

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

# Working Documents

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DOCUMENT 1-730/79

## Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Energy and Research

**on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 110/79) for a decision adopting/second multiannual research and development programme for the European Community in the field of textile and clothing (indirect action)**

**Rapporteur: Mr C. PONCELET**

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By letter of 19 April 1979, the Secretary-General of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament, to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Community to the Council for a decision adopting a second multiannual research and development programme for the European Economic Community in the field of textiles and clothing (indirect action) .

On 23 April 1979, the President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on Energy and Research as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Budgets and the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs for their opinions.

On 4 October 1979, the Committee on Energy and Research appointed Mr PONCELET rapporteur.

It considered this proposal at its meetings of 31 October 1979 and 22 January 1980.

At its meeting of 22 January 1980, the committee unanimously adopted the motion for a resolution and the explanatory statement with one abstention.

Present: Mr Gallagher, vice-chairman and acting chairman; Mr Normanton, vice-chairman; Mr Poncelet, rapporteur; Mr Adam, Mrs von Alemann, Mr Beazley, Mr Calvez (deputizing for Mr Pintat), Mr Capanna, Mr Fuchs, Mrs Groes, Mr Herman, Mr de la Malène, Mr Moreland (deputizing for The Marquess of Douro), Mr Müller-Hermann, Mr Purvis, Mr Rogers (deputizing for Mrs Lizin), Mr Sälzer and Sir Peter Vanneck.

The opinions of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Committee on Budgets are attached.

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The Committee on Energy and Research hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council for a decision adopting a second research and development programme for the European Community in the field of textiles and clothing (indirect action)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council<sup>1</sup>,
  - having been consulted by the Council (Doc. 110/79),
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on Energy and Research and the opinions of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and the Committee on Budgets (Doc. 1-730/79),
1. Points out that this proposal for a decision follows a similar proposal for the first research programme in the field of textiles and clothing and observes that the second programme is a continuation of that textile technology programme, referred to as the initial programme;
  2. Approves the proposal from the Commission to provide financial aid to the programme, to which the industries concerned have themselves agreed to make a substantial contribution, thereby demonstrating their interest in the project;
  3. Notes that this programme is of an adequate size having regard to the scope of its objectives;
  4. Regrets that it does not, however, include a section devoted specifically to the cotton industry although the cotton industry is the first to have run into difficulties, despite the control measures of the Multifibre Arrangement;

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<sup>1</sup>OJ No. C 111 of 4 May 1979, p. 2

5. Requests therefore that consideration be given by the Commission as soon as possible to the inclusion in the third programme of a section on cotton, worsted and other natural fibres, but insists that there be no delay in the adoption and implementation of this second programme.
6. Hopes that, before completion of the projects, the Commission will submit to Parliament, on the basis of Article 235 of the EEC Treaty, technological research programmes in favour of the textile industry in the field of energy saving and environmental measures;
7. Approves the Commission's proposal subject to the incorporation by the Commission of the following amendment in paragraph 1 of the draft decision: the Commission will report to the European Parliament each year on the progress of the research, the results obtained and appropriations utilized.

Decision of the Council adopting a second  
research and development programme for the  
European Community in the field of textiles  
and clothing (indirect action)

Preamble and recitals unchanged

Article 1

To adopt a Community programme  
for research and development in  
the textile and clothing sector,  
as described in the annex hereto,  
for a period of 3 years

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The Commission will report to  
the European Parliament each  
year on the progress of the  
research, the results obtained  
and appropriations utilized.

Articles 2, 3 and 4 unchanged

<sup>1</sup> For full text see OJ No. C 111 of 4 May 1979, p. 2

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTI - Introduction

1. On 3 April 1979<sup>1</sup> the Commission of the European Communities submitted to the Council a second Community research and development programme in the field of textiles and clothing.
2. The proposal for a decision under consideration follows a similar proposal for the first technological research programme in the textile sector, which was adopted by the Council in April 1975 and which had previously been approved by the European Parliament (see report by Mr J.P. Glesener, Doc. 424/74).
3. In connection with that first research programme the European Parliament noted that, as Parliament had always urged, it was based on Article 235 of the EEC Treaty. While approving the content of the Commission's proposal, it nevertheless criticized the inadequate analysis of the financial implications and the very short time-limit imposed.
4. This second research programme will involve 18 laboratories and is to be carried out through indirect action (meaning that the industry itself will conduct the research and the Community will contribute towards its cost). It will cost a total of 8.25 m EUA, of which 4.2 m EUA will be borne by the Community budget and 4.05 m EUA by the industry itself.

The Community's contribution is 3.9 m EUA in operating costs and 0.3 m EUA for staff from the Commission of the European Communities with the creation of 1 A grade post and 1 C grade post. The work will extend over three years.

By way of comparison, the total cost of the three research projects in the first programme was 750,000 m EUA of which only one third, i.e. 250,000 m EUA, was financed by the Community.

5. The second research programme will be carried out by means of contracts under the guidance of the Commission, assisted by an ad hoc consultative committee. The Commission will also be responsible for the dissemination of information gained from the implementation of the programme and will be guided by Council regulation (EEC) No. 2380/74 of 17 September 1974.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ No. C 111, 4.5.1979



6. The Commission's commitment to this second programme was implicitly contained in its communication to the Council on general guidelines for a textiles and clothing industry policy.
7. Community action in this field would contribute to the strengthening and structural development of the textile industry and to an improvement in working conditions and production conditions in addition to the other important EEC measures in that sector, namely the new policy on imports (in force since 1978) and the industrial policy (still under discussion in the Council). The proposed programme also aims at making energy savings in textile manufacture and at protecting the environment.
8. The proposed research programme is backed by COMITEXTIL (Comité de Coordination des Industries Textiles de la Communauté) and the industry itself with the endorsement of the Economic and Social Committee.
9. COMITEXTIL has shown its ability as a contractor to manage a Community programme: the initial textile programme was completed in 1978 with very satisfactory results which are in the process of being published. The completion of that initial programme also demonstrated that the laboratories of the various countries can work together effectively, which is a further guarantee for the successful implementation of the second programme submitted to the European Parliament.
10. The committee regards as satisfactory the criteria used in selecting the topics, although naturally with different concentrations of emphasis:
- (1) to contribute towards the maintenance and the improvement of the general economy of the EEC,
  - (2) to improve the competitiveness of the European textile industry in the world,
  - (3) to meet the requirements and expectations of consumers,
  - (4) to improve working conditions and production conditions,
  - (5) to introduce new methods, machines and products,
  - (6) to economize on energy, materials and working time,
  - (7) to protect the environment.
11. These criteria follow both the approach adopted by the Council on economic and social matters and in the field of the environment and energy saving, as well as the guidelines on policy in the textile sector proposed by the Commission of the European Communities on 22 July 1978.

## II - Objectives of proposed research topics

The programme proposed by the Commission will cover the following topics:

12. Garment physiology and construction. This can be divided into two sub-topics:

- (a) the first concerns the extent to which various types of clothing are comfortable to wear, depending on the nature of the constituent materials, their porosity, the method of making up and interactions with the body, particularly heat exchange and moisture transfer;
- (b) the second concerns designing the garment to speed up production (estimated gain: 20-30% of the time taken at present to respond to market demand), at a lower cost (estimated gain: 10-25% according to type), for better quality as regards consistency of sizes and general comfort. As well as savings in operating costs there would be savings in materials due to the optimization of the cutting process.

This topic meets several selection criteria and is important to the textile sector insofar as garments, which account for more than half of the textile industry's output are essentially the sum of their component parts.

This topic is of interest in that it calls for continuity in the design of a garment from fibre to finished product.

13. Quality of knitted fabrics and knitwear articles

As in the preceding topic, quality is a major factor in keeping existing markets and conquering new ones and is also important for customer satisfaction.

If these objectives are to be achieved, it will be necessary to devise methods to produce and monitor durability, dimensional stability and comfort.

The project therefore provides for an enquiry into consumer dissatisfaction (garments thrown away because of wear or loss of shape, etc.) as well as practical trials to assess the life of garments, the permanence of certain qualities and to gather opinions and suggestions from users. Another of the project's tasks is to devise more objective methods of measuring quality with the aim of improving manufacturing techniques.

This topic satisfies a number of the selection criteria and relates to a sector which accounts for one eighth of textile production.

14. Application of new spinning technologies in the wool industry

The project is in three parts:

- (a) the use of reclaimed materials and non-textile wastes (savings on raw materials);
- (b) the development of control methods to rationalize the present teasing and carding methods;
- (c) the development of open end spinning machines for the carded yarn market in order to increase productivity in that sector to a level comparable with that obtained with similar machines in the cotton industry.

Because the carded yarn market is smaller, machine makers have not looked into the design of suitable machines. The necessary preliminary work can only be carried out by means of joint research.

This type of industry is still widespread throughout the European Community and it needs this effort if it is to hold its own by improving its productivity. This project should enable it to make a technological leap forward.

15. Upgrading of linen

Here again is a typical Community industry with close links with agriculture. Both industries have already embarked on a programme for improving the varieties grown, harvesting methods, methods of treating straw flax to improve fibre yield, methods of improving spinning technology by developing new machines and for improving working conditions by reducing dust levels, as well as diversifying and improving products (crease resistance, softening, dimensional stability).

Naturally, this calls for new methods of carrying out quality control checks on the linen at every stage (fibre, thread and fabric).

The industries concerned are making considerable efforts and the Community's contribution will permit an increase in the pace of the technological change sparked off by this project, which itself also meets several of the selection criteria.

16. Pollution treatment and water recycling in textile finishing factories  
(bleaching, printing, dyeing, stiffening)

One of the obvious objectives of this project is the protection of the environment. Another objective is to save water and energy wherever recycling is feasible. Studies in the laboratory, in pilot plants and in the industrial setting should identify the optimum conditions for the treatment of waste water - whether total or partial recycling - and the cost of treatment. Particular attention will be given to removing pigments and to the objective measurement of effluent pigmentation. The behaviour of sizing agents and printing ink thickeners will also be studied.

This study will enable research to move from actual operating conditions to controlled conditions. There may be a further benefit in the transfer of technology to other fields such as leather and paper manufacturing.

III - Strategic importance for the textile industry of the second research programme

17. European industry needs a strategy. That strategy is taking shape and the textile industry, for its part, has agreed on a common policy, the main aims of which are to:

- develop consumption
- maintain research and innovation
- modernize production machinery
- adapt products to demand.

18. The textile industry is a single complex structure presenting the following characteristics:

- labour and capital intensive
- meeting point of diverse disciplines and technologies: chemistry (dyes, man-made fibres), engineering (complex machinery for spinning, weaving, knitting, processing), electronics (automatic control and monitoring systems), etc. ...
- an industry which needs to produce a continuous flow of new products and which is therefore in a state of constant creativity (demands of fashion),
- need for diverse types of product: fabric for clothing, household linen, furnishings, materials for industrial use (conveyor belts for mining applications, other belts, laminated reinforcing materials for boat hulls and car bodywork, textiles for public works ...).

19. As has been stated above, research and development are an integral part of the textile industry policy. Indeed, they are one of the ways - and in some cases the only way - of solving the technological, economic and social problems of the countries of the Community.

20. The European clothing and textile industries sell on quality, imagination and taste. They will survive only if they are able to adapt quickly to demand. This requires a sizeable contribution from research which is alone capable of following, initiating or anticipating the development of scientific knowledge and techniques and applying them to the problems of the textile industry.

21. Research and development are essential to create new and improved products and to maintain markets through greater competitiveness in the world market and so form an essential part of Community textile strategy.

22. It is precisely in the textile sector that research is most important because the European textile industry must be competitive in relation to imports from third countries and because often small and medium-sized textile undertakings do not have the financial means to participate in the research projects conducted by larger industries.

#### IV - Conclusion

23. Your rapporteur is satisfied with the choice of topics for the reasons stated and because it is obvious that they cover important areas in the textile and clothing industry.

24. However, the absence of topics relating specifically to certain sectors of the textile industry and in particular the cotton industry, requires either:

- the immediate addition to the programme of a research topic on cotton, or
- the submission and early adoption by the Commission of a third programme giving priority to the topic(s) which would best serve the interests of this important manufacturing sector now so vulnerable to international competition,

without thereby delaying the adoption and implementation of the second programme.

25. Thus, in view of the importance of research in connection with the cotton sector, it is desirable that this third programme should be adopted by the Commission before the expiry of the three-year period notwithstanding the delay of the proposal for programme No. II, which was due largely to the ponderousness of the EEC procedure.

26. In conclusion, the committee recommends that the research programme and the proposal for a decision be approved subject to the requirement that the Commission reports each year to the European Parliament on the progress of the research, the results obtained and appropriations utilized.

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AND MONETARY AFFAIRS

Draftsman: Mr F. COLLOMB

At its meeting of 12 October 1979, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs appointed Mr Collomb draftsman.

It considered the draft opinion at its meeting of 21 November 1979 and adopted it unanimously.

Present: Mr Delors, chairman; Mr Deleay, vice-chairman; Mr Collomb, draftsman; Mr Beazley (deputizing for Sir David Nicolson), Mr Beumer, Mr von Bismarck, Mr Bonaccini, Mr Caborn, Mr Damseaux, Miss Forster, Mr Hopper, Mr Moreau, Sir Brandon Rhys Williams, Mr Vondeling and Mr von Wogau.

1. The textile industry is experiencing serious difficulties, due among other factors to fluctuations in demand, to an increase in the cost of raw materials derived from oil and a growing volume of low-price textile imports. There is surplus production capacity in this sector. Moreover, the textile industry has a very large number of processing stages and undertakings in some branches, particularly in that of clothing.

It therefore seems necessary for both structural and economic reasons to encourage efforts to improve and renew the technology which is vital for increasing the competitiveness of this sector.

2. The Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs therefore approves the submission of a second multiannual research and development programme covering three years, with expenditure divided between the Community and the textile undertakings concerned. Moreover, on 11 October 1979, during consideration of the draft budget of the Communities for the financial year 1980, the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs tabled an amendment to this effect (reinstatement of a commitment appropriation of 4,200,000 EUA against item 3722, token entry in payment appropriations and 600,000 EUA entered in Chapter 100).

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS

Letter from the chairman of the committee to Mrs Walz, chairman of the  
Committee on Energy and Research

Subject : Proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the  
Council for a decision adopting a second multiannual research and  
development programme for the European Community in the field of  
textiles and clothing (indirect action) (Doc. 110/79)

Dear Mrs Walz,

The Committee on Budgets considered the abovementioned proposal on  
24/25 January 1980.

This second programme will extend over a three-year period, the total  
cost being estimated at 8.25m EUA, of which 4.2m EUA will be borne by the  
Community budget.

The Commission's proposal is accompanied by a very detailed financial  
statement. It contains a comprehensive description of the objectives of and  
justification for the programme, together with a complete breakdown of the  
annual laboratory expenditure and a list of the laboratories in the various  
Member States participating in the programme. Thanks to the exhaustive and  
satisfactory data given in the financial statement, and in view of the first  
research programme already approved and the relatively minimal expenditure  
involved, the committee could support the Commission's proposal. However,  
in the light of its exhaustive discussion the Committee on Budgets would  
draw the following aspects to the attention of the committee responsible:

- where a programme is to be continued, the Commission should be able to  
produce a concise report on the progress and findings of the first  
programme in order to justify its continuation. A brief and comprehensive  
analysis of the findings of the preceding programme is essential for an  
assessment of the prudent utilization of appropriations and of great  
value to the Committee on Budgetary Control when it audits expenditure as  
part of the procedure for granting the discharge;
- the Commission's request for two new temporary staff (1 A 1 and 1 C 1 post)  
is inadequately justified. While it is clear that it is difficult to  
recruit an expert from the Commission's own staff in view of the highly  
specialized nature of the programme, we wonder how the preceding programme  
could have been implemented without additional staff. At all events, if  
an expert is recruited, the Commission's independence, substantially and  
professionally, vis-à-vis the industry must be safeguarded in respect of

the topics covered by this programme.

Subject to a satisfactory solution being found to these two problems, the Committee on Budgets approved the Commission's proposal.

Yours sincerely,

(sgd) Erwin Lange

Present : Mr Notenboom, acting chairman, Mr Baillet, Mr Balfe, Mr Barbi, Mr Bonde, Mrs Boserup, Mr Dankert, Mr Fich, Mr Forth, Mrs Gaspart, Mr Gouthier, Mr Hord, Mr Motchane (deputizing for Mr Megahy), Mr Nord, Lord O'Hagan, Mr Orlandi and Mrs Scrivener.