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**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION
TO THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT,
THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND
THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**An Evaluation of the Bridge Phase of TIDE
(Technology Initiative for Disabled and Elderly people)**

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION
TO THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT,
THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND
THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

AN EVALUATION OF THE BRIDGE PHASE OF TIDE
(TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE FOR DISABLED AND ELDERLY PEOPLE)
(DRAFT)

A. Background

The Bridge Phase of the Technology Initiative for Disabled and Elderly people (TIDE) (hereinafter referred to as “the TIDE Bridge phase”) was a Community technology promotion and application initiative, established by Council Decision 93/512/EEC of 21 September 1993¹, with the objective of “stimulating the creation of an internal market in rehabilitation technology in Europe to facilitate the socio-economic integration of disabled and elderly people”. 55 projects were selected by the Commission for funding in November 1993 and April 1994 following a call for proposals which was published in the OJ on 21 April 1993². After their completion, an evaluation of the initiative has taken place in 1999-2000.

In accordance with Article 4(1) of the Council Decision, the initiative has been evaluated by a panel of independent experts, each of whom is a specialist in the field of technology for disabled and elderly people.

Seven independent experts were selected on the basis of a call for tenders and included a balanced cross-section of experts from industry, universities, research and user organisations, with a mix of national backgrounds. The evaluation panel worked between October 1999 and January 2000 using two main sources:

- the 55 TIDE Bridge phase project dossiers;
- questionnaire responses from 28 TIDE project co-ordinators.

Each of the 55 project dossiers was examined by at least three of the independent evaluators, according to their area of expertise. The questionnaire responses from projects were gathered during October – November 1999 with the help of a survey form, especially focussing on the outcomes of the projects. Responses were received from 50% of the projects. In addition to the above sources of information, presentations on the TIDE Bridge phase were made to the panel by Commission staff who had been actively involved in the initiative.

¹ OJ L 240, 25.9.1993, p. 42.

² OJ C 111, 21.4.1993, p. 11.

B. Evaluation of the outputs and results of the initiative

The 55 technology promotion and application projects addressed six application areas:

1. Access to technology and related services
2. Life at home and remote care
3. Mobility and transport
4. Control and manipulation
5. Restoration and enhancement of function
6. User and market issues.

The outputs of each of the projects (reports, prototype systems, technical demonstrators, products and services, information materials and dissemination activities) were registered and analysed. Additional information concerning horizontal activities (networking, standardisation activities, and workshops) and broader dissemination of the results was also included in the evaluation.

Particular attention was also paid to the five principles to which the project work should conform, according to the Council Decision:

1. User-focused principle
2. Market oriented principle
3. Innovation and technology adaptation principle
4. Multi-disciplinary approach principle
5. Technology verification principle.

In examining the results, the evaluation panel found wide variations in the output of the projects and the degree to which projects conformed to the five principles. There were also differences between the six application areas in the overall success of their achievements in terms of exploitation and market take-up.

The responsibility for dissemination of results has been taken seriously by many of the consortia. In particular, communication with the press and media has continued after the conclusion of the projects. There was also a high production of peer-reviewed technical or scientific publications based on the work conducted in the initiative.

C. Main conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation panel

a) Overall impacts of the TIDE Bridge phase

The evaluation panel concludes that the TIDE Bridge phase was successful as a co-ordinated action, bringing together a diverse group of organisations, workers and users throughout the European Community. Although it was not its primary objective, the TIDE Bridge phase contributed significantly to the emergence of pre-normative and pre-competitive research and development work on products and services targeted towards the needs of persons with disabilities and older people in Europe.

In terms of having a positive influence on socio-economic integration, the greatest impact of the TIDE Bridge phase may have been in extending ordinary people's perceptions of what can be possible for disabled and elderly people when new technologies are made available to them. Tools for improving communication, orientation, and mobility for persons with sensory, motor, and/or cognitive impairments helped to demonstrate the impact which technology can have in empowering individuals to participate in society. The initiative has highlighted the continuing importance of driving relevant European social and research policies forward from the standpoint of the sector, in order to promote the social inclusion of disabled and older persons and societal cohesion.

The TIDE Bridge phase contributed to the development of a single market for rehabilitation technology in Europe. It also facilitated the integration of disabled and elderly people into the Community. Horizontal activities also contributed to understanding and developing the broad infrastructure underlying the market. Standardisation activities were generally less effectively addressed, although there were certain exemplary exceptions.

The overall view of the panel is that the objectives of the initiative have been pursued in a cost-effective manner, having achieved a satisfactory number of outputs from the projects and associated activities. A large number of actors covering a wide range of activities have been stimulated to participate in meeting the overall objectives of the action. There has been a worthwhile contribution to the knowledge base and some significant new products and services have been produced.

b) Recommendations of the Independent Evaluation Panel

On the basis of their evaluation of the TIDE Bridge phase, the experts have made three overall recommendations and thirteen specific recommendations in their report.

The panel's **three overall recommendations** are that:

- *the European Union should continue to support a broad and integrated range of measures addressing older people and people with disabilities, in order to promote the development and take-up of rehabilitation technology products and services for different kinds of users;*
- *as an integral part of this, there ought to be convincing and well-funded research and technological development activities for the benefit of elderly and disabled people both within the Information Society Technologies area and in other research areas;*
- *these research and technological development activities should be complemented by a strong European Union social policy framework allowing the dissemination and take-up of new Information Society Technologies systems and services to meet the needs of elderly and disabled persons in the spirit of "access for all".*

The evaluation panel's **thirteen specific recommendations** address actions which are intended to contribute to the implementation of the overall recommendations.

D. Commission response to the recommendations

a) General remarks

It is clearly desirable to maintain the continuity of RTD work in successive Community programmes, where this is appropriate. In this sector, it should be noted that *the issues addressed by each of the Action Lines of the TIDE Bridge phase have been followed up*, first in the fourth framework programme (1994 – 1998): Telematics Applications Programme, Disabled and Elderly Sector, and currently in the fifth framework programme (1998 – 2002), within the two specific programmes mentioned below.

In the fourth framework programme's Telematics Applications Programme, Disabled and Elderly Sector, 50 million ECU of Community funding were allocated to 53 RTD projects and horizontal actions. In this programme, increased emphasis was placed on a "user-centered" approach to the design of applications and systems for the target groups of disabled and older people.

The panel's recommendations concerning continued RTD funding and the necessity of links to the policy areas concerning disability and ageing are currently accommodated within the ongoing work of the fifth framework programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration (RTD) activities (1998-2000), insofar as the framework programme represents an integrated approach to RTD based on the dual objectives of increasing the competitiveness of European industry and improving the quality of life of European citizens. An essential aspect of the fifth framework programme is that European research and development funding must be clearly tied to European policy objectives, which in this case refers to policies in the areas of employment and social affairs, non-discrimination, education, consumer policies, public health, transport and others.

The fifth framework programme particularly addresses ageing and disability issues in two specific programmes: *Creating a User-friendly Information Society (IST programme): Key Action 1. "Systems and Services for the Citizen" and Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources: Key Action 6. "The Ageing Population and Disability" and Key Action 11. "Generic Research related to Disability"*. Funding in these areas jointly amounts to approximately 245 million euro. Ongoing co-ordination of the work programmes of these two specific programmes ensures that there is no overlap of effort and that proposals which address one or other of the Key Actions can be allocated correctly to the most appropriate area.

The panel recommendations are also supported by the new initiative of the Commission under the title "*eEurope – An Information Society for All*", adopted on 8 December 1999 (COM (1999) 687). One of the actions in this initiative directly addresses disabled persons, with targets to "*...ensure the "e-participation" of the disabled by taking full account of their needs*". With the support of the Member States, it is anticipated that this initiative will lead to a wider take-up of new Information Society Technologies systems and services to meet the needs of elderly and disabled persons in the spirit of "access for all".

In the area of integration and the social inclusion of people with disabilities, the European social policy framework is being developed continually by the Commission in full co-operation with the Member States, the social partners and the community of NGO's and other

actors in the field. A recent Communication from the Commission "Towards a Barrier Free Europe for People with Disabilities" (COM(2000) 284) adopted on May 12th 2000 specifically looks at greater convergence and complementarity between Community policies and programmes and outlines various EU initiatives which should promote a wider access to assistive technologies for people with disabilities.

b) Specific recommendations

The evaluation panel's **thirteen specific recommendations** address a number of actions which re-affirm and reinforce the five principles of the TIDE Bridge phase, these being:

- User-focused principle (actions 1, 2)
- Market-oriented principle (actions 3, 4)
- Innovation and technology adaptation principle (actions 5, 6)
- Multi-disciplinary approach principle (action 7)
- Technology verification principle *and* (action 8)
- Long-term and other issues (actions 9, 10, 11, 12, 13).

Many of the points which are raised in the recommendations are already being implemented in the fifth framework programme. Particular responses to each of the suggested actions are given below:

User-focused principle: Action 1 recommends *appropriate user involvement in RTD projects*, and states that this should be an important criterion in evaluation and selection of proposals.

Response: The evaluation procedures for the IST programme specifically include reference to "*Quality of partnership, involvement of users [our emphasis] and other actors*" in projects. These aspects are especially assessed during the evaluation process in relation to *Proposal Part B, criterion 5. Management and resources*. Furthermore, in the IST 2000 3rd Call for proposals, the importance of user involvement and addressing the needs of users is specifically highlighted as one of the criteria for evaluation of proposals, as described in the *IST Guide for Proposers Part 2A* and the *IST Guidelines for Evaluators*.

User-focused principle: Action 2 recommends that ethical issues should be assessed in the evaluation and selection of proposals and adherence to ethical guidelines should be monitored in projects from the beginning of the work.

Response: Evaluation procedures for proposals in the IST programme specifically require that ethical issues should be evaluated in all cases where these are relevant to the work of the proposal. Project monitoring procedures will allow for the monitoring of ethical issues through the peer review process. Where relevant, projects may be required to submit one or more deliverables showing how ethical issues have been addressed and the experience gained. Ethical issues are specifically highlighted as one of the criteria for evaluation of proposals, as described in the *IST Guide for Proposers Part 2A* and the *IST Guidelines for Evaluators*.

Market-oriented principle: Action 3 recommends a new funding mechanism to support the take-up of products and services from research and technological development projects, so as to improve the outcomes and benefits for disabled and elderly users.

Response: The Commission supports the take-up of results from RTD projects through the dissemination activities of the Innovation Programme and through activities to stimulate the participation of investors, for example, the IST Investment Forum. Future actions need to strengthen this principle in order to ensure that successful project outcomes will be exploited in an appropriate way, and that the end users will benefit from the research work.

Market-oriented principle: Action 4 recommends that a study, funded by the EC, should be conducted to examine the market possibilities for take-up from research and technological development projects in the area of ageing and disability.

Response: The TIDE pilot phase (1992-1994) included the *HEART* project: *Horizontal European Activities in Rehabilitation Technology*, which made an examination of the market for Rehabilitation Technology products and services and other related issues. The information from HEART thus established a baseline for the understanding of market conditions. Within the framework of the IST programme, proposals for Accompanying Measures are invited, which would allow for a study to examine the current and foreseeable market opportunities in this sector, with particular attention being paid to issues that relate to older people. As part of such a study, key projects from the fourth and fifth framework programmes would be reviewed in order to bring their contribution to the market analysis.

Innovation and technology adaptation principle: Action 5 recommends that work plans for any future programmes in this field should include state-of-the-art technology both in new areas and in existing areas (e.g. robotics).

Response: Within the scope of the fifth framework programme, opportunities for funding exist in the specific programmes *Information Society Technologies* and *Quality of Life* for addressing state-of-the-art rehabilitation- and assistive technologies. Through its dissemination activities, the Commission will seek to ensure that all relevant Calls and Action Lines are made known to the widest possible community of researchers, providers and users through the Internet and Programme Support services.

Innovation and technology adaptation principle: Action 6 recommends that future programmes should support the development and use of innovative technologies and the application of available technologies which can lead to marketable solutions for the benefit of users.

Response: The development and use of innovative technologies and innovative applications is provided for in the fifth framework programme, with a strengthened emphasis on going beyond the state-of-the-art, and that consortia must be committed to exploitation of the results of their work. These objectives are present in the Action Line IST2000-I.2.1 for persons with special needs, including the disabled and elderly, and are further elaborated in the *IST Guide for Proposers Part 2A* and the *IST Guidelines for Evaluators*.

Multi-disciplinary approach principle: Action 7 recommends that appropriate independent network(s) of key players should provide a much needed link between research and technological development consortia and those business communities, public bodies and non-governmental organisations in which products and services could suitably be deployed.

Response: This recommendation will be brought to the attention of the IST Committee for their consideration in connection with the further development and implementation of the specific IST programme.

Technology verification principle: Action 8 recommends that project outcomes should be disseminated in the public realm for the benefit of future work in this area.

Response: This is provided for in the contractual requirements for projects which are conducted under the specific IST programme. Projects are encouraged to target their dissemination strategies to the relevant audiences in appropriate ways. In addition, the Commission makes the results of research publicly accessible through the Internet, using dynamic links, so that all users of the service can locate and contact those people and projects relevant to their interests.

Long-term and other issues: Actions 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 recommend that:

- Future research and technological development programmes in this field should be supported by well targeted, long-term horizontal actions focusing on “non-technical” issues. These should include legislation, norms and standards, certification, guidelines, and social and demographic conditions. They should also incorporate social and psychological elements relevant to the conditions of the user groups.
- In future programmes there should be an emphasis on communication and networking to raise the awareness of all the relevant actors – national and European - in the field of rehabilitation technology.
- Projects should be strongly encouraged to develop their results through other European Union activities such as training programmes, support programmes for small and medium-sized enterprises, and so on.
- Assessment of the management capacity of the consortia should be carried out as an integral part of the project selection and negotiation process.
- Suitable indicators and mechanisms should be established to monitor the management and the performance of projects (both during and after their contractual work) against the objectives of research and technological development programmes.

Response: The Commission accepts these recommendations and has ensured that each is catered for within the management structure and procedures of the fifth framework programme. Longer-term issues will also be taken up in the planning of the sixth framework programme.

E. Final remarks

The TIDE Bridge phase has largely had an effective impact on the objectives which were set for it, with the exception of work addressing older persons, which should continue to be the focus of future programmes. It is concluded that the TIDE Bridge phase contributed positively to the objectives set for it. Lessons learned from the evaluation have been used to develop the recommendations in the evaluation report. These will provide pointers for future programmes.

ANNEX



**An evaluation of the Bridge phase of
TIDE**

(Technology Initiative for Disabled and Elderly people)

1993 - 94

REPORT

Evaluation Panel

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March 2000

Information Society Directorate General
Applications relating to the Disabled and the Elderly

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PREFACE

The technology initiative for disabled and elderly people (TIDE) was a community technology promotion and application initiative with the main objective of “stimulating the creation of an internal market in rehabilitation technology in Europe to facilitate the socio-economic integration of disabled and elderly people”.

The part of the initiative known as the “Bridge phase” covered the period 1993-94. It was intended to act as a link between the Pilot action of TIDE which began in 1991 and the research and development activities that were anticipated in the Telematics Applications Programme which started in 1994.

This report presents an evaluation of the TIDE Bridge phase initiative, performed by a panel of independent experts. It is based on an assessment of the outputs, results and impacts of the activities as required by the Council Decision of 21st September 1993, which is the legal basis for the initiative. The panel has also produced a detailed background document (in English, only), which may be consulted and downloaded from the Internet at the following address:

http://www.cordis.lu/ist/ka1/special_needs/library.htm.

The independent experts, assisted by the Commission Services, have examined, analysed and evaluated the work done and the impacts of the initiative on *inter alia* the rehabilitation technology sector, the single market and the situation of disabled and elderly people in Europe.

The evaluation took place in the autumn of 1999, that is, after the completion of the last TIDE Bridge phase project. Therefore the results of the evaluation could not influence the succeeding work in the Telematics Applications Programme. However, the longer term assessment of this phase of TIDE has provided results which may be taken into account for the development of the Information Society Technologies programme. Carrying out the evaluation at this stage also provided an opportunity to assess the longer term outcomes from the TIDE Bridge phase.

The evaluation panel wishes to thank all those members of the Commission staff who were involved during the Bridge phase as well as during the evaluation for their strong, competent and service-minded support! It would not have been possible for the panel to fulfil its obligation without help from the Commission Services.

The TIDE Bridge phase evaluation panel

Brussels, January 2000

INTRODUCTION

This report presents an evaluation of the TIDE Bridge phase 1993-94 technology initiative for submission to the European Parliament and Council. It was conducted in accordance with Article 4 of the Council Decision 93/512/EEC which requires that “at the end of the initiative, an evaluation of the results achieved shall be conducted for the Commission by a group of independent experts”. The evaluation has examined the *outputs*, the *results* and the *impacts* of the initiative.

EVALUATION OF THE OUTPUTS AND RESULTS OF THE INITIATIVE

The TIDE Bridge phase initiative included 55 technology promotion and application projects in six application areas³:

1. Access to technology and related services
2. Life at home and remote care
3. Mobility and transport
4. Control and manipulation
5. Restoration and enhancement of function
6. User and market issues.

The outputs of each of the projects (reports, prototype systems, technical demonstrators, products and services, information materials and dissemination activities) were registered and analysed. Additional information concerning horizontal activities (networking, standardisation activities, and workshops) and broader dissemination of the results was also included in the evaluation.

Particular attention was also paid to the five principles to which the project work should conform:

- User-focused principle
- Market oriented principle
- Innovation and technology adaptation principle
- Multi-disciplinary approach principle
- Technology verification principle.

In examining the results, the evaluation panel found wide variations in the output of the projects and the degree to which projects conformed to the five principles. There were also

³ The projects are presented in the publication “TIDE Bridge Phase - Synopses” (December 1994), available from the Information Society Directorate General, *Applications relating to the Disabled and the Elderly*, Fax +32 2 296 4260.

differences between the six application areas in the overall success of their achievements in terms of exploitation and market take-up.

The responsibility for dissemination of results has been taken seriously by many of the consortia. In particular, communication with the press and media has continued after the conclusion of the projects. There was also a high production of peer-reviewed technical or scientific publications based on the work conducted in the initiative.

OVERALL IMPACTS OF THE TIDE BRIDGE PHASE INITIATIVE

Building on the momentum of the TIDE Pilot action, the TIDE Bridge phase was a technology initiative that, like its predecessor, was successful as a co-ordinated action, bringing together a diverse group of organisations, workers and users throughout the European Community.

The Panel concludes that, although it was not its primary objective, the TIDE Bridge phase contributed significantly to the emergence of pre-normative and pre-competitive research and development work on products and services targeted towards the needs of persons with disabilities and older people in Europe.

Overall, the greatest impact of the TIDE Bridge phase in terms of socio-economic integration may have been in extending ordinary people's perceptions of what can be possible for disabled and elderly people when new technologies are available.

Tools for improving communication, orientation, and mobility for persons with sensory, motor, and/or cognitive impairments helped demonstrate the impact which technology can have in empowering individuals to participate in society. Some application areas show that there has been a marked improvement in the possibilities for independent living through the use of new technologies.

In bridging the gap between innovative research and users, the TIDE Bridge phase increased the possibilities for the creation of a single market for rehabilitation technology in Europe, and facilitated the integration of disabled and elderly people into the community. Horizontal activities also contributed to understanding and developing the broad infrastructure underlying the market.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the evaluation of the TIDE Bridge phase initiative - and acknowledging the continued importance of this area of work both for the users and for the rehabilitation technology sector in Europe - the evaluation panel makes the following main recommendations:

The European Union should continue to support a broad and integrated range of measures addressing *older people and people with disabilities*, in order to promote the development and take-up of rehabilitation technology products and services for different kinds of users.

As an integral part of this, there ought to be convincing and well-funded research and technological development activities for the benefit of *elderly and disabled people* both within the Information Society Technologies area and in other research areas.

These research and technological development activities should be complemented by a strong European Union social policy framework allowing the dissemination and take-up of new Information Society Technologies systems and services to meet the needs of elderly and disabled persons in the spirit of “access for all”.

This overall approach implies greater convergence and complementarity between Community programmes and budget lines, including not only research programmes but also those concerned with policy development and implementation. The evaluation panel is convinced that there is a clear-cut case for inter-linking the various actions to ensure that appropriate technologies are made available to address the needs of disabled and elderly persons.

The evaluation panel specifically recommends the following actions which are structured according to the five principles of the TIDE Bridge phase outlined above:

User-focused principle

1. User involvement should be an important criterion in the evaluation and selection of proposals. Users are made up of very wide-ranging groups of persons and agencies with different needs and responsibilities. User involvement should be included in research and technological development projects at levels and types appropriate to the needs of each individual project.

2. Where applicable, ethical guidelines should be followed in projects. These should be an integral part of a project from the beginning of its work. Appropriate weighting should be allocated to these issues in the evaluation and selection of proposals. Projects should also be closely monitored to ensure adherence to such standards.

Market oriented principle

3. A funding mechanism should be found to support the take-up of products and services from research and technological development projects. New structures and mechanisms are needed to identify and select high-value prototype products and services and to deliver them more quickly to their target markets. The aim should be to improve the outcomes and benefits for disabled and elderly users.

4. A Community-funded study should be conducted to examine the market possibilities for take-up from research and technological development projects in the area of ageing and disability. The study should address the role of small and medium-sized enterprises and large companies, and the rehabilitation technology and consumer markets (for both older persons and disabled persons), identifying the actors, levers and mechanisms that can further the development of rehabilitation technology market(s).

Innovation and technology adaptation principle

5. Work plans for any future programmes in this field should include state-of-the-art technology both in new areas and in existing areas (e.g., robotics). In preparing future work plans, areas which to date have experienced fewer benefits from new technologies (such as the needs of people with cognitive or learning disabilities) should be considered.

6. Future programmes should support the development and use of innovative technologies and the application of available technologies which can lead to marketable solutions for the benefit of users.

Multi-disciplinary approach principle

7. Appropriate independent network(s) of key players should provide a much needed link between research and technological development consortia and those business communities, public bodies and non-governmental organisations in which products and services could suitably be deployed. The group should comprise high-level experts, nominated by the Member States.

Technology verification principle

8. Project outcomes should be disseminated in the public realm for the benefit of future work in this area. This would include the results of all projects, even those which did not fully meet their objectives.

Long-term and other issues

9. Future research and technological development programmes in this field should be supported by well targeted, long-term horizontal actions focusing on “non-technical” issues. These should include legislation, norms and standards, certification, guidelines, and social and demographic conditions. They should also incorporate social and psychological elements relevant to the conditions of the user groups.

10. In future programmes there should be an emphasis on communication and networking to raise the awareness of all the relevant actors – national and European - in the field of rehabilitation technology.

11. Projects should be strongly encouraged to develop their results through other European Union activities such as training programmes, support programmes for small and medium-sized enterprises, and so on.

12. Assessment of the management capacity of the consortia should be carried out as an integral part of the project selection and negotiation process.

13. Suitable indicators and mechanisms should be established to monitor the management and the performance of projects (both during and after their contractual work) against the objectives of research and technological development programmes.

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**ANNEX 2. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND METHODOLOGY FOR THE TIDE BRIDGE PHASE
EVALUATION**

• **LEGAL BASIS**

Article 4 of the Council decision No. 93/512/EEC of 21 September 1993 on a “Community technology initiative for disabled and elderly people (TIDE) (1993 to 1994)”

• **SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES**

The evaluation will encompass all activities of the TIDE Bridge phase from the launch of the initiative in 1993 to the conclusion of the last projects in 1998. It will address the efficiency, effectiveness and relevance of the programme and major achievements, especially with respect to the goal of “...stimulating the creation of an internal market in rehabilitation technology in Europe to facilitate the socio-economic integration of disabled and elderly people” (Council Decision, OJ L 240. 25.9.1993, p.45 and Annex I.).

The following aspects will be included:

1. the implementation of the TIDE Bridge Phase initiative: organisational aspects
2. main activities of the programme, RTD projects, support actions, conferences, workshops, other horizontal activities and the work of the Technical Committee;
3. results of the initiative, including exploitation, dissemination and identifiable impact (acknowledging that some of the impact can, however, be expected to occur during the coming years).

• **ORGANISATION OF THE EVALUATION**

The evaluation will be conducted by an Independent Evaluation Panel of 7 high-level experts (industrial, academic, users) at 12 days per person. The Panel will be assisted by an Evaluation Secretariat provided by the Commission Services DG Information Society, Unit B2, with 3 Experts to the EC and secretarial staff.

The Panel will begin its work in October 1999. Four meetings of the Evaluation Panel will be held in Brussels, in total 6 days. The Final Report will be completed by the end of 1999.

• **METHODOLOGY**

1. First panel meeting: Identification of the objectives and criteria for the evaluation; identification of data sources, development of the evaluation plan, draft questionnaire to projects, outline of Final Report.
2. Desk study of project dossiers and deliverables, statistical analysis, questionnaire survey of all 55 projects. Non-project-based activities and results, e.g. conferences, workshops, dissemination and other horizontal activities. Preparation of the materials for analysis. The Evaluation Secretariat, on behalf of the Panel, will prepare and analyse materials for scrutiny and evaluation by the Evaluation Panel.

3. Second meeting: Presentation and discussion of the initial analysis based on objective input and output measures derived from the evaluation criteria; Record of the analysis: preliminary results; Specific assessment of the themes of the initiative; Global assessment of the results based on criteria as defined by the Evaluation Panel; Agreement of the structure and elements for the Final Report.

4. Third and fourth meetings: Discussion and completion of the draft Final Report.

5. Production of the Final Report and delivery to Council, European Parliament and Economic and Social Committee.