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EURONET NEWS

EURONET is a European network for scientific, technical, social and economic information which should be operational by 1977.

MULTILINGUAL CONGRESS 1977

The definitive breaking-down of language barriers existing between producers and users of information is the theme of the Third European Congress on Information Systems and Networks, which will be held from 3-6 May 1977 in Luxembourg under the auspices of the Commission of the European Communities, in cooperation with the other Community Institutions.

Contributing authors and participants will consist of documentalists and linguists concerned with multilingual aspects of information science. In view of the estimated exponential growth of EURONET (1) usage, the present monolingual status of the great majority of databases could well prove a hindrance to many users. The Congress will therefore cover analyses of present-day developments in language utilisation, rapid access to terminological resources, computer-aided syntactic models, human and machine-assisted translation techniques, multilingual thesauri and information retrieval systems, and automatic translation.

Experts will then attempt to define the evolution and future application of multilingual systems, which fall into four categories: terminological data banks, multilingual thesauri, controlled-, and free-syntax automatic translation systems.

Recent Appointments

Professor André Piatier, Paris University, as special advisor to Dr. Brunner, Member of the Commission of the European Communities responsible for Research and Technology. Professor Piatier's main area of concern is tariffication policy in the EURONET environment.

M. J.Y. Gresser, French PTT Administration, as EURONET project leader for the PTT Consortium. The project team reports to the Consortium Management Committee and is responsible for the drawing-up of study contracts and the evaluation of subsequent recommendations.

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EURONET Detailed Design Definition Study

A detailed design definition study on a telecommunications sub-network meeting the requirements of EURONET is now under way. This study was commissioned recently with SESA/Logica by the PTT Consortium, which has undertaken to implement and operate such a sub-network.

The object of the study is to provide the basis for the detailed planning, scheduling and budgeting of the sub-network operation, as well as specifications for a call of tenders for hardware and for the development of software.

LATEST NEWS.....

As part of the EURONET Project, the PTT Administrations of the nine EEC countries are responsible for the design, planning and implementation of the telecommunications network.

It is anticipated that the network will be based on the use of EIM (2) technology augmented as necessary by additional hardware and software to provide virtual call facilities and packet assembly/disassembly facilities for non-packet mode terminals.

At the meeting of the PTT Consortium Management Committee held in PARIS on May 24/25 it was agreed that tenders for the supply of the additional processors would be invited from companies located within Community countries. Formal tenders are expected to be invited on or about 1 July 1976. However in the meantime firms will be invited to submit initial proposals to the PTIs to enable a pre-selection process to take place. It is anticipated that hardware necessary for software development should be supplied by December 1976, but delivery of hardware for network implementation would be necessary by about June 1977.

Further details of the criteria applying to the initial selection process are available from the Project Director - Réseau pour Euronet - 115, rue de Bac, 75007 PARIS. Telephone 5484770. Telex 200515.

1) The European network for scientific and technical information.

2) The European Informatics Network.

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Mr. J.F.P. Thomas, British Post Office, as technical advisor to Dr. A. Schwall, Chairman of the PTT Consortium Commercial Sub-Committee, and to Mr. P.T.F. Kelly, Chairman of the corresponding Implementation Sub-Committee.

Some Studies on the 1976 Programme

Here is a selective list of studies which will be undertaken within the 1976 programme of activities in scientific and technical information and documentation (STID).

"The Level of Use of Patent Information to be Expected from 1977 - 1981"

This study will forecast the number of searches, the average cost per search, and the proportion of on-line users to be expected in the various categories from 1977 - 1981.

"Financing and Pricing Policy in Europe for STID Services"

This review study intends to ascertain from data base operators the methods and conditions involved in financing their operations and the details of their pricing policies.

"Patterns of Information Acquisition and Use"

The object of this study is to compare information acquisition and use by local and regional authorities in the Member States of the European Communities for environmental planning decisions.

"Study on the Compilation of a Multilingual Thesaurus in Food Science and Technology"

The multilingual thesaurus will be expected to improve the compatibility of existing systems, and thereby facilitate the development of a sub-network in food science and technology and related fields which will be incorporated into EURONET.

"Evaluation of EURONET Network Protocols and Consequences for Terminal-to-Host Communications: EURONET Terminal Protocols"

The final report of this study will outline protocol implications for front-end processor designs with special regard to terminal support requirements.

"Analysis of the Cost/Effectiveness of Automatic Processing Information Retrieval"

The results of this study will help determine whether and under what circumstances free-text processing may be applicable in the multilingual context of EURONET.

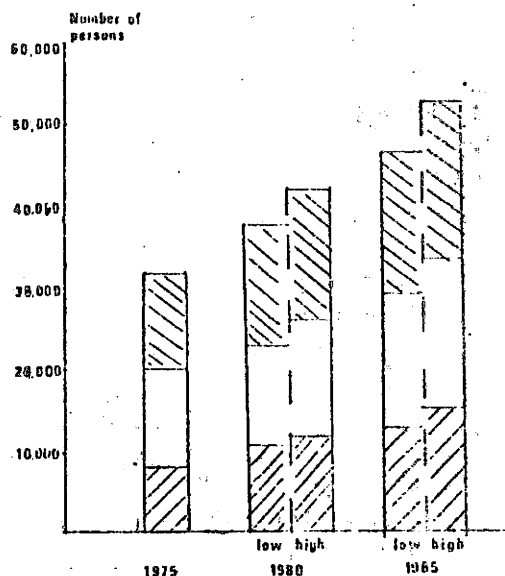
Progress in Metallurgical Information

According to a recently issued report (1), an estimated 100,000 documents will probably be available via the SDIM (2) data bank by Spring 1977. This figure compares with approximately 66,000 documents at present and 17,000 in January 1974.

It is expected that SDIM, a cooperative bibliographic file now in its fifth year of operation, will become one of the key Community data bases accessible via the European network for scientific and technical information (EURONET). Preparations are now being made to widen the coverage of SDIM by integrating new and/or additional journals, and non-Community, non-conventional literature such as research reports and patent information.

With an eye to the future, a management review study has been commissioned to identify and analyse the options for the further development of the Community's metallurgical information system. Consideration will be given to the needs of the ultimate users, the potential market available in Europe, the system's cost/effectiveness, and the services offered.

Information Science Specialists in the EC Member States (excluding the Benelux Countries) 1975-1985



- ▨ Level I + II (Information scientist, scientific librarian/documentalist).
- Level III (librarian, documentalist).
- ▩ Level IV (Assistant librarian/documentalist, information assistant).

† See opposite page "BATTELLE Report".

1) SDIM Progress Report; Doc. XIII/SDIM/75/29 - E.
2) The System of Documentation and Information on Metallurgy.

Training of Specialists Workshop

The first EURONET workshop for scientific and technical information specialists will be held from 1-17 December 1976 in Luxembourg, if the Commission accepts a recent proposal by the Training of Specialists Group. Between 25 and 30 participants are expected to be invited.

The theme of the workshop includes the identification of the essential short-term training requirements of operating specialists and intermediaries who will be working with EURONET, the planning and organisation of pilot courses, and the establishment of guidelines, syllabi, etc., for training.

BATTELLE Report: Key Findings

"Approximate Quantitative Forecast of the Needs in Information Science Specialists in the Countries of the European Communities in 1985". A report by U. Frenzel and A. Blum. (Battelle-Institut, Frankfurt-am-Main).

This report presents a systematic country-by-country survey of the present status of information science specialists in the Community, i.e. their structure, numbers and distribution. The forecasts for future needs in specialists are based on extrapolations from official and semi-official statistics.

Problems noted in the report are: the vagueness of statistics - no basic data on manpower in the information sector is available as yet for the Benelux countries; the differing conceptions of the term "information science specialists"; and the grouping of national information on the present structure of specialists by institution or civil service rank rather than by educational level. Any comparative figures must therefore be treated with caution.

According to figures available, an estimated 32,700 specialists were employed in Denmark, United Kingdom, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Ireland and Italy in 1975. Up to 1985 the need for specialists will grow to between 47,900 (low assumption) and 56,700 (high assumption).

An annual growth rate throughout these six countries during the period 1975-1985 of between 3.9% (low) and 5.7% (high) can be expected. As the United Kingdom accounted in 1975 for 49% of the total number of specialists and by 1985 will account for an estimated 41%, the exclusion of figures on the U.K. would result in an estimated annual growth rate of between 5.4% (low) and 7.4% (high).

The quantitative needs in information science specialists in 1985 will be largely conditioned by technological advance and its use, by the installation of new networks such as EURONET (the European network for scientific and technical information) and by the scope of the information sector itself.

Data Bases for EURONET

According to the replies from Community Member Countries to a questionnaire sent out by the Commission at the end of 1975, the total number of different data bases considered as being desirable for access via EURONET amounts to 123, whilst the number offered by Member States (including those currently available on ESA/SDS (1), but not including the Commission's own data bases) is 95.

Of the first category, 81 are European, 30 are of U.S. origin, and 12 stem from international cooperative systems. Four-fifths of the data bases proposed are the traditional bibliographic reference type, and the rest are factual data banks. Most bases are either on-line, or are planned to go on-line within the next two years. It is interesting to note that the list of the "ten most wanted data bases in Europe" names CAS; MEDLARS; INSPEC- Physical Abstracts; INSPEC - Computing, Electric and Electronic Abstracts; U.S. Government Research Announcements (NTIS); Nuclear Science Abstracts; COMPENDEX; EXCERPTA MEDICA; INIS; and AGRIS.

Of the 95 data bases offered by the Member States:

- 80 are offered by one country only,
- 9 are offered by two countries and/or SDS,
- 5 are offered by three countries and/or SDS,
- 1 is offered by four countries and/or SDS.

Harmonisation of Data Base Contractual Conditions

The main object of a study programme started recently is to draw up guidelines to help harmonise contractual conditions for data bases in the EURONET environment. This study is being carried out by a joint working group consisting of the International Council of Scientific Unions Abstracting Board (ICSU AB) and the Commission of the European Communities, assisted by the CIDST (2).

ICSU AB, which comprises a number of major data base suppliers throughout the world - including the United States - will be able to call upon its own special expertise in legal and technical matters relevant to the study. The final report is due in November 1976.

ALL COMMENTS OR INQUIRIES may be sent to:

Mr. D. BUCKLEY,
Directorate-General Scientific & Technical
Information and Information Management,

Commission of the European Communities,

29, rue Aldringen, LUXEMBOURG (Grand Duchy).

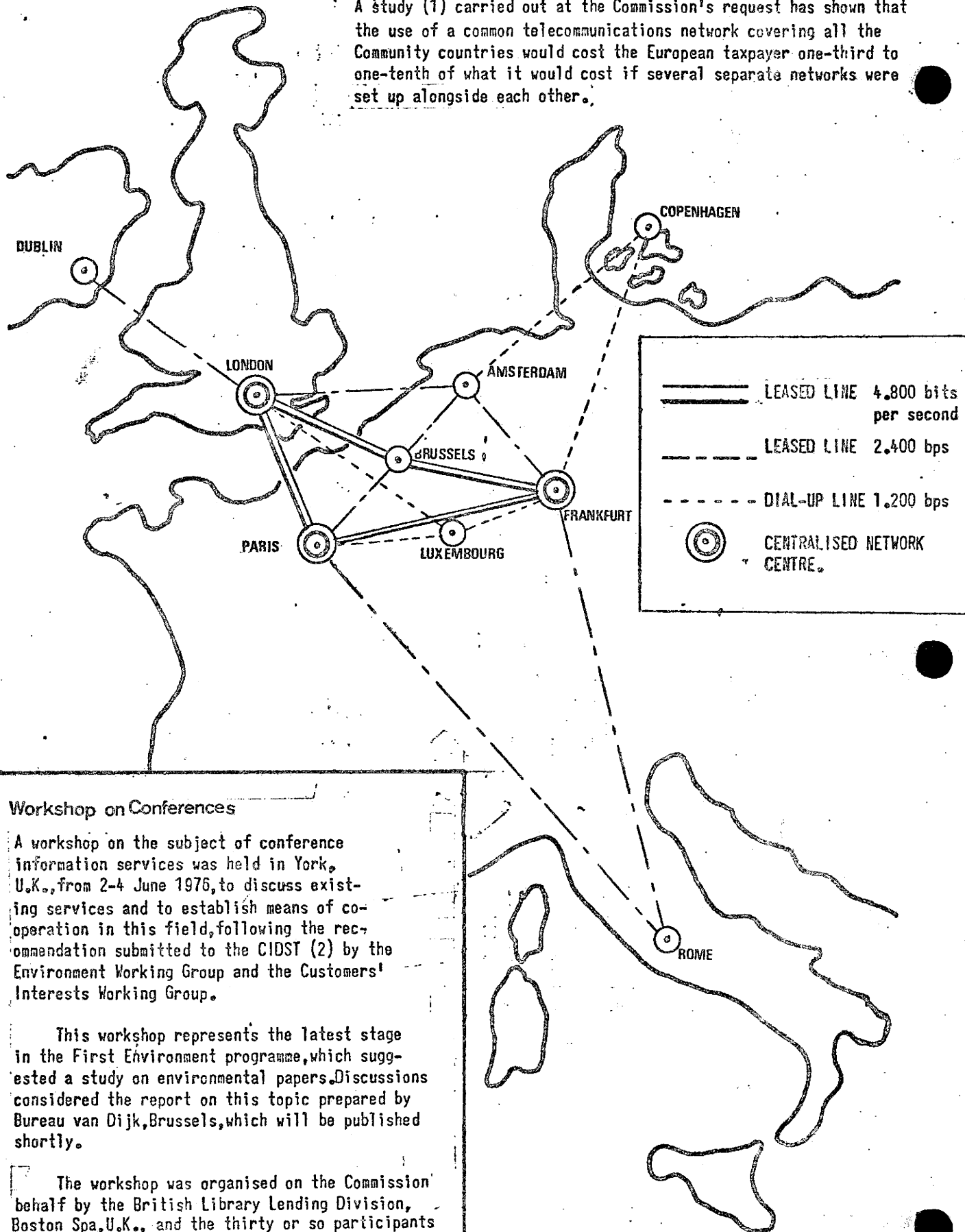
Telephone: Luxembourg 29241, extension 281

Telex: EURDOC LU 2752.

1) The European Space Agency/Space Documentation Service.
2) The Committee for Information and Documentation in Science and Technology.

A European distributed network for scientific & technical information :

A study (1) carried out at the Commission's request has shown that the use of a common telecommunications network covering all the Community countries would cost the European taxpayer one-third to one-tenth of what it would cost if several separate networks were set up alongside each other.



Workshop on Conferences

A workshop on the subject of conference information services was held in York, U.K., from 2-4 June 1976, to discuss existing services and to establish means of co-operation in this field, following the recommendation submitted to the CIDST (2) by the Environment Working Group and the Customers' Interests Working Group.

This workshop represents the latest stage in the First Environment programme, which suggested a study on environmental papers. Discussions considered the report on this topic prepared by Bureau van Dijk, Brussels, which will be published shortly.

The workshop was organised on the Commission behalf by the British Library Lending Division, Boston Spa, U.K., and the thirty or so participants included managers of information services from Community Member Countries.

1) The Economics of the European Information Network (EURONET), by DIEBOLD Deutschland, (August 1975).

2) Committee for Information and Documentation in Science and Technology.