

**Proposal for a Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning a set of actions relating to the trans-European network for the collection, production and dissemination of statistics on the trading of goods within the Community and between the Community and non-member countries (Edicom)**

(2000/C 337 E/40)

(Text with EEA relevance)

COM(2000) 458 final — 2000/0201(COD)

*(Submitted by the Commission on 20 July 2000)*

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 285 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Acting in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 251 of the Treaty,

Whereas:

- (1) The actions implemented pursuant to Council Decision No 96/715/EC of 9 December 1996 on inter-administration telematic networks for statistics relating to the trading of goods between Member States<sup>(1)</sup> have made it possible to improve considerably the quality of intra-Community statistics.
- (2) Intra-Community foreign trade statistics are entering a new phase of development, characterised by growing and increasingly demanding user needs.
- (3) The Council attaches special priority to meeting the urgent need of the Economic and Monetary Union for fast, reliable and accurate macroeconomic statistics.
- (4) The modernisation of the trans-European network for the collection, production and dissemination of statistics on the trading of goods within the Community and between the Community and non-member countries should be a driving force in the development of these statistics.
- (5) Council Regulation (EEC) No 3330/91 of 7 November 1991 on the statistics relating to the trading of goods between Member States<sup>(2)</sup> and Council Regulation (EC) No 1172/95 of 22 May 1995 on the statistics relating to the trading of goods by the Community and its Member States with non-member countries<sup>(3)</sup> provide for increased use of automatic processing and electronic transmission.
- (6) Simplification of the Intrastat system was a pilot project in the SLIM ('Simpler Legislation for the Internal Market') initiative launched in 1996; the specific proposals for

reducing the workload on statistical information providers have been approved by the European Parliament and the Council.

- (7) The objectives of this Decision are compatible with those of Decisions Nos 1999/1719/EC<sup>(4)</sup> and 1999/1720/EC<sup>(5)</sup> of the European Parliament and the Council on trans-European networks for the electronic interchange of data between administrations (IDA); account will be taken of IDA decisions, in particular Article 11 of Decision No 1999/1719/EC, in implementing this Decision.
- (8) An ex-ante evaluation has been performed in accordance with the Commission's financial management rules, in order to focus the programme on the need for effectiveness in achieving the objectives and to incorporate budgetary constraints from the design phase of the programme onwards.
- (9) In accordance with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality laid down in Article 5 of the Treaty, the objectives of this Decision cannot be adequately achieved by the Member States; in fact the development and modernisation of the trans-European network for the collection, processing and dissemination of intra- and extra-Community trade statistics can be better achieved at Community level, with the scope of this Decision not exceeding what is necessary to achieve these objectives.
- (10) Council Regulation (EC) No 322/97 of 17 February 1997 on Community statistics<sup>(6)</sup> provides the regulatory framework for the provisions of this Decision, particularly those relating to access to administrative data sources, statistical confidentiality and the principle of cost-effectiveness.
- (11) Since the measures necessary for implementing this Decision are management measures in accordance with Article 2 of Council Decision 1999/468/EC of 28 June 1999 laying down the procedures for the exercise of implementing powers conferred on the Commission<sup>(7)</sup> the measures should be adopted according to the management procedure laid down in Article 4 thereof.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 327, 18.12.1996, p. 34.

<sup>(2)</sup> OJ L 316, 16.11.1991, p. 1.

<sup>(3)</sup> OJ L 118, 25.5.1995, p. 10.

<sup>(4)</sup> OJ L 203, 3.8.1999, p. 1.

<sup>(5)</sup> OJ L 203, 3.8.1999, p. 9.

<sup>(6)</sup> OJ L 52, 22.2.1997, p. 1.

<sup>(7)</sup> OJ L 184, 17.7.1999, p. 23.

(12) This Decision lays down, for the entire duration of the programme, a financial framework constituting the principal point of reference, within the meaning of point 1 of the Declaration by the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission of 6 March 1995, for the budgetary authority during the annual budgetary procedure,

HAVE ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

#### Article 1

##### Field of application and general objectives

1. The measures provided for in this Decision relate to the trans-European network for the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics on the trading of goods within the Community and between the Community and non-member countries.

2. The general objectives are as follows:

(a) to encourage the rational organisation of the network referred to in paragraph 1 in the most modern and effective manner possible and to adopt measures necessary for improving and harmonising the methods used, in order to produce statistics which:

- are more reliable and less expensive for the information providers and administrations, and become available more quickly,
- more fully satisfy the new expectations of users;

(b) to develop existing computer tools for the collection, processing, transmission and dissemination of statistical data, taking into account the latest technological advances and seeking to optimise cost-effectiveness.

#### Article 2

##### Actions

1. To achieve the objectives referred to in Article 1, a set of actions (known as the 'Edicom' programme) shall be implemented for:

(a) the development of the network referred to in Article 1(1) in order to:

- produce statistical information that is of better quality and becomes available more quickly, in order to satisfy the requirements of Community policies,
- to produce statistical information that is relevant and appropriate to the new needs of users within the framework of Economic and Monetary Union and the changing international economic environment,
- to incorporate statistics on the trading of goods more effectively into the general statistical system at national, European and international level and adapt them to changes in the administrative environment,

- to improve the service offered to suppliers and users of information, by providing them with the available statistics and metadata relating to the trading of goods;

(b) the development and promotion of tools for collecting information on the trading of goods, by taking into account the latest technological advances in order to improve the functions available to information providers.

The specific conditions in which these actions are implemented are set out in Annex 1 to this Decision.

2. The procedures for implementing the actions referred to in paragraph 1 shall be adopted by the Commission in accordance with the procedure provided for in Article 4(2).

#### Article 3

##### Annual work programme and management of expenditure

1. In accordance with the procedure provided for in Article 4(2), the Commission shall approve:

- the annual work programme, including the allocation of annual budget expenditure under this Decision,
- the adjustments to the breakdown of expenditure set out in Annex 2, involving a change of more than EUR 200 000 in the resources allocated annually to a category of actions, during the year.

2. The Statistical Programme Committee of the European Communities, instituted by Decision 89/382/EEC, Euratom <sup>(1)</sup>, shall be informed of the annual work programme.

#### Article 4

##### Procedure

1. The Commission shall be assisted by the Committee on statistics relating to the trading of goods between Member States, established by Regulation (EEC) No 3330/91, and the Committee on statistics relating to the trading of goods with non-member countries, established by Regulation (EC) No 1172/95, for matters coming under their respective responsibility.

2. In the event of reference being made to this paragraph, the management procedure referred to in Article 4 of Decision 1999/468/EC shall apply, in compliance with the provisions of Article 7(3) and Article 8 thereof.

3. The period provided for in Article 4(3) of Decision 1999/468/EC shall be fixed at three months.

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 181, 28.6.1989, p. 47.

*Article 5***Evaluation**

1. The Commission, in collaboration with the Member States, shall regularly review the actions financed under this Decision, in order to ascertain whether the stated objectives have been attained and to provide guidelines for improving the effectiveness of future actions. The Commission shall submit to the Committees referred to in Article 4(1) a summary of the evaluations, which may if necessary be examined by the latter. The evaluation reports shall be available on request to the Member States.

2. At the end of the period of five years referred to in Article 7(2), the Commission shall submit to the European Parliament and the Council a report on implementation of this Decision, accompanied, where appropriate, by proposals for new actions.

This report shall seek to estimate, in the light of the expenditure incurred by the Community, the benefits of the actions accruing to the Community, the Member States and providers and users of statistical information and to identify areas for potential improvement and verify synergy with other Community activities, particularly in the field of trans-European telecommunications networks and technological development programmes.

3. The Commission shall take any other measure necessary to verify that the financed actions are carried out properly and in compliance with the provisions of this Decision.

*Article 6***Financial aspects**

The total appropriation for implementation of the Community project described in this Decision for the period 2000-2004 is fixed at EUR 51,2 million. An indicative breakdown, by category of actions referred to in Article 2, is shown in Annex 2.

The annual appropriations shall be authorised by the budgetary authority, subject to budgetary constraints.

The financial resources provided for under this Decision shall not, in principle, be allocated to actions which benefit from other sources of Community funding.

*Article 7***Entry into force and validity**

This Decision shall enter into force on the day of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Communities*.

This Decision shall be valid for a period of five years as from its entry into force.

*Article 8***Addressees**

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

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## ANNEX 1

**Specific conditions for implementation of the actions referred to in article 2**

1. Implementation of the actions referred to in Article 2 shall:
    - (a) take into account the need for continuity of existing computer tools, the usefulness of which is acknowledged with respect to the objectives referred to in Article 1, giving due regard to competition with the private sector in the field of business services;
    - (b) take into account the results of other relevant activities of the Community, particularly in the field of trans-European telecommunication networks and Community research and technological development programmes; account will also be taken of obligations in connection with Article 11 of the IDA Decision No 1999/1719/EC;
    - (c) refer to existing European standards and the specifications accessible to the public, such as the Internet open standards, so as to guarantee a high degree of interoperability of national and Community systems within and between the administrative sectors and with the private sector.
  2. The actions provided for in Article 2 shall, in advance of the programme, and in accordance with the proposal for the annual work programme, be the subject of:
    - (a) a description of their objectives, scope, justification and the likely costs and benefits;
    - (b) a description of the functions and technical approach;
    - (c) a detailed implementation plan which describes each task and the order in which the tasks are to be performed.
  3. Implementation of the annual work programme will require technical and administrative assistance and support measures, with a ceiling of 7 % of total appropriations.
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## ANNEX 2

**Indicative breakdown, by category of Edicom actions, in accordance with Article 2, for years 2000-2004**

(EUR millions)

Breakdown	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
An information network of better quality, less costly and available more quickly, in accordance with the requirements of Community policies	2,262	2,226	2,394	2,250	2,250	11,382
A relevant information network adapted to the changing needs of users within the framework of Economic and Monetary Union and the international economic environment	0,696	1,128	1,236	2,371	1,503	6,934
A network of information which is better integrated into the general statistical environment and adapted to the development of the administrative environment	2,493	2,884	2,405	2,381	2,758	12,921
A network improving the statistical service offered to administrations, users and providers of data	1,130	1,118	1,124	0,986	1,634	5,992
A network based on tools for the collection of information in the light of the latest technological advances in order to improve functions available to information providers	1,188	1,068	1,068	0,648	0,648	4,620
Integrated and interoperable network	1,496	0,874	1,290	1,050	1,086	5,796
Technical and administrative assistance; support measures	0,697	0,700	0,711	0,715	0,732	3,555
Total	9,962	9,998	10,228	10,401	10,611	51,200