 17 September 1974

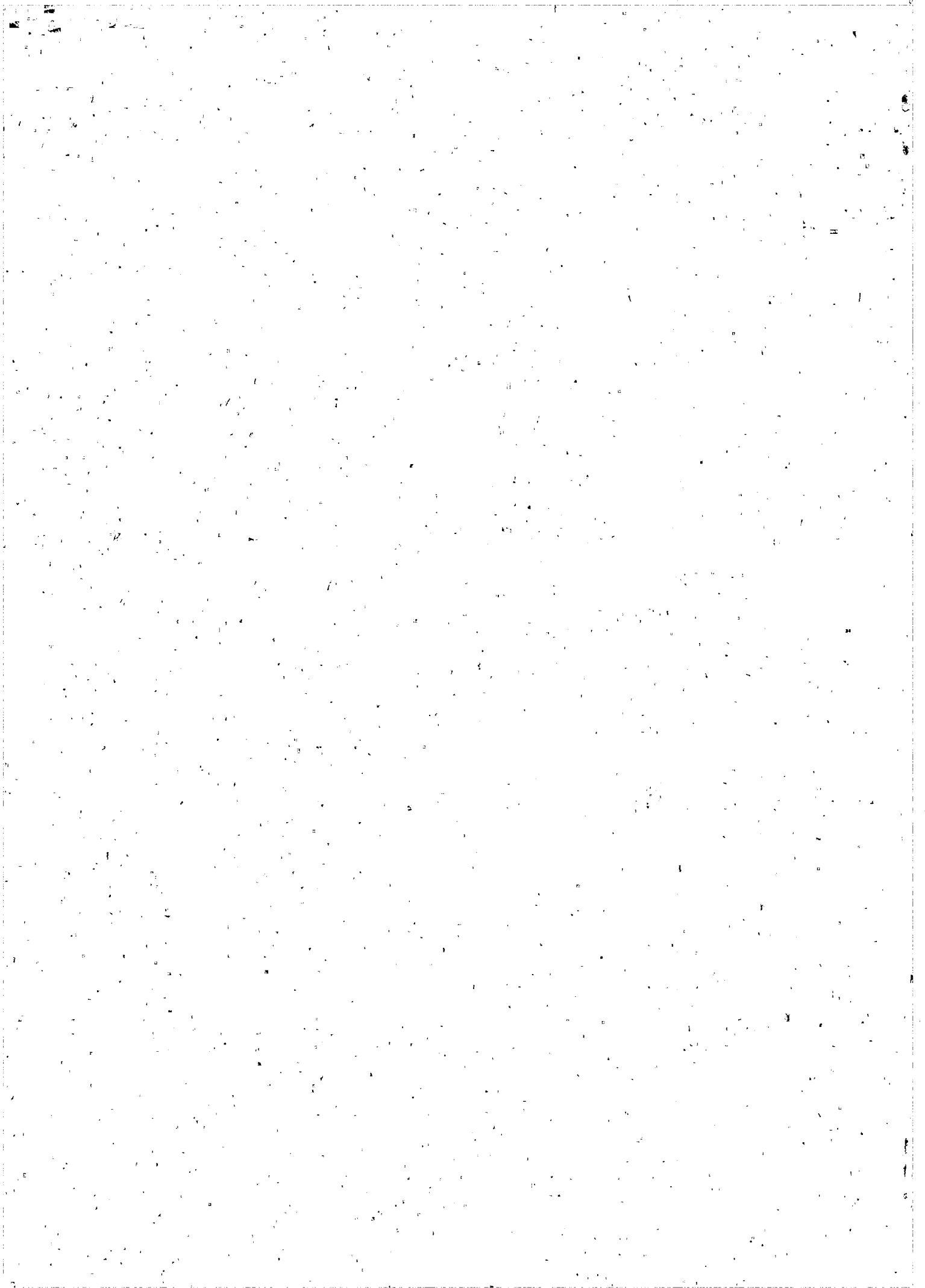
Proposal for a

COUNCIL DECISION

establishing a programme of technological
research in the textile sector

(submitted to the Council by the Commission)

COM(74) 1440 final



INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION

As the Community's markets are opened more and more to imports of textiles from third countries, faster in fact, than internal demand is growing, it is more than ever necessary to maintain the technical and technological lead of the Community's textile industries as they become increasingly diverted towards areas where a promising future is tied to very advanced technological development.

In the document SEC(1)2615 final on "a policy for the textile sector", which was passed to the Council on September 23, 1971, the Commission particularly stressed the essential role played in the development of textile companies by, on the one hand, research and, on the other, by the fullest use of modern technology. Hence the Commission declared its interest in being informed of any suggestion of the textile industry in this field, with the view to submit eventually appropriate proposals to the Council.

In view of the fragmentation and duplication of work being carried out in generally moderate sized companies, any collective textile research would, without, of course, trying to cover too wide a range, tend to stimulate the necessary efforts towards integration within the Community.

A programme of six research projects was drawn up by the Co-ordination Committee of the EEC Textile Industries (COMITEXTIL), from which three themes have been chosen:

- heat treatment of man-made fibres,
- treatment of textiles in organic solvent media,
- fireproofing of textile fibres by radiation-grafting.

In choosing the three projects, the Commission does not pretend to be establishing a research programme covering the entire textile industry.

Nevertheless, each of these items, taken separately, can make an effective contribution towards achieving precise objectives such as a greater knowledge of the properties of man-made fibres, strengthening the fight against pollution and increasing protection for the consumer. Thus, in choosing

these areas, it is intended to give more than merely symbolic support for increased cooperation in applied textile research at the Community level.

The Community's financial contribution will constitute only one third of the total, the remainder coming from the industry itself. Nonetheless, this modest contribution is expected to have a multiplier effect which will be out of all proportion to the sum involved.

OBJECTIVES OF THE THREE PROPOSED RESEARCH PROJECTS

1. Heat treatment of man-made fibres

This is intended to throw more light on the still little-known properties of the products of an industry which, starting from virtually nothing before the war, accounted for two-thirds of industrial textile fibre consumption in Europe in 1973.

In the same year, exports of man-made fibre products constituted 52 % of total textile exports. Furthermore, although the Community's trade balance in textiles was virtually in equilibrium in 1972, man-made fibres produced a positive balance of 1.200 million dollars. In terms of the maintenance of an even trade balance for all textiles, therefore the presence of this industry is exceptionally important to the Community.

2. Treatment of textiles in organic solvent media

This is intended principally to reduce both the volume of effluent water and the consumption of energy.

3. Fireproofing of textile fibres

This concerns a very serious problem for the consumer, with regard, for example, to furnishing fabrics and night attire.

EXECUTION AND FINANCING

Before embarking on technological work, the Commission considered it necessary either to carry out a preliminary critical analysis of the knowledge already available, in order to define a common programme, or, in the case of fireproofing, to make some preliminary trials on a Community basis.

With this object, the Commission authorised, on December 11, 1972, by written procedure C/3091/72, the setting up of a bibliographical study by the Community textile industries organisation, COMITEXTIL, which brought together nine textile research laboratories for the work.

The results of this study are now available, and it is necessary to move on to the experimental phase, which will again be entrusted to COMITEXTIL. They will pass out the work to the thirteen research laboratories who have already worked on the study phase and the preliminary work, and will also involve other institutions according to geographical and technical requirements. The textile industry itself has set aside 500.000 units of account for the financing of this programme, twice the sum which the Commission proposed to spend as a result of this note (25.000 u.a.)

As currently conceived, the programme will last three years, and the expenditure (for the Community) is phased as follows :

	<u>1st. year</u>	<u>2nd. year</u>	<u>3rd. year</u>
- heat treatment of man-made fibres	30.000 u.a.	35.000 u.a.	35.000 u.a.
- treatment of textiles in organic solvent media	30.000 u.a.	35.000 u.a.	35.000 u.a.
- fireproofing of textile fibres by radiation-grafting	10.000 u.a.	20.000 u.a.	20.000 u.a.
Total contribution of the Community	70.000 u.a.	90.000 u.a.	90.000 u.a.

On the basis of the results obtained during this period, an examination will be made of whether research into these objectives should continue, and if so, in what form.

DECISION REQUESTED OF THE COUNCIL

To approve this research programme in the textile sector.

Proposal for a
COUNCIL DECISION

Establishing a programme of technological research in the textile sector

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

HAVING REGARD TO the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community,
in particular Article 235 thereof;

HAVING REGARD TO the proposal from the Commission;

HAVING REGARD TO the Opinion of the European Parliament ;

WHEREAS the Council on the 14.1.1974 adopted a resolution concerning the
co-ordination of national policies and the definition of actions of
Community interest in the field of science and technology;

WHEREAS the final communique of the conference of Heads of State held in
Paris on 19-21 October 1972, envisages the joint execution of actions of
Community interest in the context of the development of a common policy
in the field of science and technology;

WHEREAS by virtue of Article 2 of the Treaty, one objective of the
Community among others, is to further the harmonious development of economic
activities in the Community as a whole, and continuous and balanced
expansion;

WHEREAS the research to which the present Decision relates is concerned
with a variety of objectives, such as the reduction of manufacturing costs,
experiments with new fibres, the solution of certain environmental problems,
as well as consumer safety and protection, and represents a fundamental
step in the development of an important economic sector of the Community,
the textile industry;

WHEREAS preliminary research carried out by the textile industry has
demonstrated the value of the programme to which the present Decision

relates and as a result of which the textile industry intends to join in the programme with a financial contribution twice that of the Community

WHEREAS the technological programme to which the present relates appears necessary in order to achieve within the common market the aforesaid Community objectives;

WHEREAS the Treaty does not provide all the powers necessary to achieve these objectives;

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS :-

Article 1

There is hereby established, for a period of three years commencing 1.12.1974, a European Economic Community research programme in the textile sector as set out in the Annex hereto.

Article 2

A sum of 250 000 units of account is allocated for the realisation of this programme and a corresponding appropriation shall be included in the Community Budget, the unit of account being as defined in the Financial Regulation on the establishment and implementation of the Budget of the European Communities and on the responsibility of authorising officers and accounting officers.

Article 3

The Commission shall carry out the programme by means of contracts.

Article 4

Know-how and inventions resulting from the execution of the programme, whether patentable or not, shall be subject to the provisions of Regulation No /74 of the Council of establishing the conditions of use of know-how applicable to research programmes undertaken for the European Economic Community.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council

The President

Research programme in the textile sector

A maximum of 0,250 million units of account is provided for carrying out the programme which is concerned with the three following themes :

1. Thermal treatment of chemical fibres

Main objectives :

The optimisation of production methods to improve the yield and the quality of products, especially in medium and small companies, who generally lack the required research facilities.

Programme :

Structural modification of chemical fibres : polyamides, polyester, acrylic and modacrylic, olefin, di- and tri-acetate, under different conditions of thermal treatment (under tension or not, under tension with twist).

Changes, as a result of thermal treatment, in dyeing, mechanical, physical and shape properties.

2. Textile processing in organic solvents

Main objectives :

Reduction in pollution of effluent water, and in energy consumption by using organic solvents instead of water in production methods.

Programme :

Fibre/solvent interaction

Types of fibre : polyester, polyamide, wool

Types of solvents : perchlorethylene, dichloromethane, hydrocarbon fraction, isopropyl alcohol.

Interactions : solubility of fibre in the solvent

solubility of solvent in the fibre

variation in fibre structure.

Rheology in the solvent medium : two-phase effects (fibre/solvent), three-phase (fibre/solvent/water - fibre/solvent/dyestuff), four-phase (fibre/solvent/water/dyestuff).

Mechanical, physical, shape and surface characteristics.

3. Fireproofing of textile fibres by radiation grafting

Main objectives :

Consumer protection by the reduction of flammability in clothing and household textiles.

Programme :

Types of fibre : cellulosic, wool, polyamide, polyacrylic.

Type of flame retardant : various monomers of vinyl, or acrylic groups, epoxides and others, halogenated, phosphorised or nitrogen containing compounds.

Irradiation carried out on a pilot scale by electron accelerators.

Physical-chemical control of fire-retardant textiles, and tests of flammability and combustibility according to methods and standards laid down by member states and certain third countries.

