Research and technological development activities of the European Union. 1995 annual report

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OBJECTIVE: to present the Commission's 1995 annual report on the research and technological development activities of the European Union. CONTENT: the 1995 annual report contains the results of research activities during 1994 under the third framework programme (1990-1994) and presents the programme of work and the main points identified for 1995. - The Community research policy in 1994 was marked by both the high volume of activities and the challenges to be met. The implementation of the fourth framework programme required no fewer than 25 legislative texts, including the framework programme itself and 18 specific programmes. In addition, 1994 saw the beginning of the first debate on the coordination of the scientific and technological policies of the Member States and the creation by the Commission of the European Science and Technology Assembly (ESTA). The countries of the EEA also took an active part in the Community's non-nuclear research programmes and the activities carried out by the EU in connection with international scientific and technical cooperation and the conclusion of bilateral agreements (agreement with Australia, negotiations completed with Canada and started with Switzerland and Israel). The report quantifies the activities carried out in 1994 under the third framework programme: 6101 new projects involving 18261 participants were launched in 1994; a total of 10976 projects were in progress at the end of 1994; a total of 1936 million ecus was paid out in Community aid in 1994. They accounted for nearly 16407 transnational cooperation links in the form of jointly funded actions involving several partners throughout the Community and the EEA. - The Commission will ensure in 1995 that the specific programmes of the fourth framework programme are implemented efficiently, taking greater account of the needs of the citizens and the markets. It will pave the way for new approaches and initiatives so that the part played by Community research in developing solutions to problems such as unemployment, social upheaval and the speed of technical innovation is more visible to the public. Similarly, the vital links between research and industry deserve particular attention. A certain number of task forces have been set up in order to launch joint projects of interest to industry (car of tomorrow, educational multimedia software, new generation of aircraft, vaccines and viral illnesses, railway of the future, intermodal transport). This approach will be continued and applied to other public utilities or areas of industrial interest (e.g. environment, maritime industries). Finally, it should be noted that this year the Commission also intends to study aspects such as the link between research and industry, the role of research in the information society, the promotion of innovation policies, the pre-standard dimension of research programmes and, finally, the use of instruments for which provision is already made in the Treaty (Article 130K, L and N of the EC Treaty) relating to the adoption of additional programmes, the participation of the Community in programmes undertaken by several Member States and the creation of joint ventures.