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

**on
implementing the information and communication strategy
for the European Union**

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INTRODUCTION

At its meeting on 11 November 2003, the Commission noted “that Mr Vitorino would submit, ... , a memorandum on implementing the information and communication strategy beyond 2004”.

By information and communication strategy is meant the frame of reference for communication to the general public (and not all the Commission’s information measures), as set out in the Commission’s communication of 2 July 2002 [COM(2002)350 final].

This **strategy**, based both on strengthening interinstitutional cooperation and developing structured partnerships with the Member States, has been discussed in detail not only between the various Community institutions but also with most of the government information services, whether formally at the invitation of the Commission in Brussels or in a more informal but equally fruitful manner in the Club of Venice.

This ongoing dialogue has resulted in the formal adherence of the Council to the strategy by its decision of 10 December 2002, and that of the European Parliament on 10 April 2003, following the reports by Mr Bayona and Mr Andreasen.

It is appropriate to emphasise the main **objectives** of the strategy.

The principal objective is “to improve perception of the European Union and its Institutions and their legitimacy by deepening knowledge and understanding of its tasks, structure and achievements and by establishing a dialogue with its citizens”.

This includes in particular raising the quality of European public debate, associating the public in European decision-making, listening to the public and their concerns more attentively, and the methodical, consistent rebuilding of the EU’s image.

To do this, the memorandum proposes a realistic, progressive approach based on two main themes:

- the ability of the European Union to formulate and disseminate appropriate, targeted messages about its various priority information topics;
- establishing a voluntary working partnership with the Member States, fostering synergy between their structures and know-how and the activities of the European Union.

The cohesiveness of the strategy will also require better coordination of the Commission’s own resources as regards both its means of communication and its internal communication culture. This calls for:

- creating more synergies between the Commission’s means by reference to the objectives and priorities laid down;
- more systematic and better organised dissemination of an internal communication culture.

From now on, these objectives should be implemented in a new context characterised by the necessary adjustment of the resources available with a view to the Union’s enlargement.

In accordance with its institutional prerogatives¹, the Commission will have to face this new situation with staff numbers unchanged for its headquarters and particularly limited human resources for the establishment of 10 new representations. Thus, 2005 will be the first year in which the information and communication strategy will apply in full in EU-25².

¹ Opinion of the Legal Service of 10 July 2003: “information and communication measures are covered by the Commission’s institutional prerogatives, which can be carried out without a legal basis under Article 49(2)(c) of the Financial Regulation”.

² It will be noted that Phare appropriations will continue to apply in EU-8 until 31 December 2004, in the field of information and communication, under the responsibility of DG ELARG.

I. More structured and better prioritised communication

The recommended strategy is based in the first place on the sharing of objectives between the three Community institutions and its development and implementation will have to be closely concerted. Interinstitutional cooperation is essential and determines both the activities of the centre and those of the Commission's representations, Parliament's information offices and the governments' information services.

1. INTERINSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

Interinstitutional cooperation has, since 2002, seen the full participation of the Council in the development of an information and communication strategy, in particular within the Interinstitutional Group on Information (IGI), which it now chairs jointly with the Commission and Parliament. It will be noted in this respect that in its conclusions of 10 December 2002 the Council pointed out *“that European Union institutions' information activities in Member States should be coordinated effectively with those of the Member States in question”*.

It also *“hoped to see Member States take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the new strategy proposed by the Commission, ...”*.

Parliament, for its part, emphasised, when it voted on 10 April 2003, how much it appreciated *“the Commission's effort, ... , emphasising its intention to consolidate interinstitutional cooperation and establish a joint strategy in this area”*.

It had explained that *“all collaboration with the Member States should concentrate on implementing priority information campaigns, defined at Community level, but adapted to the cultural and linguistic diversities of each”*.

Beyond these statements of principle, interinstitutional cooperation is developing on the ground in coordination cells bringing together the various partners, as provided for in the *Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)* which the Commission and Parliament are proposing to their government partners.

It will also be noted that this interinstitutional cooperation is also growing, especially in administrative and management terms within the European Union Houses, which combine under the same roof the Commission's representations and Parliament's information offices.

This contract of confidence which interinstitutional cooperation represents lies at the very basis of the recommended strategy. It should be regularly renewed within the Interinstitutional Group on Information (IGI), whose task is to shape interinstitutional cooperation at political level.

To this end, the statute, role and mission of the IGI will have to be reassessed in order to give it more political prominence in each of its constituent parties. The preparation of its work will also have to be improved, as will the implementation of its decisions. In particular, the follow-up to the guidelines worked out in the IGI will have to be consistent and effective. The Commission is ready to discuss this with its partners following the renewal of the Institutions this year.

However, achieving structured communication about the European Union will also include a genuine teaching function in relation to its role and tasks.

2. COMMON VALUES WITH A CENTRAL THREAD?

Whether it is information of a general nature on the existence and role of the Union that is involved or communication about major projects and challenges of the EU (PRINCE priority information topics), the development of an appropriate information and communication strategy is a *sine qua non* for the success of the EU's policies and initiatives.

To be effective, the strategy must be based on a few common values that will make it possible to use a common frame of reference to structure the messages about its different policies.

As indicated in its communication of 2 July 2002, a wide-ranging study, based on interviews with different focus groups, was carried out throughout EU-28³ in the second half of 2003.

The study related in particular to receptiveness to the EU's fundamental values, which are peace, freedom, solidarity and cultural diversity. It was also designed to test the claims, against the yardstick of these values, made in the various priority information topics.

In sum, the initial results of the study⁴ confirm the public's lack of basic information about the Union. From this it can be inferred that the common European values taken as a reference for communication about the Union are not sufficiently explicit on such "infertile" ground.

Initially, the values appear, for most of the focus groups tested, to be insufficiently discriminating and specific to Europe compared with other democracies. The way they are defined is not sufficiently stimulating to bring out specific aspects of the Union.

Moreover, a value is an abstract, static notion. While there is no denying that reference has to be made to these values, their relevance in communication terms has to be filtered through the Union's principal political objectives and "proved" by giving specific examples.

The citizens surveyed are receptive and interested when they are informed about specific aspects of Community policies and shown how they may be affected by them.

It is of course necessary to step up the provision of information about such aspects, but this cannot provide a framework for a stimulating set of claims about the Union either, if the — by nature very diverse — items are not somehow "linked" by a central thread — i.e. the higher goals from which they proceed.

Clearly, we will only motivate the citizens of the Union by delivering a strong political message to them about the goals which the Union sets and even, over and above that, about the affirmation of a higher overall plan — i.e. by showing how it is based on values.

The Institutions must therefore be able to draw up their own set of messages, and this requires common references and values — a central thread — that they can share. The main information topics must be selected on the basis of the Union's major policies for the years ahead, and

³ Comprises EU-15, the 10 accession countries, Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey.

⁴ Report on the qualitative study on the focus of communication about the EU (*Rapport d'étude qualitative relative à l'orientation de la communication sur l'UE*), Optem, January 2004.

should meet the public's needs and concrete concerns (in the light of the policy priorities set in the Annual Policy Strategy decision). The messages to be prepared and disseminated should be priority ones not just for the Union but also for the public.

The challenge for the Union as regards communication is primarily one of motivation, arousing the public's curiosity, stimulating interest, and doing so with a message rooted in common values, but whose substance is sufficiently specific for the public to identify with.

3. PRIORITY INFORMATION TOPICS (PRINCE)

As stated in its communication of 2 July 2002, the Commission has so far concentrated on four defined priority information topics: enlargement, the future of the Union, the area of freedom, security and justice, and the euro. It has also obtained Parliament's and the Council's agreement for a fifth PRINCE topic in 2004 – the role of Europe in the world – the more fully to meet the concerns of the Union's citizens.

3.1. Redefining the strategies for the different topics

The fact that various significant events will be taking place in 2004 makes it absolutely essential to update the strategies underlying the different priority information topics mentioned.

In the first place this concerns enlargement. This communication strategy must be pursued beyond the decisive date of 1 May 2004; it should not be confined to simply explaining the arrival of ten new Member States but should also cover the ongoing negotiations with the other candidate countries and the further dimension of the new neighbourhood policy. This involves educating the public about a continuing process of drawing the frontiers of tomorrow's Union. The guidelines laid down by the Commission in its communication of 10 May 2000 are still the appropriate reference.

A review is even more warranted where the future of the Union is concerned. The negotiations at the Intergovernmental Conference are still going on, and the new strategy to be implemented with regard to the new constitutional treaty will therefore have to take account of the European elections and, in particular, of the new timetable for future negotiations.

Beyond 2004, which is a transitional year, it is also essential to think about the relevance of other topics, which may, with an eye to consistency, correspond more fully to the Commission's policy priorities.

3.2. Multiannual programming

Apart from updating current topics, the timetable for 2004 will also provide an opportunity for preparing, for 2005, a better match between the strategic priorities of the new Commission, set out each year in the Annual Policy Strategy decision, and the various priority information topics. Full account will also have to be taken of the fresh priorities identified in the new financial perspective.

Accordingly, the enlargement of the Union will have to be flanked by a greater degree of interinstitutional cooperation, based on better programming and a more structured redefinition of the various priority information topics for 2005 and subsequent years. The programming will also have to be multiannual. It could, for instance, cover a four- to five-year period

(2005-2009), accompanied by annual monitoring and mid-term review, based on impact indicators yet to be defined, the more accurately to reflect Parliament's term and the Commission's mandate. This would also suit the Member States' needs for political visibility, legal certainty and financial guarantees.

The adaptation of the PRINCE activities to enlargement will affect their partnership arrangements but will also involve greater rationalisation of the detailed management rules.

Priority information topics: adaptation of strategies and reprogramming.

II. Creating synergies between means

The means available to the Commission are both centralised and dispersed. Meeting the challenge of developing information and communication strategy in the context of EU-25 requires not only the adaptation and extension of all means to this new horizon but the provision of sufficient resources both at headquarters and in the 25 representations.

1. PARTNERSHIP AND DECENTRALISATION

As stated in the communication of 2 July 2002, the partnership offered to the Member States and their regional and local authorities received a fresh boost through the preparation of political agreements in the form of a memorandum of understanding (MoU). This reference text, approved by Parliament and the Council, crystallises the mutual political agreement between the Member States and the Community institutions on the main vectors of the information and communication strategy for the EU. It thus resembles a purely political memorandum of understanding, resting on a voluntary basis, between the different parties in question. Soon to be signed by the majority of Member States, the instrument meets the need for flexibility and adaptability expressed by most of the national public authorities concerning the implementation of a joint communication plan with the European Commission.

When it has been validated by the current Member States, it may also be offered as it stands to the new Member States from 1 May 2004.

For the record, it will be noted that the memorandum, which will be signed by the Commission, the government and the European Parliament, is designed to coordinate the three parties' information and communication strategies for the EU as part of a partnership for the dissemination both of general information on the EU and the major priority information topics decided jointly under PRINCE.

To disseminate information to the public as fully as possible, the partnership will also cover the EU's information and documentation relays and networks, including the national-level centres.

The MoU thus provides for the creation of a coordination cell, comprising the representatives of the three parties (Commission, European Parliament and the national government), responsible for coordinating the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the partnership on the basis in particular of a joint communication plan. The coordination cell is the basis for the full involvement of Parliament in this exercise, which will strengthen the citizen aspect and make it possible to benefit from the commitment shown by Parliament (most notably in the Andreasen⁵ and Bayona⁶ reports). Every measure carried out under the partnership will contain a reference clearly identifying both the government and the EU.

To date, 6 MoUs have been signed (with Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal, France and Luxembourg) and 4 are in the process of being concluded within the current Union (Austria, Belgium, Netherlands and Finland).

⁵ Resolution of 13 March 2002 P5_TA(2002)0109.

⁶ Resolution of 10 April 2003 P5_TA(2003)0187.

2. PRINCE

Apart from the possibility of centralised management of the PRINCE information lines (autonomous Commission action), the implementation of information and communication measures under PRINCE is traditionally based on partnership between the Commission and the Member States, i.e. on the sharing of an agreed communication plan and each of the parties' respective resources.

This partnership requires the development of co-financing agreements which in future must comply with the provisions of the new Financial Regulation. The agreements used hitherto have turned out not to be consistent with the Financial Regulation, which imposes fresh constraints firstly on the substance and scope of the agreements and secondly on their approval as regards validation of the de facto or de jure monopoly of the competent authorities in relation to the proposed measures.

So it is essential to get back to the spirit of the partnership, i.e. to cooperation in terms of strategic objectives between the Commission and the national government with a view to a better distribution of competencies between the parties under the aegis of a joint coordination cell, as provided for in the MoU.

2.1. Partnership arrangements

Three types of partnership can be offered to the Member States: strategic partnership, management partnership and one-off partnership. These three types of partnership are not mutually exclusive but provide a choice of possibilities that could be of interest to the Commission's partners on either a multiannual or an annual basis. This offer of services meets the flexibility concerns expressed by the majority of national and/or regional authorities.

All the same, at the present time only the strategic partnership is directly and immediately operational: management partnership and one-off partnership still require some development and the adoption of basic acts and standard agreements.

2.1.1. Strategic partnership

Direct implementation of the MoU's provisions involves carrying out what may be called a strategic partnership, i.e. with respective fields of competence and separate, complementary financing.

In line with current practice in several Member States, and in accordance with the MoU, the partnership reflects the basic principles of the PRINCE programme.

Under the partnership, the national government, the Commission and the European Parliament agree on a joint communication plan, whose various measures are financed separately but complementarily either by the Commission itself (subject to calls for proposals or calls for tenders) or by the national or regional government (in accordance with its own financial rules). A joint logo may also indicate that such measures are the result of a joint strategy.

This approach ensures the necessary continuity in the conduct of the information and communication strategy. It has the necessary flexibility to adapt to the different administrative structures of each country and to each government's guidelines. It can therefore become a reference framework for the action of all the Member States.

2.1.2. *Management partnership*

This type of collaboration between the Commission and the authorities of the Member State is a genuine structured partnership between the parties, designed to facilitate co-financing of the jointly approved communication plan. It is based on the establishment of indirect centralised management which devolves the administration of jointly decided information activities onto the Member States.

Opting for this system means that a Commission decision (basic act or *Beschluss*) must be adopted to provide the authority for the delegation to the Member States. In accordance with Article 54(2)(c) of the Financial Regulation and Articles 38 and 39 of the Implementing Rules the basic act will have to define in detail the implementing tasks delegated and provide for the necessary control arrangements.

Article 39(3) of the Implementing Rules states that “in cases of management by a network, requiring the designation of at least one body or entity by Member State or by country concerned, the body or entity shall be designated by the Member State or the country concerned in accordance with the provisions of the basic act”.

After the Member States have designated the information services or administrative departments concerned, the Commission will have to adopt the necessary acts of delegation in accordance with Article 41 of the Implementing Rules. These agreements must include a definition of the tasks assigned, the conditions and detailed arrangements for performing the tasks, the rules on reporting, the scrutiny arrangements and the provisions guaranteeing visibility of the Community action in relation to the other activities of the body entrusted with implementing tasks.

Only after this double procedural step within the Commission (*Beschluss* then instruments of delegation) can budget funds be transferred each year when the authorising departments by delegation and the bodies designated to carry out the implementing tasks have, in accordance with Article 160 of the Implementing Rules, signed agreements to make available the operational appropriations.

The Member States then act as intermediaries, responsible for awarding and managing the grants and contracts in accordance with the guidelines, criteria and procedures determined by the Commission. The Commission has to establish that the delegation of implementing tasks complies with the principles of sound financial management⁷.

Once it is up and running, the system provides every guarantee that the partnership between the Member State and the Commission will be sustained, while meeting the requirements of planning the institutions’ policy priorities.

2.1.3. *One-off partnership*

This type of partnership consists simply in co-financing measures carried out directly by the Member States. Unlike in a management partnership, however, the Member State may not pass on grants to further recipients, because it is a beneficiary and not a person empowered to

⁷ Article 54(2)(c) of the Financial Regulation.

implement the Community budget⁸. To justify the award of grants without a call for proposals, a decision of the College is necessary, in this case in order to confirm the de facto or de jure monopoly of the beneficiary public authority in respect of the proposed measures.

As with any grant, the simple co-financing agreement is designed for beneficiaries implementing measures directly, and not for intermediaries (public authorities) passing on funds to third parties in the form of multi-stage grants.

Very often, the Member State or regional authority behaves like an intermediary when implementing its information and communication strategy. Simple co-financing agreements are limited in scope, therefore, especially since in principle each measure requires its own agreement.

It should be noted therefore that, in the context of one-off partnerships, the Commission may also draw up a plan for a framework agreement flanked by a specific agreement. The approval of such a framework agreement by a Member State, following approval by the Commission, would enable that State, during a four-year period, to sign a specific agreement for a given measure quickly without the Commission's additional approval being necessary.

- Use of MoUs in EU-25 as the foundation for partnership between the Member State and the Community Institutions.
- Preparation and development of the types of partnership proposed.

3. RELAYS AND NETWORKS

It will be noted that in its communication of 2 July 2002 the Commission wanted all the relays and networks *“to be analysed and assessed with a view to drawing up a new and more coherent framework for action and preparing to extend them to new Member States”*.

To get its information over to the public, the Commission relies on a network of more than 1 000 information relays.

These are mainly the Info-Points Europe and Rural Information and Promotion Carrefours, European Documentation Centres (EDC) and other university reference centres (about 780 altogether) Also at the Commission's disposal are the 550 lecturers of Team Europe. All these networks could well expand: about 100 organisations in EU-15 applied of their own accord to become relays in 2004.

As stated in the communication of 2 July 2002 a stocktaking evaluation of all the relays and networks was carried out in 2003 in order to help the Commission define a model for a second-generation information relay better suited to the public's information needs.

The purpose of the evaluation was threefold:

- conduct a detailed examination and analysis of the present system;
- evaluate past experience and current effectiveness;

⁸ Articles 53 to 57 of the Financial Regulation strictly regulate the possibilities for delegation, which in the case in point would require indirect centralised management to be put in place in accordance with the management partnership arrangement.

- identify possible improvements on the basis of the results of the evaluation.

The reply rate for this exercise⁹ was sufficient to guarantee the reliability of the results.

The most significant results, drawn from quantitative and qualitative analyses, are as follows:

- 1) 91.3% of the Commission's Representations in the Member States which replied (reply rate of 100%) consider that the relays and networks are useful or even very useful as multipliers of information for the general public. They enable the Representations to fulfil one of their priority missions;
- 2) of the 92% of the information relays which took part in the evaluation, over 80% claim to be able to count on the political support of their national authorities at local and/or regional level. This testifies to the high degree of support that Member States give to the work of the relays;
- 3) this result is borne out by the host structures replying (66%), which are positive (over 85%) in their assessment of:
 - the importance of the relays in informing the public about Europe,
 - the value added of the relays for their own institution, and
 - their own interest in hosting a relay;
- 4) in addition to political and financial backing, relays can also rely on sound operational (technical, logistic, material, administrative) support from their host structures: administrative support for the production of information material targeted at local needs (in 90% of cases) and promotional support (some 80% of the host structures promote the work of their relays in the media). Three quarters also state that they intend to increase the capacity of their relays in response to the users' information and documentation needs.

To sum up, the results of the **evaluation** – operation and value added for the EU message – amply demonstrate that these relays are extremely proactive and that in the Member States, the national, local or regional authorities, the host structures of the relays and the Commission Representations all consider them to be crucial suppliers of information for the general public.

The stocktaking evaluation thus confirms the strategy set out in 2002 of giving the IPEs and Carrefours a key role in the development of the second generation of information suppliers¹⁰.

The enlargement of the EU is currently forcing the Commission to rationalise its relays and networks more effectively. This involves in particular finding a single name and logo for all of them. The name could be the generic term "Europe Direct" and would thus cover all the services offered by the Commission for spreading information and answering the public's questions, whether as a freephone number, the Europa website or a local relay nearby.

⁹ European Commission Representations 100 %
 Information relays: Carrefours, Info-Points, interregional centres 92 %
 Team Europe..... 50 %
 European documentation centres and their host organisations 59 %
 Other host organisations 66 %

¹⁰ See COM(2002) 350 of 2.7.2002.

Relays now receive considerable technical assistance in a variety of forms: free supply of documentation and publications for the general public (around 1 500 000 copies a year – EUR 15), access to the relays and networks intranet, specialist assistance via a relays and networks help desk (at an annual cost of around €1 500 000 – EU-15), free staff training courses (800 person/days a year – EU-15), events and networking, in particular regular coordination meetings, visits, exchange programmes for relay staff (over 1 000 person/days a year – EU-15) and original information products tailored to their specific needs.

Among the relays and networks, the host structures of the 266 Info-Points Europe and Rural Information and Promotion Carrefours received additional support from the Commission, up to and including 2003, in the form of a flat-rate direct operating grant of some €20 000 a year.

3.1. Info-Points Europe and Rural Information and Promotion Carrefours

At its meeting on 26 November 2003, the Commission, following confirmation of the budgetary authority's agreement reached at the budgetary conciliation on 24 November 2003, authorised for one final year in 2004 the funding of the host structures of the IPEs and the Carrefours by means of operating grants based on a transitional ad hoc decision derogating from the principle of the call for proposals enshrined in the Financial Regulation.

With a view to preparing the new action framework for relays and networks (2nd generation) in the context of EU-25, the Commission thinks it worthwhile first reappraising the merits of the existing network with a view to its development in the new Member States. For this it is proposed that their management be modernised, with due allowance for the different situations which exist within the enlarged Union. EU-15 already has an established network, while one will have to be set up in EU-10. Different types of management will therefore be necessary depending on the area concerned.

It is proposed that a call for proposals (direct management) be launched for EU-15, so that the existing IPEs and Carrefours can capitalise on their experience in a situation of open competition, except for the EU-15 countries preferring indirect centralised management, which would be given the responsibility of launching their own call for proposals.

For EU-10 it is proposed that only indirect centralised management be used, so that in each new Member State it will be possible to draw on the national authorities' knowledge of their specific requirements for the purpose of setting up these new relays and networks.

These two systems would be launched at the same time for a similar period of four years, after which they would be reviewed in the light of experience.

In order to provide proper understanding of the solution recommended, it would be helpful to spell out the details of the management of the two systems, which will both have to be based on a Commission decision containing the same criteria and provisions for the selection and financing of the new network.

3.1.1. Choice of new network - Direct management

In accordance with the principles of equal treatment and transparency, the selection of host structures for relays receiving an operating grant, from 2005 will necessarily involve launching a call for proposals.

The selection and award criteria and the financial and control provisions must be laid down in a Commission decision. For the sake of the stability of the network and the continuity of its

information and communication operations, the call for proposals could be launched on a multiannual basis (four years). Partnership agreements (framework agreements) could then be concluded with all the beneficiaries for the same period.

The authorising officer would approve the work programmes and would implement the specific annual agreements tied to these framework agreements.

It should be borne in mind that Article 112(2) of the Financial Regulation requires all the agreements to be signed before 30 April 2005.

3.1.2. Choice of new network – Indirect centralised management

This option entails devising a plan for indirect, centralised management, in which the performance of the activities and the management of the network would be devolved to the Member States.

To be carried out, it would have to be based on a Commission decision, so as to delegate authority to the Member States; these would then be responsible for managing and promoting the network of relays, although the Commission would not be relieved of its monitoring responsibilities (Article 54(2)(c) of the Financial Regulation and Articles 38 and 39 of the Implementing Rules). This decision will have to contain the same selection and award criteria and relevant financing provisions as the decision for the system of direct management.

After the Commission has adopted this basic act (*Beschluss*), the Member States will have to designate the entities which may receive this management delegation (Article 39(3) Implementing Rules). Once the entities have been designated, the Commission will have to adopt the instruments of delegation (delegation agreements, Article 41 Implementing Rules). Once this multiannual framework has been laid down, agreements on making available funds will be concluded annually for the transfer of the funds corresponding to the operating subsidies of the host structures of this new network of relays (Article 160 Implementing Rules).

For this the Member States (entities receiving this delegation) will have to apply the EU Financial Regulation for the selection of the new relays which may receive an operating grant. This is because in this system the Member States are simply an intermediary in the application of the Financial Regulation: they themselves will have to issue a call for proposals for the selection of the new relays and networks.

Implementation of the two options for the management of this type of relay and network.

3.2. Major centres

The Commission relies on three national major centres (*Grands Centres*) (Lisbon, Paris and Rome). It is a founder member of these three centres, constituted as European economic interest groupings (Lisbon and Rome) or as an economic interest grouping (Paris) and financed fifty-fifty with the Member States concerned. It is represented on all their managing bodies.

At its meeting on 11 November 2003, the Commission confirmed that in the case in point the Community contribution is similar to a subscription from a member of the grouping and is therefore not subject to the provisions on grants. It was on this basis that it renewed the agreement on the Sources d'Europe centre in Paris on 15 March.

An overall evaluation of the usefulness and impact of the operations conducted by these three centres needs to be conducted before envisaging any development of the structures in the enlarged EU. This evaluation will be available in the second half of 2004.

More generally, this issue will be addressed in the broader context of the guidelines for the Commission's participation in private-law bodies will be put before the Commission in the very near future.

Any future development of these centres is subject to compliance with these two pre-conditions.

Overall evaluation of the three existing centres to be conducted and compliance with the obligations linked to the Commission's guidelines on its participation in private-law bodies.

3.3. PHARE Centres

Relays of a special type currently exist in eight of the ten future Member States. These are the (PHARE) EU Information Centres in the capitals of the countries concerned and at present financed entirely from the PHARE appropriations.

These Centres will have no legal basis after 31 December 2004. Under no circumstances can they be taken over by the Commission.

Some of the functions performed by the Centres will be taken over in part by the new representations (contacts with the press) and in part sub-contracted to outside companies selected by calls for tenders (media monitoring). If the Member States concerned so wish, they can take over the Centres but will have to finance them in full.

Confirmation that the Commission will not take over the (PHARE) EU Information Centres of the new Member States.

4. OTHER COMMUNICATION INSTRUMENTS AND TOOLS

The vast majority of people in Europe are still very ill-informed about European issues: according to the latest *Eurobarometer* (EU-15) findings, 72% of the public admit to knowing very little or nothing about the European Union.

It is against the background of these findings that we must analyse the usefulness, purpose and added value of the Commission's communication instruments and tools, which will have to be developed in relation to the many and diverse needs of 450 million people.

4.1. Audiovisual media

Television and radio are still by far the preferred sources of information on European issues for the public in Europe, including in the ten new Member States. Because of the massive increase in the number of radio and television channels available (for EU-15 alone there are over 1 100 national television channels and 1 900 local and regional ones; for the ten the corresponding figures are thought to be 166 and 264), making use of them is not an easy matter. Reaching the "general public" with the limited resources relative to the costs that achieving this objective would entail would mean drawing up media strategies that adapt the messages supplied more closely to the target audiences and applying a critical mass of

resources to the multiplier targets – information professionals (*Europe by Satellite (EbS)* and studios and media library), decision-makers and politically aware public (EuroNews and cross-border information channels) – and at the same time continuing an active policy of diversifying the co-financing of operations (calls for proposals) directed at a variety of “general public” audiences.

4.1.1. Adapting the tools

The audiovisual strategy will continue to revolve primarily around the information tools intended for the media and information professionals: development of EbS, support for electronic media and the media library. All of this is being developed in digital format and the range of on-line services available is constantly growing.

Opening up this activity to the new Member States will mean extending coverage of European events to all of them on the same basis as the service currently provided in EU-15. The same will be true of production activity in the studio, and this will apply equally to developing a co-production programme to suit producers and/or broadcasters in the new Member States and to the ability to provide training in audiovisual techniques for Commission members and staff from the new countries.

Work is already under way to equip EbS to work in 21 languages, with the possibility of increasing this in the medium term. Framework contracts are also being negotiated to facilitate rapid and effective television production work in EU-25.

As an interinstitutional instrument, EbS is making an active contribution to improving television coverage in EU-25 of the priority information themes agreed by the IGI. Through the quality and variety of its broadcasts EbS is now, by virtue of the demand for its services, the eighth supplier of Eurovision (EBU) out of a hundred or so.

Information seminars will also be provided in large number for Union journalists. These seminars are currently used essentially for training journalists from the new Member States.

4.1.2. A more dynamic approach

With enlargement it also becomes essential to achieve a better match between the targets that are set and the means available. This more dynamic approach calls for new operational tools to be developed that give a better understanding of the media market and increased resources to evaluate the different and changing information needs of the various population groups and to put in place media strategies for selecting media more closely in line with the messages to be broadcast and the target groups.

It is therefore proposed that management and selection arrangements be improved but that co-financing of audiovisual programmes and the EU be continued by means of calls for proposals. This approach, developed in 2003 with an €8.5 million call for proposals, allowed over 40 radio and television broadcasts to be co-financed in EU-15. A call for proposals, with standardised arrangements in order to limit the human resources required will be launched in 2004 by the EU-15 representations and by headquarters in cooperation with the REP in 2005.

Similarly, the initiation of multilateral cooperation between different parliamentary or political channels in EU-25, in accordance with the wishes of Parliament expressed in the

report by Mr Andreasen¹¹ and confirmed in the report by Mr Bayona¹² is under consideration. The aim of this project, now known as *Channel Europe*, would initially be to facilitate cooperation between these channels so that they can increasingly provide viewers with political information from the other Member States and EU institutions. Ultimately this could result in a European political information channel. Specific recommendations relating to this project may be made in the course of 2004.

4.1.3. *EuroNews*

The Commission Communication of 9 July 2003 called for an ad hoc evaluation of Community support for the EuroNews channel. This evaluation was carried out by Deloitte and Touche, a specialised independent company, following an invitation to tender¹³. Its verdict is positive and its main conclusions are as follows:

“EuroNews is clearly relevant to EU objectives.

“It is effective in achieving the objectives of providing EU-perspective information to a large number of people in several languages. Its effectiveness is inevitably limited by financial constraints.

“It is efficient as a partner for the Commission compared to comparable alternatives and to industry norms.

“Its utility is demonstrated by (limited) polling evidence of viewer attitudes, but it is again dependent on financial capacity...

“...Given Euronews’ unique nature and position, we are of the opinion that no other pan-European channel would have been appropriate or efficient as an alternative for the partnership between the Commission and Euronews. Its average cost per hour of broadcasting is extremely low compared to European average costs of public service broadcasters”.

These positive assessments are based essentially on the following points:

- Firstly the success of EuroNews in terms of distribution and audience and the strong position it holds on the European audiovisual scene.

Since 1993 when it first started broadcasting, EuroNews has developed in a very rapidly changing market in terms of both programmes offered and technology. While the number of national or cross-border channels has risen from 190 in 1993 to 1 132 in 2003¹⁴ EuroNews has extended its broadcasting network from 35 million to 151 million households. The channel is now broadcast in seven languages (including Russian) by cable and satellite in 78 countries, particularly in Europe and in the EU neighbourhood countries (Eastern Europe, Middle East, Maghreb). Its audience has also increased very sharply to over 7.1 million viewers a day at end 2003 (as against 5.6 million in 2000).

¹¹ Resolution of 13 March 2002 P5_TA(2002)0109.

¹² Resolution of 10 April 2003 P5_TA(2003)0187.

¹³ “Evaluation of conventions and co-financing projects with Euronews in the period 1993-2003” Final report DG Budg/2000/S 203-130610, European Commission, DG Press, March 2004.

¹⁴ See *Transfronteir television in the European Union: Market impact and selected legal aspects*, European Audiovisual Observatory, Council of Europe, March 2004.

The EuroNews website also has over 500 000 hits a month with 4 million pages visited and 3 000 hours of video information downloaded.

In terms of European information EuroNews has become the reference channel on the audiovisual scene in the EU and the neighbourhood countries.

Secondly, EuroNews is the television channel with the lowest costs in Europe.

According to studies available, EuroNews' costs per hour of broadcasting are far below those of other television channels¹⁵. As a result Community funds (€3.6 million in 2004) will co-finance 112 hours of new programmes and 1 426 hours of broadcasting of European programmes, equivalent to 4 hours of information viewed **each day** by over 7.1 million viewers.

There does not seem to be another information tool that can produce the same quality/performance/cost ratio.

To conclude, **in the medium and long term**, it would therefore seem entirely justified, as is indeed recommended by the evaluators, that EuroNews be kept as one of the Commission's partners in implementing its audiovisual strategy.

One way of doing so, which would be compatible with the financial regulations, would be to apply a contract-based approach. Given that a strategy for audiovisual communication has now been agreed, responsibility for part of its implementation could be devolved to EuroNews by means of a negotiated service contract. The contract could be concluded for 2005 and subsequent years, in line with the rules applicable to public contracts for cultural services¹⁶.

This approach would avoid all problems relating to competition aspects, first of all because the public service contract procedure is covered by Community law and secondly because it means that there will be no overpayment for the service provided.

The Community contribution for the period 2005-2007 would be in the order of €9 to €12 million over three years.

In the short term, the European Parliament allocated €8 165 000 to heading 16.02.02 "Citizens' information via the media" when drafting the 2004 budget, placing €2 million of this amount in reserve with the following comment:

"Part of this appropriation may be allocated to EuroNews with due respect for the provisions of the Financial Regulation. The appropriation entered in reserve will be released on the basis of an evaluation by the Parliament of proposals presented by the Commission by 1 May 2004 at the latest, on the conditions and objectives for the financing of EuroNews by the EU budget."

¹⁵ Mac Kinsey & Company: *Organisatie-en efficiëntieverbeteringen Publieke Omroep*", 2003.

¹⁶ See Council Directive 92/50/EEC of 18 June 1992 relating to the coordination of procedures for the award of public service contracts, as amended by Directives 97/52/EC (WTO agreements) and 2001/78/EC (standardised notices) which is an integral part of our budgetary procedures, and 126.b MODEX of the Implementing Rules of the Financial Regulation.

In the light of this, the Commission could decide to award EuroNews an operating grant in 2004, from the 2004 budget, of about €2 million¹⁷. That would bring the Commission's contribution to EuroNews in 2004 up to about €5.4 million¹⁸, or about 16.9% of the channel's turnover corresponding to the percentage of broadcasting time co-financed by the Commission.

The financial viability of EuroNews was subject to positive analysis in the procedure for awarding grants for actions by the Commission in December 2003. As the situation has not changed since, the purpose of such a grant would not be to ensure a balance in the EuroNews accounts, but would on the contrary correspond to the recommendations made to the Commission by the evaluator. It would help to speed up the renewal of the EuroNews production tool, thus to improve its effectiveness, efficiency and continue to increase its audience. It would also be rational in economic terms.

For an operating grant to be awarded in 2004, the Commission would have to take an award decision by 30 April as laid down in the Financial Regulation¹⁹.

Whatever the decision taken, Parliament would have to be informed by means of a detailed presentation of the results of the external evaluation of EuroNews referred to above. If the Commission decides to pursue collaboration with EuroNews beyond 2005, the amount involved would have to be taken into account in the preparatory work on the budget for 2005 and subsequent years.

- Confirm the key role of *EbS* and digital database management;
- Confirm the centralised approach to the audiovisual policy of the Commission and the EU;
- Extend audiovisual coverage of major EU events to the new Member States;
- Prepare an operating grant award decision in accordance with the provisions of the Financial Regulation and its implementing rules for 2004 as soon as possible and for adoption by 30 April 2004;
- Lay down new arrangements for collaboration with EuroNews for 2005 and beyond.

4.2. Second-generation EUROPA

On 6 July 2001 the Commission adopted a communication entitled "Second-generation EUROPA – advanced Web services to citizens, businesses and other professional users" (C(2001)1753/2) as part of its eEurope programme.

The aim of this communication was to develop the interactive side of Europa, to adapt it to EU-25 and to make it more accessible using a system of portals for different categories of users.

In 2004 and 2005 Commission sites will start to migrate to a new information production and management environment on the Internet, provided the Directorates-General devote the

¹⁷ Article 108(2) of the Financial Regulation.

¹⁸ Of which, €0.6 million is financed out of the 2001 budget and just under €3 million out of the 2003 budget.

¹⁹ Particularly Article 108(1)(b) of the Financial Regulation and Article 168(c) of the Implementing Rules.

necessary resources. The process is an essential precondition for the success of the eCommission.

To meet the general information needs of 450 million European citizens, material on Europa must be presented at the first two levels of access to the Europa sites in the 20 official languages. In addition, a multimedia database will have to be developed to provide basic information which would be supplemented and adapted locally to cater for public demand. The second-generation relays and networks could thus evolve into Cyber-relays offering free access to the information and interactive services available on Europa.

More specific portals will also be developed for target audiences, such as people moving within the European Union (young people, students, job-seekers, etc.) or people with a daily professional interest in EU activities and legislation.

Electronic management of the Commission's publications will also become more widespread, to respond to the needs of the enlarged EU in real time and thus minimise storage costs.

- Migration of Commission sites to an advanced information production and management system on the Internet;
- Interactive and multilingual development of Europa II, using special portals managed jointly by the Directorates-General responsible for the topic.

4.3. Opinion polls and Europe Direct

4.3.1. Eurobarometer

The Commission's opinion polls are an invaluable reference tool providing information about current trends for both the European Union and the individual Member States. Their value – and the reliability of *Eurobarometer* (EB) in particular - must be preserved and guaranteed in EU-25.

For this reason, the Commission has decided to create two framework contracts - *EB* standard/special and *EB* Flash – each of which will cover the 25 Member States. *EB* standard/special should be operational by autumn 2004 and *EB* Flash by the end of 2004.

Looking ahead to enlargement, there is also the question of monitoring polling activity, and specifically *Eurobarometer*. The Commission should be able to carry out the controls necessary for the development of this area of activity.

Thanks to the new framework contract signed this year, the Commission is developing qualitative studies for the needs of all Directorates-General which already cover the 25 states of the enlarged EU (and sometimes even 28 states).

4.3.2. Europe Direct (00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 – <http://europa.eu.int/europedirect>)

This service provides a free telephone number and website for replying to people's questions about all Community policies directly in their own language. It has already been adapted to the needs of 25 Member States and will also be incorporated in the EU's information and communication strategy, both in its interinstitutional aspects (contribution to preparing for the next European elections) and in the area of partnership with the Member States and the various EU relays and networks.

By 1 May 2004 at the latest, all citizens of the new Member States will have access to *Europe Direct*. A single phone number for the entire enlarged European Union will come into operation next spring.

Develop *Eurobarometer* and *Europe Direct* on an interinstitutional basis to serve the EU's information and communication strategy.

CONCLUSION

If the European Union's information and communication strategy adopted on 2 July 2002 is to succeed it must be adopted at the highest policy-making level and must itself be based on the institution's policy priorities.

The forthcoming years must be used to consolidate the achievements of the EU's information and communication strategy since July 2002.

The enlargement of the EU only enhances the importance of the concepts of partnership and decentralisation that underlie this strategy.

Its successful implementation will depend on the tasks the Commission sets itself and the Member States in this growing field of communication and on the resources that are available.

In the case of the Commission, the initiating, coordinating and planning role of the central administration must be enhanced, but at the same time the tasks of the representations must be defined in a way that is more in keeping with their resources.

LEGISLATIVE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Policy area(s): 16 – PRESS AND COMMUNICATION

Activit(y/ies):

16 01 – Administrative expenditure of policy area ‘Press and communication’

16 02 – Provision of information to the media on the decisions and the policies of the Commission

16 03 – Analysis of public opinion trends and development of general information for citizens

16 04 – Integrated management of means of communication (at central and local level)

16 05 – Coordination of information relays and networks in the European Union

TITLE OF ACTION: IMPLEMENTING THE EUROPEAN UNION’S INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

1. BUDGET LINE(S) + HEADING(S)

16 01 04 01 (ex – B3-300A) – General information work concerning the European Union – Expenditure on administrative management

16 01 04 02 (ex – B3-301A) – Information outlets – Expenditure on administrative management

16 01 04 03 (ex – B3-306A) – Information activities in connection with specific policies – Expenditure on administrative management

16 01 04 04 (ex – B3-303A) – Communication work – Expenditure on administrative management

16 49 04 01 (ex – B3-300A) – General information work concerning the European Union – Expenditure on administrative management (payments 2004)

16 49 04 02 (ex – B3-301A) – Information outlets – Expenditure on administrative management (payments 2004)

16 49 04 03 (ex – B3-306A) – Information activities in connection with specific policies – Expenditure on administrative management (payments 2004)

16 49 04 04 (ex – B3-303A) – Communication work – Expenditure on administrative management (payments 2004)

16 02 02 (ex – B3-3000B) – Citizens’ information via the media

16 02 03 (ex – B3-3030B) – Direct communication - Media

16 02 04 (ex – A-421) – Operation of radio and television studios and audiovisual equipment

16 03 01 (ex – B3-3000B) – Public opinion analysis and proximity actions

16 03 02 (ex – B3-3030B) – Actions in the field of communication

16 04 02 (ex – B3-3000B) – Tools for information to the citizens

16 04 03 (ex – B3030B) – Communication tools

16 05 01 (ex – B3-301) – Information outlets

16 01 02 01 (ex – heading A7) – External staff of DG PRESS

16 01 02 11 (ex – heading A7) – Other management expenditure of DG PRESS

2. OVERALL FIGURES

2.1 Total allocation for action (ex - Part B): €63.835 million for commitment in 2005

2.2 Period of application:

2004-06

2.3 Overall multiannual estimate of expenditure:

(a) Schedule of commitment appropriations/payment appropriations (financial intervention)
(see point 6.1.1)

(€ million to three decimal places)

Lines 16 02 to 16 05	2004	2005	2006	Total
Commitments	60.705	59.050	59.450	179.205
Payments	51.900	53.200	53.200	158.300

(b) Technical and administrative assistance and support expenditure (see point 6.1.2)

(€ million to three decimal places)

Lines 16 01 04	2004	2005	2006	Total
Commitments	4.464	4.785	4.785	14.034
Payments	2.869	4.785	4.785	12.439

Subtotal a+b	2004	2005	2006	Total
Commitments	65.169	63.835	64.235	193.239
Payments	54.769	57.985	57.985	170.739

(c) Overall financial impact of human resources and other administrative expenditure
(see points 7.2 and 7.3)

	2004	2005	2006	TOTAL
Commitments/ Payments	1.300	1.300	1.300	3.900

TOTAL a+b+c	2004	2005	2006	TOTAL
Commitments	66.469	65.135	65.535	197.139
Payments	56.069	59.285	59.285	174.639

2.4 Compatibility with financial programming and financial perspective

Proposal is compatible with existing financial programming

2.5 Financial impact on revenue

Proposal has no financial impact on revenue

3. BUDGET CHARACTERISTICS

Type of expenditure		New	Contribution from EFTA countries	Contributions from applicant countries	Heading in financial perspective
Non-comp	Diff/ Non-diff	NO	NO	NO	3 and 5

4. LEGAL BASIS

Measures taken by the Commission by virtue of its institutional prerogatives.

5. DESCRIPTION AND GROUNDS

5.1 Need for Community intervention

5.1.1 Objectives pursued

At its meeting on 11 November 2003, the Commission noted “that Mr Vitorino would submit, ..., a memorandum on implementing the information and communication strategy beyond 2004”.

By information and communication strategy is meant the frame of reference for communication to the general public (and not all the Commission's information measures) as set out in the Commission's communication of 2 July 2002 on an information and communication strategy for the European Union (COM(2002)350 final).

This **strategy**, based both on strengthening interinstitutional cooperation and on developing structured partnerships with the Member States, was endorsed by the Council in its conclusions of 10 December 2002 and by the European Parliament in its resolution of 10 April 2003, following the report by Mr Bayona.

The principal objective is "to improve perception of the European Union and its Institutions and their legitimacy by deepening knowledge and understanding of its tasks, structure and achievements and by establishing a dialogue with its citizens".

This will require stronger planning of information activities in the context of interinstitutional cooperation and clarification of the implementing procedures.

Measures have to be implemented in a new context shaped by the implications of the entry into force of the new Financial Regulation and implementing rules and by the need to adjust the available resources in the run-up to enlargement.

5.1.2 Measures taken in connection with ex ante evaluation

The proposed strategy will be implemented on the basis of opinion polls and studies available to DG PRESS. More specifically, this communication (point I.2.) is based on the report on the qualitative study on the focus of communication about the EU (Rapport d'étude qualitative relative à l'orientation de la communication sur l'UE) drafted by Optem in January 2004, which confirms the overriding need to structure the Commission's communication effort around concrete examples reflecting the EU's policy goals.

5.1.3 Measures taken following ex post evaluation

The evaluation function having been created within DG PRESS in October 2003, the DG's management plan will specify each year the main evaluation priorities to be developed.

5.2 Actions envisaged and budget intervention arrangements

The budget lines concerned belong to the policy area 'Press and communication' (Title 16).

The actions envisaged chiefly concern general information activities conducted in partnership with the Member States, the financing of relays and networks in the EU and the centralised and devolved means of communication at the Commission's disposal.

The management arrangements proposed for the partnership with the Member States (see 5.3 below) can also be used for implementing the PRINCE priority information operations.²⁰

²⁰

- Debate on the future of the European Union (budget line 25 03 02),
- Information and communication strategy / Enlargement (budget line 22 04 01),
- Area of freedom, security and justice (budget line 18 08 01),
- Communication on economic and monetary union, including the euro (budget line 01 02 04),
- Role of the European Union in the world (budget line 16 04 05).

5.3 Methods of implementation

The objectives will be pursued chiefly through three types of action:

– Partnership with the Member States

In the context of the Commission's communication of 2 July 2002 on an information and communication strategy for the European Union (COM(2002)350 final) and with reference to the provisions of the new Financial Regulation, the implementation of information and communication activities via the Member States is based on a partnership between the Commission and the Member States, in other words on a pooling, around an agreed communication plan, of each of the parties' resources.

Three types of partnership can be considered:

- (1) **Management partnership:** a system implemented through indirect centralised management which devolves, via a Commission decision, the management of information activities onto the Member States.
- (2) **One-off partnership:** consists simply in the cofinancing of specific measures carried out by the Member States, which are the final beneficiaries of grants (awarded on the basis of a Commission decision²¹) and not intermediaries in the implementation of the strategy. This option allows a framework agreement (flanked by specific agreements) to be concluded for a four-year period.
- (3) **Strategic partnership:** measures are financed separately but complementarily on the basis of a joint communication plan.

– Relays and networks

To get its information over to the public, the Commission relies on a network of more than 1 000 information relays. Only the Info Points Europe and Rural Information and Promotion Carrefours, of which there are 266 in 2004, qualify for a Community (operating) grant.

With a view to preparing this new action framework for relays and networks (second generation) in the context of EU-25, the Commission will maintain the aid granted to these entities in the form of technical assistance plus direct operating aid for such structures. The management arrangements envisaged for this aid are as follows:

- (1) **EU-15: direct management (a call for proposals** in order to select host structures for relays and networks, in accordance with the provisions of the Financial Regulation) or **indirect centralised management** for the Member States which so desire;.
- (2) **EU-10: indirect centralised management:** (operation of the relays would be developed to the Member States that were willing to take on such responsibility, by means of a Commission decision).

The Commission also relies on three major national centres (*Grands Centres*) (Lisbon, Paris and Rome). It is a founder member of these three centres, constituted as European economic interest

²¹ Intended to validate the *de jure* or *de facto* monopoly of the grant beneficiary (Member State) according to the action envisaged.

groupings (Lisbon and Rome) or as an economic interest grouping (Paris) and financed 50/50 with the Member States concerned.

To meet the needs arising from the expansion of the information and communication strategy and to respond to the wishes already expressed by several Member States, it is proposed to set an objective, starting with the three existing centres and before considering the possibility of extending these structures at the level of the enlarged Union, of conducting an overall assessment of the usefulness and impact of the activities carried out by the existing major centres. In addition, guidelines on the Commission's involvement in private-law bodies will be laid down in a memorandum from the Secretariat-General, to be submitted to the Commission very shortly. Any extension of or change in the major centres will therefore be subject to these two preconditions.

– **Synergies between the Commission's means of action**

To supplement the activities described below, the Commission also has a number of means of action.

(1) Communication instruments and tools

- Audiovisual media:
 - Strengthening multilateral cooperation between different parliamentary or political channels (Channel Europe project); following the analysis that is under way, specific recommendations will be made in the course of 2004;
 - Cofinancing of audiovisual programmes about the EU via calls for proposals;
 - Continuing to organise information seminars for journalists;
 - Establishing a basis for future cooperation with EuroNews on the basis of an operating grant in 2004 (requiring a Commission decision) and grants for actions from 2005 onwards.
- Second-generation Europa: migration of Commission sites to an advanced system for producing and managing information on the Internet, and interactive and multilingual development of Europa II (under way).
- Opinion polls, in particular Eurobarometer: adaptation to an enlarged Union (in progress).
- Maintenance of Europe Direct (free telephone service for replying to people's questions directly in their own language about all Community policies).

(2) Commission representations in the Member States (p.m.)

The process of converting the delegations in the new Member States into representations should result in August 2005 in a homogeneous network of representations. The new representations will continue to be progressively expanded after that date.

The reference options used for calculating the financial impact and the impact on staff and administrative expenditure (points 6 and 7 below) are the following:

Partnership with the Member States

- Management partnership: the legal/financial instruments will have to be prepared at headquarters and negotiated by the representations with the Member States' public authorities, with responsibility for implementation and monitoring remaining with the authorising departments (no subdelegation for PRINCE budget lines).

Relays (Info Points and Rural Carrefours)

- Indirect centralised management (for the EU-10 countries and the EU-15 countries which so desire) and call for proposals (for the EU-15 countries which do not want indirect management).

Audiovisual media (EuroNews)

- Operating grant in 2004 (requiring a Commission decision awarding the grant) and service contract from 2005 onwards.

6. FINANCIAL IMPACT

6.1 Total financial impact for the operational part (ex - Part B)

6.1.1 Financial intervention

Commitments (in € million to three decimal places)

	2004	2005	2006	TOTAL
16.02 02 Citizens' information via the media	10.165	9.000	9.000	28.165
	8.100(*)	9.000(*)	9.000(*)	26.100(*)
16.02 03 Direct communication - Media	2.710	2.600	3.000	8.300
	1.000(*)	1.100(*)	1.100(*)	3.200(*)
16.03 01 Public opinion analysis and proximity actions	6.800	8.000	8.000	22.800
	4.585(*)	6.000(*)	6.000(*)	16.585(*)
16.03 02 Actions in the field of communication	9.890	8.650	8.650	27.190
	1.000(*)	1.000(*)	1.000(*)	3.000(*)
16.04 02 Tools for information to the citizens	9.650	7.300	7.300	24.250
	2.460(*)	2.500(*)	2.500(*)	7.460(*)
16.04 03 Communication tools	4.400	5.750	5.750	15.900
	2.150(*)	3.450(*)	3.450(*)	9.050(*)
16.05 01 Information outlets	17.100	17.750	17.750	52.600
	7.682(*)	15.782(*)	15.782(*)	39.246(*)
TOTAL	60.715	59.050	59.450	179.205
	26.977(*)	38.832(*)	38.832(*)	104.641(*)

(*) The amounts in italics form part of the appropriations indicated for each line and correspond to the budgetary impact presented in Table 6.2.

6.1.2 Technical and administrative assistance and support expenditure

Commitments (in € million to three decimal places)

	2004	2005	2006	TOTAL
16.01 04 01 General information work concerning the European Union – Expenditure on administrative management (ex B3-300A)	0.180	0.180	0.180	0.540
16.01 04 02 Information outlets – Expenditure on administrative management (ex B3-301A)	0.292	0.325	0.325	0.942
16.01 04 03 Information programme for European citizens (PRINCE) – Information activities in connection with specific policies – Expenditure on administrative management (ex B3-306A)	2.592	2.880	2.880	8.352
16.01 04 04 Communication work - Expenditure on administrative management (ex B3-303A)	1.400	1.400	1.400	4.200
TOTAL	4.464	4.785	4.785	14.034

6.2. Calculation of costs by measure envisaged

Commitments (in € million to three decimal places)

Breakdown	Type of outputs	Number of outputs	Average unit cost	Total cost 2005
	1	2	3	4=(2X3)
<u>16 02 02</u> <u>Citizens' information via the media</u>				<u>9.000</u>
EuroNews	Financing of coproduction	One agreement to be signed in 2005	4.000 (annual amount)	4.000
Other audiovisual activities	Call for audiovisual proposals	1 (via various framework contracts)		4.000
	Information seminars for journalists	variable number (on the basis of a framework contract)		0.600
<u>16 02 03</u> <u>Direct communication - media</u>				<u>1.100</u>
Other audiovisual activities	News coverage production capacities	1 (via several framework contracts)		1.100

<u>16 03 01</u> <u>Public opinion analysis and proximity actions</u>				<u>6.000</u>
Partnerships with the Member States (1)	Partnership agreements	8		0.500
Opinion polls	Eurobarometers (EB) and specific opinion polls	2 framework contracts (EB std/special and EB Flash)		5.500
<u>16 03 02</u> <u>Actions in the field of communication</u>				<u>1.000</u>
Partnerships with the Member States (1)	Partnership agreements	17		1.000
<u>16 04 02</u> <u>Tools for information to the citizens</u>				<u>2.500</u>
Europe Direct	Call centre	1		2.500
<u>16 04 03</u> <u>Communication tools</u>				<u>3.450</u>
Europa	New advanced system	1 (via various framework contracts)		3.100
Other audiovisual activities	Media library	1 (on the basis of three framework contracts)		0.350
<u>16 05 01</u> <u>Information outlets</u>				<u>15.782</u>
Relays and networks	Grants for host structures of relays	Existing relays (266) + 18 new relays per new Member State	0.020	5.292 3.600
	Contribution to the major centres	3 existing major centres + 22 new major centres (of which 9 in 2005)	0.500 (cotisation de démarrage)	2.390 4.500
TOTAL COST				38.832

(1) The amounts shown concern only "institutional" information operations implemented by DG PRESS. The partnership agreements concerned can also be used for the PRINCE appropriations which are the responsibility of other DGs.

For information, the PRINCE appropriations entered in the 2004 budget, for which the conclusion of agreements is envisaged as a management method, amount to:

- PRINCE – Debate on the future of the European Union (25 03 02): €4.5 million
- PRINCE – Information and communication strategy / Enlargement (22 04 01): €16.5 million.

For the record, the other PRINCE appropriations entered in the 2004 budget relate to the following areas:

- PRINCE – Communication on economic and monetary union, including the euro (01 02 04): €6 million
- PRINCE – Area of freedom, security and justice (18 08 01): €3 million
- PRINCE – Role of the European Union in the world (16 04 05): €4 million.

7. IMPACT ON STAFF AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURE

7.1. Impact on human resources

Types of post	Staff to be assigned to management of the action using existing and/or additional resources		Total	Description of tasks deriving from the action
	Number of permanent posts	Number of temporary posts		
Officials or temporary staff	N/A In the light of the Commission decision on the APS 2005			
Other human resources				
Total				

The human resources requirements identified for the options described in point 5.3 are estimated as follows:

- preparation of agreements in the context of the partnerships with the Member States and technical assistance for their implementation: 1 A and 1 B;
- establishment and management of an enlarged network of relays: 5 A, 4 B and 3 C;²²
- establishment and management of new major information centres: 7 B and 6 C;²³
- strengthening of operational coordination for all activities developed by the representations: 1 A and 1 C.

The authorising departments in the Commission undertake to put in place appropriate management mechanisms by means of the necessary legislative proposals in order to implement the Commission's information and communication strategy with the human and budgetary resources that are allocated.

7.2 Overall financial impact of human resources

N/A

²² On 14 April 2004 the President, Mr. Vitorino and Mrs. Schreyer, reached an agreement on these human resources requirements on the basis of the following:
 - 5 additional posts to be made immediately available in 2004;
 - 3 additional posts in 2005;
 - 4 posts to be redeployed in 2004 within DG PRESS.

²³ Indicative request, which does not prejudice the results of the evaluation and the memorandum which is being prepared on the Commission's participation in private-law bodies.

7.3 Other administrative expenditure deriving from the action

Budget line (number and heading)	Amount €	Method of calculation
16 02 04 – Operation of radio and television studios and audiovisual equipment	€1 300 000	Development of Europe by Satellite (EbS) to work in 21 languages (already under way) and adaptation of the audiovisual tools (production, media library) managed in digital format (in progress)
Total	€1 300 000	

The amounts are total expenditure for 12 months.

I.	Annual total (7.2 + 7.3)	€1 300 000
II.	Duration of action	3 years
III.	Total cost of action (I x II)	€3 900 000

8. FOLLOW-UP AND EVALUATION

8.1 Follow-up arrangements

For the partnerships with the Member States, all the activities are regularly monitored by the operational units at headquarters and by the representations, via the Commission/Member State coordination teams on which they are represented.

As regards the relays and networks and the activities conducted by DG PRESS, the DG's internal monitoring and reporting system will be enhanced in order to ensure that resources are used as efficiently as possible in the new context (enlargement, new agreements in line with the Financial Regulation, increased checks, etc).

8.2 Arrangements and schedule for evaluation

Recurrent evaluations will be carried out from 2004 onwards using an evaluation methodology specific to DG PRESS and drawing from the ongoing evaluation of activities under the PRINCE programme.

As part of the evaluations of the activities of the relays, a specific evaluation will be carried out in 2005, using the DG PRESS evaluation methodology, in particular on the basis of the relays' final activity reports, the reports on on-the-spot checks, the reports/analyses provided by the Commission representations, etc. It will also take account of the technical assistance provided to the relays by the Commission departments (training, documentation, information, audiovisual and electronic services, etc.). The evaluation will be performed by an outside consultant.

9. ANTI-FRAUD MEASURES

The provisions of the financial rules relating to implementation of the budget, with special reference to monitoring measures, will be put into effect.

As far as grants are concerned, the agreements concluded between the Commission and beneficiaries allow for on-the-spot checks by the Commission or the Court of Auditors at the premises of the direct beneficiary of the Community grant and the eventuality of requiring documentary evidence for any expenditure made under such agreements for a period of five years following payment of the balance of the grant.

Grant beneficiaries are furthermore required to submit reports and financial statements, which are analysed from the point of view of content and eligibility of expenditure, bearing in mind the purpose of the Community funding.

It should be stressed that the checks carried out before payments are made will cover any objective evidence that the grant beneficiary can supply, such as the certification of financial documents.