

Council for Trade in Services  
Special Session on Telecommunications Services

Original: English

## COMMUNICATION FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND ITS MEMBER STATES

### European Commission Actions to Assist Third Countries in Adapting to the Changes in the Telecommunications Environment

#### Addendum

1. This note aims to give an overview of the European Commission contribution in the field of assistance to third countries for **telecommunication regulatory changes and modernisation**. The note presents past and ongoing activities in this area, but does not include investment projects nor the actions conducted by EC Member States.

2. From 1992 to 1999 the Commission spent or will be spend around **61 Mn. €**<sup>1</sup> in grants for the restructuring of telecommunications according to the following geographical coverage.

#### A. LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES

3. A programme including important regulatory assistance aspects was undertaken for Central American countries for the period 1992-97, with a total budget of **17 Mn. €**. This regional program for technical assistance and telecommunications development included two lines of action: technical assistance to the Technical Commission of Telecommunications in Central America (COMTELCA) and the national operators in the fields of regulation, standardisation and approval of equipment and training of human resources. The second action aimed at the development of rural telephony and the reinforcement of the transmission potential within various countries of the region (Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala).

4. There is an other project covering all Latin American countries to support dialogue and diffusion of the Information Society as well as cooperation in the field of standards (**0,6 Mn. €** committed in 1999).

#### B. MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES AND MIDDLE EAST

5. The projects of technical co-operation and assistance for these regions are carried out within the framework of the MEDA programme (covering Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and the Palestinian Authority). A project "New approaches to telecommunications policy" for a total of **2,4 Mn. €** is to be launched in the second half of 1999. The following actions will be supported notably by the organisation of training courses, seminars and forums: reform of the telecommunications sector, legislative techniques, participation in the WTO agreements, privatisation measures, analysis of telecommunications market, etc.

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<sup>1</sup> Euro is approximately equal to US\$ 1,03 on 8 June 1999.

6. There is also an important number of ongoing projects between the EC and MEDA countries for regulatory assistance on a bilateral basis. In particular a line of action has been established with Morocco for a total amount of **4,5 Mn. €** concerning projects of co-operation with the National Telecommunications Regulatory Agency of Morocco (ANRT). The projects aims to study the following issues: legislation relevant to the ANRT, strategy and action plan of the ANRT, financial management of the ANRT, organisation of financial resources of the ANRT in relation to the sales of frequencies and technical assistance to ANRT.

7. The second line of action concerns the cooperation with Syria. In particular this involves assistance to the Syrian Government by supporting the national Syrian Telecom Establishment (STE) to improve and modernise the telecommunications sector. The specific objectives for this action include: developing human resources by providing high quality training to groups of STE personnel, improving administrative and technical procedures of STE, developing planning procedures on the technical side, building up operation and maintenance procedures for the local cable network, introducing modern financial management concepts to improve the monitoring and control of operations. The total amount of the action is approximately **10 Mn. €**. The agreement of the Syrian authorities is pending.

#### C. CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

8. The Central and Eastern Europe countries benefit from technical regulatory assistance in the telecommunications sector in the framework of the PHARE programme. There are ongoing regional projects amounting to **2,7 Mn. €** for the following countries: Albania, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, FYROM, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia. The major area of interest are: tariffs, quality of service, spectrum management, accounting practices and cost allocation, training of staff, liberalisation and standardisation.

9. Furthermore the following bilateral projects have been undertaken since 1992:

- 8 projects with Bulgaria for a total amount of **2,6 Mn. €** in the field of technical assistance, training, restructuring and spectrum management. Most of these projects were concluded in 1998;
- 7 ongoing projects with the Czech Republic and Slovakia for a total amount of **0,1 Mn. €** for technical assistance in implementing legislation in the telecommunications sector;
- 2 ongoing projects with Latvia for a total amount of **0,6 Mn. €** in the field of procurement assistance and training;
- 6 projects with Poland for a total amount of **3 Mn. €** for training in the telecommunications sector, in particular for rural telecommunications. Most of these projects were concluded in 1998;
- 10 projects with Romania for a total amount of **3 Mn. €** for technical assistance for the introduction of GSM services, quality management in telecommunications and training. Four of these projects are ongoing;
- 3 ongoing projects with Slovenia for a total amount of **0,5 Mn. €** for technical assistance for the introduction of GSM services and training.

#### D. COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES

10. A number of CIS countries are benefiting from technical regulatory assistance in the telecommunications sector in the framework of the TACIS programme. There are currently 2 ongoing regional projects totalling **2,5 Mn. €** for CIS countries and Mongolia.

11. In addition, the following projects have been conducted on a bilateral basis:

- 6 projects with Russia for a total amount of **6,8 Mn. €** dealing with technical assistance on management and maintenance for telephone network operators, technical assistance for mobile communications networks operators in rural areas, technical assistance to the regional telecommunications training centres and support to radio spectrum frequency management. Most of these projects were concluded in 1998;
- 1 project with Georgia for **1 Mn. €** dealing with telecommunications development strategy is ongoing;
- 1 project with Kazakstan for **1,8 Mn. €** dealing with technical assistance for frequency management is ongoing;
- 1 project with Uzbekistan for **1 Mn. €** dealing with further assistance to the telecommunications sector is waiting for statement of endorsement.

E. AFRICA

12. The European Development Fund committed 82 Mn. € for Africa in the period 1995-1998 for projects related to telecommunications infrastructures. Supporting the establishment of a regulatory framework in Africa is an ongoing activity with priority given in particular to the least developed countries. At this stage, one study to explore a regulatory model that countries with low telephone penetration and low GDP in Africa is in preparation.

F. OTHER COUNTRIES

13. There is a number of ongoing programmes between the EC and other countries for regulatory assistance. Such as:

- 3 ongoing projects with China for a total amount of **0,7 Mn. €** in the field of testing and certification and for the creation of an education and standardisation centre;
  - 1 project concluded in 1995 with India for an amount of **0,6 Mn. €** in the field of training.
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