COUNCIL DECISION

of 29 June 1988

on a programme plan to stimulate the international cooperation and interchange needed by European research scientists (1988 to 1992) (Science)

(88/419/EEC)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Article 130Q (2) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission (1),

In cooperation with the European Parliament (2),

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee (3),

Whereas by Decision 85/197/EEC (4), the Council adopted a first plan to stimulate European scientific and technical cooperation and interchange;

Whereas Article 130K of the Treaty provides for the implementation of the framework programme to be carried out by means of specific programmes developed within each activity;

Whereas Article 130G (d) provides for the stimulation of the training and mobility of researchers in the Community;

Whereas the Community framework programme should play its part in contributing to strengthening the scientific and technological infrastructure and potential in all Member States of the Community;

Whereas Council Decision 87/516/Euratom/EEC of 28 September 1987 concerning the framework programme for Community activities in the field of research and technological development (1987 to 1991) (5) includes the stimulation, enhancement and use of human resources amongst the activities it provides for;

Whereas the stimulation of cooperation and exchange between European research laboratories in universities and in public and industrial institutions contributes to the achievement of a researchers' Europe while aiming to reduce the gap on the scientific and technical level between the various Member States of the European Community and being consistent with the pursuit of scientific and technical quality;

Whereas it is necessary to put existing scientific potential to good use at both the human level and that of institutions;

Whereas it is important to improve access to communication networks and scientific and technical information;

Whereas there exists a need to maintain close links with complementary activities undertaken by the European Science Foundation and the Council of Europe;

Whereas it is in the Community's interest to involve third countries and international organizations in certain Community programmes and particularly those programmes contributing to the overall European scientific infrastructure;

Whereas the Scientific and Technical Research Committee (Crest) has been consulted on the following measures,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

A programme plan to stimulate the international cooperation and interchange needed by European research scientists, hereinafter referred to as the 'Stimulation plan' is hereby adopted for a five-year period commencing on 1 January 1988.

Article 2

The summary of the stimulation plan and its objectives together with the operational arrangements for implementing the plan are set out in the Annex.

(1) OJ No C 14, 19. 1. 1988, p. 5.
(2) OJ No C 68, 14. 3. 1988, p. 52 and OJ No C 187, 18. 7. 1988.
(3) OJ No C 35, 5. 2. 1988, p. 5.
(4) OJ No L 83, 25. 3. 1985, p. 13.
(5) OJ No L 302, 24. 10. 1987, p. 1.

Article 3

The funds estimated as necessary for the execution of the stimulation plan amount to 167 million ECU, including expenditure on a staff of 18.

The Community financial support awarded to stimulation activities shall constitute 100 % of the cost of these scientific and technical cooperation and interchange actions.

Article 4

1. The Commission shall undertake the implementation of the stimulation plan by means of research bursaries, research grants, grants for high-level courses, contracts encouraging the twinning of laboratories and operations contracts including equipment and accompanying measures where appropriate. It shall be assisted by the Committee for the European Development of Science and Technology (Codest), set up pursuant to Decision 82/835/EEC (1), and by consultants.

2. The contracts drawn up by the Commission shall show the rights and obligations of each party, particularly the methods of disseminating, protecting and exploiting the research results and of making any reimbursement that may be necessary of the funding given.

Article 5

1. The Commission is authorized to negotiate in accordance with Article 130N of the EEC Treaty, agreements with international organizations, with those countries participating in European cooperation in the field of scientific and technological research (COST) and with those European countries having concluded framework agreements in scientific and technological cooperation with the Community with a view to associating them wholly or partly with the programme.

2. These agreements, which are founded on the criterion of mutual advantage, shall be concluded by the Council, deciding by qualified majority, in cooperation with the European Parliament.

Article 6

The Commission shall address a report to the Council and to the European Parliament after 30 months on the basis of an evaluation of the results so far achieved. This report shall be accompanied by suggestions for changes which may be necessary in the light of these results.

After the completion of the plan, the Commission shall send to Member States and the European Parliament a report on the performance and results of the plan.

The abovementioned reports will be carried out in relation to the precise objectives set out in Annex II to this Decision and in accordance with Article 2 (2) of the framework programme set out in Decision 87/516/Euratom/EEC.

Article 7

This Decision shall apply with effect from 1 January 1988.

Article 8

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Luxembourg, 29 June 1988.

For the Council

The President

H. RIESENHUBER

ANNEX

Objectives and summary of the stimulation plan

1. The stimulation plan consists of a range of activities selected on the basis of their scientific and technical quality, which have as their aim the establishment of a network of scientific and technical cooperation and interchange at European level which will gradually be extended. The overall objective is to improve the efficacy of scientific and technological research in all the Member States and to contribute thereby to the reduction of scientific and technical development disparities between the different Member States of the European Community. It covers all fields of science and technology (the exact and natural sciences).

   Whilst the stimulation plan therefore aims to improve the overall scientific and technical quality of research and development in all Member States of the Community, its specific objectives are to:

   — promote training through research and, by means of cooperation, the better use of high level researchers in the Community,

   — improve the mobility of research scientists of the Member States of the Community,

   — develop and support intra-European scientific and technical cooperation on high-quality projects,

   — promote the setting-up of intra-European cooperation and interchange networks with a view to reinforcing the overall scientific and technical competitivity of the Community and thereby strengthening its economic and social cohesion.

2. The objectives set out above will be achieved by means of support measures for research scientists, teams of research and development organizations to ensure the harmonious scientific and technical development of the Community. These will take the following forms:

   — *Research bursaries*

   Financial support granted to scientists to enable them to acquire additional training by participating in a research project in a laboratory in a Community country other than their own for a period of at least one year and at most two years.

   — *Research grants*

   These cover the cost to the laboratories concerned of the transfer or secondment of a research scientist from one Community country to another, either to allow a scientist to be taken on in a team in a country other than his own or to enable a science graduate to specialize before joining a university or industrial research laboratory.

   Depending on the type of scientist and the purpose of the research allocation, it may take different forms:

   — funding to enable a research scientist to make short stays (from 15 days to two months) in a foreign country within the Community to carry out specific experiments in a particular scientific or technical facility not available in his own country,

   — funding to cover the costs associated with mobility (travel, subsistence, insurance, removal, etc.), the research work and possibly the salary of a scientist seconded to or incorporated in a research team in a country (in the Community) other than his own, for a period of at least six months and at most three years,

   — funding to cover the costs associated with the mobility and research work of a scientist taken on in industry, who goes to follow a lengthy training course (from one to three years) in a public sector laboratory in a foreign country (within the Community),

   — subsidies for high-level training courses: financial support granted to a body offering a specialized high-level course held within a Member State so that it can accept scientists from different Community Member States to give them additional training or enable them to retrain for other functions.

— *Twinning of laboratories in different countries*

This enables researchers who are working in isolation in an advanced field in several Community countries to bring their efforts together, without coming into one laboratory, and thus encouraging the formation of a research team exceeding the necessary 'critical size'. Funding is granted to allow the researchers to meet, to carry out joint experiments, to exchange results, to add to their equipment or to strengthen their teams by temporarily taking on other scientists, preferably from a different country.

— *Development of multidisciplinary, multinational operations*

This would, by virtue of the financial resources made available, enable the associated research teams to have enough resources (including equipment) and be able to bring together the best expertise available in different countries and disciplines, in order to achieve a predetermined objective or to undertake jointly a predetermined scientific task in the framework of an S/T cooperation 'network'.

In addition, the plan will be complemented by sectoral incentive measures: research bursaries, research grants and subsidies financed in the framework of each of the Community research and development programmes following the agreement of the appropriate Management and Coordination Committee (CGC).

3. Measures to stimulate interchange and cooperation apply to all fields relevant to the exact and natural sciences, such as:

— mathematics,

— physics,

— chemistry,

— life science,

— earth sciences and ocean sciences,

— scientific instrumentation,

— engineering sciences.

4. In the fields in which support will be granted, multinational projects to benefit from the Community support measures will be chosen essentially on the basis of their quality, the extent to which they are multidisciplinary in content, their innovative aspects and their value in terms of breaking down barriers between different forms of research and development in all parts of the Community. Where scientific and technical quality is comparable, particular attention will be given to projects likely to reduce scientific and technical development disparities between Member States and thereby to contribute to economic and social cohesion within the European Community.

5. The choice of stimulation incentive measures and the teams concerned will be made by the Commission which, with the help of the Committee for the European Development of Science and Technology (Codest), will make use of a peer review system. The Commission will see to it that there is consistency between the stimulation activity and programmed Community R&D activities.

6. The Commission will at the same time undertake a series of consultations, surveys and seminars with the cooperation of Community scientific and technical circles in order to analyse and evaluate scientific and technical needs and opportunities, with the aim of providing more detail to the content of the stimulation plan.

The Commission will cooperate closely with the national authorities to ensure consistency between these activities and national policies on research stimulation.

7. In order to evaluate the scientific and/or technical quality of requests for support, as well as to analyse scientific and technical opportunities and needs or to assess projects which have been financed or the activity itself, the Commission may call upon expertise from outside its own staff.