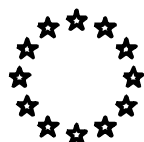


2000

**EXTERNAL MONITORING REPORT
ON THE
SPECIFIC PROGRAMME
FOR
RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGICAL
DEVELOPMENT**



IN THE FIELD OF

**USER-FRIENDLY
INFORMATION SOCIETY**

MAY 2001

This report is part of a series of external annual monitoring reports prepared for the EU Framework Programme, the Euratom Framework Programme and their constituent Specific Programmes.

The Commission has over the years placed increasing emphasis on the evaluation of Community R&D activities. As part of the process of continuous improvement, a new programme monitoring scheme was introduced in 1995. This scheme involves independent external monitoring experts and a timely response by Programme Management to the recommendations produced by the experts. The new scheme thereby provides the basis of a quick response mechanism to programme developments and should give advice on key issues.

This report is the second covering the IST Programme in the Fifth Framework Programme; it also highlights progress in relation to ongoing activities under the Fourth Framework Programme. The report should help reinforce the establishment of best practices and identify scope for further improvements in programme implementation.

The report consists of three parts:

Part A: *External monitoring report prepared by the following independent external experts:*

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Part B: *Responses of the Programme Management to the external monitoring report.*

PART A:

Report of the external Monitoring Panel

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the period of the current Monitoring exercise (November 2000 – April 2001), the ITC (Information Technology & Communications) sector has been undergoing a major reevaluation, as reflected in the profit warnings of major IT companies: these, in turn, have had a major impact on global stockmarkets. The ten-year period of continuous growth in the GDP due to New Economy productivity improvements seems to be temporarily disrupted, at least, in the US. Europe will be closely watched to see if the same phenomenal productivity improvements can be repeated in the coming years without the subsequent disruption. This situation provides an opportunity that the EU will indeed become "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world", as stated at the Lisbon Summit in March 2000. The IST Programme has an essential role to play in these developments.

Within Europe, probably the most important political and organisational challenge to the EU over the next decade will be the entry and integration of the next group of new Member States. The integration challenge is all the more apparent in the IT sector, where the infrastructure and IT industry in general, in the countries concerned, is weak. One of the sectors where Europe has a worldwide lead is Mobile Communications. The upcoming 3G (third generation) technologies and UMTS will offer new possibilities to keep the pace-setting role for Europe for standards, new applications and user productivity improvement. The IST Programme has a key role to play in these developments as well.

Within the IST Programme itself, Programme Management has carried out during 2000 the evaluation of the second, third and fourth calls for proposals, launched the second and third call projects, met the Programme's commitment and payment targets, and developed the work-programme for 2001. The development of the overall RTD Programme and the associated administrative procedures has improved considerably during the past two years. The Panel is recommending a number of fundamental strategic directions and actions geared to achieve maximum future impact and enhanced EU-wide capabilities including, as a necessity, speeding up the *e*Europe and *e*Commission initiatives.

The recommendations of the 2000 IST Monitoring Panel focus on four issues in the management of the Programme:

- ◆ **Increasing the use of electronic tools**
- ◆ **Improving Programme planning**
- ◆ **Improving administrative structures**
- ◆ **Moving forward to FP6.**

1.1 INCREASING THE USE OF ELECTRONIC TOOLS

The use of electronic tools in proposal submission is not an isolated activity but an essential part of the overall digital workflow throughout the IST Programme, indeed throughout the Commission. Such an approach will contribute to increasing productivity, reducing overall costs and improving customer satisfaction — as well as reducing time-to-contract. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ A task-force should examine how to overcome existing barriers to the electronic submission of proposals and develop an action plan by end-2001 (R8 – Section 3.2.1).

1.2 IMPROVING PROGRAMME PLANNING

The Programme's Research Targeting and Proposal Evaluation systems are, with small caveats, excellent and the basis for solid future planning and development. However, there are many difficulties within the Project Monitoring system, the tracking of research Outputs and the assessment of Impacts due to weak forward planning. It is important that the source of these difficulties is removed and that they do not reappear in FP6. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ A Project Monitoring System is put in place and its performance independently reviewed by means of an annual Project Monitoring Report. The first such Report should be available by end-2001 (R4 and R5 – Section 3.1.3).
- ◆ Programme Management develops, by end-2001, a first attempt at an integrated plan (including IT support) for the operation of the successor to the IST Programme under FP6 (R6 – Section 3.1.4).

1.3 IMPROVING ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES

Good information and good planning are ineffective if the administrative structures are poor. The consistent request of Programme Management has been for "Simplification, simplification, simplification." The power to clarify administration as well as improve co-ordination across Programme Activities would be improved by clearer lines of responsibility. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ The new incumbent of the Brussels-based Deputy Director General position should be given responsibility as overall IST Programme Director (R7 – Section 3.1.5).

Clear administration is also supported by publishing clear targets and procedures. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ In the area of time to contract, critical milestones and guaranteed service times, including time to contract, are published (R9 – Section 3.2.2), and a clear policy on the treatment of proposal budgets is formulated across Programme Activities (R2 – Section 3.1.2). Both should be available by end-2001 to the 2001 Monitoring Panel. Efforts to clarify the use of socio-economic and European Added Value selection criteria should be continued (R3 – Section 3.1.2). A customer satisfaction survey should be carried out among proposers (R1 – Section 3.1.2).

An effective Programme also needs commitment by all personnel in all Programme Activities. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ Any Advisory Group(s) should be constituted to represent the concerns of all Programme Activities (R10 – Section 3.2.3).
- ◆ A Human Resources Policy, explicitly linked to Programme development needs, should be put in place (R15 – Section 3.5.1). Explicit targets for and measures to achieve a better gender balance should be part of this policy (R16 – Section 3.5.2). Both policy and targets should be available by end-2001 to the 2001 Monitoring Panel.

1.4 THE WAY FORWARD TO FP6

Developing both the European Research Area and at the same time increasing European Added Value are fundamental to the development of FP6. To accomplish this — and give greater competitiveness to European industry and benefits to European citizens — greater knowledge is needed of the use of clustering in international research and the way SMEs exploit such research. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ Policy-oriented reviews of Take-Up Measures (R11 – Section 3.3.1), SME participation (R12 – Section 3.3.2) and Clusters (R13 – Section 3.4.1) are undertaken. All should be made available by end-2001 to the 2001 Monitoring Panel.

The integration of the applicant countries into the research activities of the current and next Framework Programmes requires particular care and support. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ In conjunction with DG Research, a medium-term plan should be drawn up for the integration of the applicant countries into FP activities, including short-term measures such as capacity-building and integration into existing networks, and made available by end-2001 to the 2001 Monitoring Panel (R14 – Section 3.4.2).

Programme Management invests considerable effort in implementing Monitoring Panel recommendations and tracking and reporting on their follow-up. However, the response to recommendations should be managed in a more timely fashion, greater continuity established from one year's exercise to the next, and better co-ordination ensured with the panel monitoring the Framework Programme. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ Each commitment made by Programme Management in response to a Monitoring Panel recommendation should incorporate an implementation timetable, and appropriate resources allocated for its realisation. A significant degree of continuity should be ensured from one year's Monitoring Panel to the next. One member, at least, of each specific programme's Monitoring Panel should be a member of the corresponding Framework Programme Panel (R17 – Section 3.6).

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 THE MONITORING REPORT

This is the report of the 2000 Annual Monitoring Panel of the Information Society Technologies (IST) Programme required by the Council Decision establishing the Programme. Its objective is to support IST Programme Management in its efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Programme.

The Monitoring exercise was carried out from November 2000 to April 2001. The Panel's work was based on:

- documentary research (annex 3);
- presentations by Commission staff to the full Panel (annex 3);
- discussions between the full Panel and separate samples of Project Participants, Project Officers, and Heads of Unit;
- semi-structured interviews of each Director by two or three members of the Panel (annex 4);
- semi-structured interviews of a sample of National Contact Points (NCPs) and members of the Programme Committee (ISTC) by individual Panel members (annex 4);
- an e-mailed questionnaire survey of NCPs in the newly associated states (annex 4).

The Panel wishes to record its appreciation of the considerable time and effort made available by all those referred to above in assisting the Panel in undertaking its mandate. Particular thanks should be accorded to DG Information Society's Programmes & Policies Evaluation Unit for its timely, efficient and knowledgeable support to the Panel.

2.2 PROGRAMME ACHIEVEMENTS

During 2000, IST Programme Management has undertaken a substantial amount of high-quality Programme implementation. It has successfully:

- carried out the evaluation of the second, third and fourth calls for proposals (see table below);
- launched projects stemming from the second and third calls in line with existing internal procedures;
- developed the work-programme for 2001.

Call <i>(submission date)</i>	Proposals received	Contribution requested (M€)	Contracts signed <i>(as of 28/3/01)</i>	Contribution engaged (M€) <i>(as of 28/3/01)</i>
Call 2 <i>(17 January 00)</i>	1212	1359.42	228	223.56
Call 3 <i>(10 May 00)</i>	862	1489.40	239	387.02
Call 4 <i>(31 October 00)</i>	1117	1640.57		

source: IST Programme Management

This substantial effort is the core of the Programme and has been well carried out, putting in place research projects that will undoubtedly contribute to Europe's economic and social development. By the end of 2000, some 70% of the Programme's budget had

been committed, with planning in place for a further 24% in 2001 and the final 6% in 2002. This financial profile has been adopted to permit the Programme Management time to plan for and phase into FP6.

IST Programme Management has also acted to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Programme by:

- Introducing a quick feedback system using the Evaluation Summary Reports (ESRs) to inform proposers of the outcome of evaluations within 4 weeks of the final evaluation.
- Introducing an *Integrated Programme Portfolio Analysis* (IPPA)¹, which provides an analysis of the portfolio of projects, contracted by the Programme and contrasts it with the Programme's vision and priorities².
- Greater harmonisation of processes within KAs and the better use of common proposal submission and evaluation tools across Key Actions.
- Introducing a formal system of setting operational Programme management targets and reporting.
- An improved follow-up system for the recommendations of the Monitoring and Assessment Panels.

The Directors, Heads of Unit, Project Officers and Support Staff of the IST Programme operate within structures and procedures that are largely not of their own making and which they have limited powers to change. Many of the management difficulties faced by the Programme derive directly from these externally imposed constraints. It is essential to take into account these constraints if the field of action of IST Management is to be understood and Monitoring Panel recommendations are to be addressed to the appropriate authorities. In this light:

- The Council Decision establishing the Programme provided a specific, independent budget for each Programme Activity (the Key Actions, the Future and Emerging Technologies and Research Infrastructures). This has led to a high degree of independence of Directors with their "own" budgets and resources.
- A much stronger co-ordination has been required of all Specific Programmes under FP5, causing an increased time to contract and weight of documentation.
- The European Commission's own central legal and financial requirements and procedures are over-elaborate and over-centralised — a view shared by the Commission³, Programme Management and the Monitoring Panel.

¹ Integrated Programme Portfolio Analysis - Report on the Analysis done following the third IST call, February 2001, IST Programme, Brussels

Integrated Programme Portfolio Analysis - Report on the Analysis done following the second IST call, May 2000, IST Programme, Brussels, <http://www.cordis.lu/ist/cpt/ippa.htm>

² On an annual basis, across all IST Programme Activities, Programme Management now sets explicit targets for their work, ranging from query response times to time-to-contract. It monitors its performance against these targets, and records and analyses the actual outcomes. This mirrors best practice in industry and is a solid first step in developing a Quality Improvement System.

³ *Simplifying the Commission's Decision-Making Process: memorandum from the President*, SEC (2000) 2071/6, November 2000

3. ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMME EXECUTION AND PROGRESS

3.1 AN INTEGRATED RESEARCH PROGRAMME

The IST Programme cycle consists of four main phases, which are repeated a number of times over the lifetime of the Programme. This section reviews the management of these four phases, the quality of the associated forward planning for each phase, and how the Programme learns and adjusts its management as each cycle is repeated. In summary, the Monitoring Panel finds that:

- ◆ **Targeting and Calls for Proposals** elements and associated planning are, with small caveats, very well undertaken along with the planning and feedback cycles for the production of the Annual Work Programme and the use of the IPPA⁴.
- ◆ **Proposal Evaluation and Selection** elements and planning are excellent, save for Time-to-Contract issues discussed in section 3.2.2 below. Feedback loops from evaluators continually improve the system.
- ◆ **Project Monitoring.** The Project Monitoring System needs to be brought up to the high standards of the Targeting and Evaluation phases of the Programme. Currently, the focus is largely on the project review element and the Programme — and projects — miss out on the full benefits.
- ◆ **Impact / Exploitation structures** are currently weaker than those for Project Monitoring. They need to be rapidly put in place so that a proper evaluation of the projects and Programme can be undertaken and the added value of European-level research demonstrated to the Parliament, Council and Member States.

3.1.1 Targeting and Calls for Proposals

The targeting of research areas and the associated calls for proposals is very well carried out by the IST Programme. The development of an annual work-programme, in conjunction with the work and analysis provided by the IST Advisory Group (ISTAG), provides the Programme with flexibility in adjusting calls for proposals to the rapidly changing R&D needs of the European Union.

The subsequent Calls for Proposals are then well undertaken. However, there continues to be a need for documentation to be simplified.

Following the selection of projects, outside experts undertake an "Integrated Programme Portfolio Analysis" (IPPA)⁴. This is an important innovation. It permits the IST Programme to have an initial snapshot of the research portfolio that it is supporting. The Programme can then compare the developing portfolio with its short-term and longer-term strategic research requirements and make any necessary adjustments in the following year's work-programme.

⁴ See footnote 1.

3.1.2 Proposal Evaluation

The evaluation procedure continues to be a solid, well-respected bulwark of the Programme and continues to improve in terms of quality. Following a 1999 Monitoring Panel Recommendation, a "quick response" mechanism, which sends the Evaluation Summary Reports (ESR) to the proposer within four weeks, has been put in place. However, greater clarity and precision in these reports would be helpful.

A strong quality-improvement system has been developed at the heart of the evaluation process, involving independent monitoring by a small group of independent experts. Key Action 1 has already undertaken "customer satisfaction" analysis as well as setting explicit quality targets. It would be useful to strengthen inter-KA Cupertino to the extent that such good practice could more easily become general policy.

The difficulties experienced by both proposers and evaluators alike in the application of socio-economic and European Added Value criteria continue, as do the difficulties in applying them in a homogeneous manner across the IST Programme and other FP5 programmes⁵.

The Evaluator Database is becoming a useful tool after initial difficulties. It has given the Programme access to new evaluators, with new skills and a broader vision of research. However, there is still difficulty in using the database as an interface to evaluators when highly specialist, technically advanced knowledge is required. Here, the Programme Management should be able to call on specialists outside the database as needed. However, the number of industry-based experts is low — one reason may be that the daily rates have not been revised since 1992.

There is an urgent need for a common IST policy regarding proposal resourcing. Currently, Programme Activities have different approaches to the role of evaluators and Programme Management in determining the appropriate level of funding for the project — and hence the EU contribution. Issues requiring clarification include:

- The appropriate roles – if any – of evaluators in either recommending or even determining the project budget, and hence the EU contribution.
- The impact of any reduction of proposal budget. For example, does any evaluator or Programme instigated budget reduction change the *qualitative nature* of the project, such that it is no longer the project that was initially evaluated?
- Does a policy of reductions in proposal budgets simply lead to consistent overpricing by proposers, and what are its effects?
- What might be the implications of an explicit value-for-money approach, where budgets are not reduced and the emphasis is only on what the Programme obtains for its investment?

Recommendation 1: *A Customer Satisfaction Survey should be carried out as part of the proposal evaluation quality improvement system by end-2001.*

⁵ Identifying the Constituent Elements of European Added Value (EAV) of the EU RTD Programmes, Yellow Window for DG Research, November 2000

Recommendation 2: *A common, well-argued policy on the treatment of proposal budgets should be developed across the IST Programme and made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.*

Recommendation 3: *Continued efforts should be made to clarify the socio-economic and European Added Value selection criteria and to communicate their meaning to evaluators and proposers.*

3.1.3 Project Monitoring

The overall Project Monitoring System, including the annual or six-monthly project review undertaken by external reviewers, is an essential element of the good management of the IST Programme. It provides information that can be used to:

- adjust the annual work-plan;
- indicate which elements of the Programme are working well — or badly, and so need attention;
- improve the overall management of projects;
- improve the actual project review process;
- act as the basic data and foundation of the Impact / Evaluation phase of the IST Programme and provide for early dissemination of project results.

However, the IST Project Monitoring System (and the project review process) is weak, and an area that the Monitoring Panel would like to see brought up to the very high level of the Programme's research targeting and proposal evaluation phases. The current weakness is due to a number of factors including:

- The lack of forward planning beyond the signing of project contracts.
- Continuation of FP4 Specific Programme practices into the present IST Programme.
- Difficulties in co-ordination across Programme Activities, and the lack of an individual responsible during the year 2000 for establishing coherent and consistent project monitoring practices across the IST Programme.
- The five-year cycle of the Framework Programme, where abrupt administrative changes may cause difficulties in ongoing project monitoring activities.

The Programme's proposed response⁶ focuses nearly exclusively on project reviews. It needs to be broadened to capture the potential benefits to IST Programme Management indicated above. The Panel's recommendations are aimed at supporting the development of this wider Project Monitoring System, and in Recommendation 6, avoiding the problem recurring in FP6.

Recommendation 4: *An IST Project Monitoring System should be put in place immediately to capture data and information from the individual project reviews and generate progress indicators.*

⁶ *Project Monitoring in IST: Final Draft*, DG INFSO, February 2001

Recommendation 5: *An annual review of the performance of the IST Project Monitoring System, undertaken by independent outside experts, should be launched in 2001 and, at minimum, a draft report made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.*

3.1.4 Tracking Project Outputs and Assessing Impacts

Tracking project outputs and assessing impacts is an essential phase in ensuring the success of the IST Programme. Such tracking can produce information that will:

- indicate to Parliament, Council and Member States the benefits of funding research at a European level, and justify further public investment in research;
- assist in developing mechanisms, not only in the IST Programme, that will improve the projects' outputs and impacts — and hence the cost/benefit ratio of the Programme;
- indicate possible areas for improvements in the management of the Programme as well as possible areas of future European research needs and EU RTD policy-making.

However, this area is a major problem within both the IST Programme and the wider Framework Programme: no systematic data collection and analysis system exists⁷. The causes of this problem include:

- intrinsic difficulties in identifying outputs and impacts in the short- and often medium-term;
- the five-year cycle of the Framework Programme, which tends to downplay the importance of projects funded under the previous Programme;
- The lack of a strong, well-informed and consistent demand for information on the benefits of EU research programmes from the Parliament, Council and Member States alike.

Impact and data collection, as with project monitoring, must be treated as an element of an integrated research management system and must be thought out *before the launch of the Programme*. Such an approach also requires a cost-effective Programme information system to be designed into the foundations of any Programme management system and into areas (which are just now developing) such as integrated electronic submission and evaluation⁸.

Recommendation 6: *During 2001, Programme Management should develop an integrated plan for the operation, under FP6, of Research Targeting, Proposal Evaluation, Project Monitoring, Tracking of Outputs, and Assessing Impacts. There should be an accompanying plan for IT support. These outline plans should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.*

⁷ For the IST Programme, impact analysis has so far involved the collection of case-study based "success stories" (see for example *IST 2000: Realising an Information Society for All*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2000); a study on "High-Impact Projects in the ICT Sector" (http://europa.eu.int/comm/information_society/evaluation/pdf/iststudy3_en.pdf); the PROSOMA showcase (<http://www.prosoma.lu>); and a planned questionnaire for the next 5-Year Assessment exercise.

⁸ *Towards a full electronic submission and evaluation of proposals*, DG INFSO, 31.10.00XIII/04202

3.1.5 Internal Programme Co-ordination

Co-ordination within Programme Activities has continued to improve. However, co-ordination *between* Programme Activities has proved extremely difficult and continues to be of concern to the Monitoring Panel. This is generally explained by Programme Management as arising from:

- the Council Decision, which indicated independent budgets for each Programme Activity⁹;
- the lack of an overall IST Programme Director;
- the lack of formal authority within the horizontal co-ordination function.

While the use of common approaches and software tools for handling research proposals has developed, issues such as project monitoring, common-format data collection and early FP6 planning have been handicapped by difficulties in cross-Programme co-ordination. An ad-hoc system has developed, with different Programme Activities taking responsibility for different issues.

An Operations Sector (OS) team carries out horizontal activities. While they have formal authority for their activities, in the strongly partitioned IST Programme, they do not have the necessary power. Success is based on individual professionalism rather than systemic strength. Their functions need to be better integrated at an overall IST Programme level.

Cross-Programme Actions, originally designed to support IST Programme integration¹⁰, have not been as effective a mechanism as might have been expected. They have largely acted to redistribute budget to the Key Actions. They are operating as "new" action lines rather than seeking integration.

The Monitoring Panel acknowledges the publication of a Brussels-based Deputy Director-General position¹¹ in DG INFSO. The Panel suggests that consideration be given for the incumbent of this position to be given responsibility as overall IST Programme Director.

Recommendation 7: *The new incumbent of the Brussels-based Deputy Director-General position should be given responsibility as overall IST Programme Director.*

⁹ Council Decision, <http://www.cordis.lu/ist/b-oj-en2.htm>

¹⁰ <http://www.cordis.lu/ist/ctp/home.html>

¹¹ "Deputy Director-General (Brussels) with special responsibility for the administrative and financial management of the RTD specific programme and of the other programmes and of the contribution of RTD activities to the eEurope action plan", INFSO organigram, 1/12/00

3.2 EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES

3.2.1 Electronic Submission and Software Tools

The Panel believes that the use of electronic tools in the proposal submission process should not be seen as an isolated activity having its own merits, but as an essential part of an all-digital workflow system. Such an activity would be in line with the eCommission initiative¹² of increasing productivity, reducing overall costs and increasing customer (participant) satisfaction with the IST programme.

The use of electronic tools and methods in proposal submission, evaluation and project management promises major benefits in shortening response times, minimising errors and saving valuable administrative resources. As electronic submission is gradually integrated into the electronic handling of all digital documents within the Commission, there will be increasing gains for both proposers and eventual project co-ordinators, as well as for IST Programme Management as a whole.

However, the adoption of electronic submission in FP5 has been quite slow. For example, rates have fallen since earlier programmes such as ACTS, where it was close to 85% at its best. It is now down to just under 20% in the IST Programme¹³. The drop in usage of electronic submission reflects the problems of software tools and procedures adopted in FP5¹⁴.

There are a number of key issues relating to IST Support Tools:

- ◆ **A coherent strategy and a vision are needed** in the area of software support tools¹⁵.
- ◆ **The electronic submission procedure should be user-friendly** and should include a tracking facility. The tracking facility should deal with all aspects of the applications and proposals such as acknowledgements when received, when approved, etc. The model of a state-of-the-art, user-friendly, Web-based parcel delivery system, with passwords, could usefully be adopted for such a service.
- ◆ **There should be wider use of digital signatures** for all interactions with the Commission, e.g. cost claims, reports, etc. It makes no sense to have complicated bureaucratic procedures for a one-time only submission process. Furthermore, those who do not wish to encrypt their proposal should be able to do so.
- ◆ **Electronic submission must be more strongly promoted** internally as well as externally. The NCPs should have an active role in promotion. Targets for usage should be set.

Finally, the Panel encourages the Commission to organise the launch of pilot electronic evaluation trials, as a preparation for the interfacing of electronic submission with electronic project management.

¹² eCommission, Chapter II.VI of *Reforming the Commission: A White Paper - Action Plan*, COM (2000) 200, March 2000

¹³ It fell to 5% for Call 1 of the IST programme, rose to 8% in Calls 2 and 3, 15% in Call 4 and 19.9% in Call 5.

¹⁴ *Review of IST Support Tools*, Informatics Directorate, DG ADMIN, December 2000

¹⁵ In this respect, the Panel is pleased to note the recent publication (March 2001) in the *Official Journal* of a call for tenders for a study on electronic transaction systems for administering projects (OJ 2001/S53-036540, <http://ted.eur-op.eu.int/fetchdoc?language=en&docnum=36540-2001&showdata=0>)

Recommendation 8: *The Commission services should establish a task-force of all stakeholders (representing the financial and legal services, experienced users and other relevant DGs) to investigate and overcome existing barriers to the use of electronic submission.*

3.2.2 Time to Contract

The elapsed time from call deadline to contract signature averaged 238 days in the FP5 IST Programme in 1999/2000 compared to e.g. about 120-150 days in the ACTS Programme of FP4. This is a particularly worrisome trend when dealing with rapidly moving technologies, themselves with very short times to market. For start-ups, the long service times are totally unacceptable. Programme Management has indicated that a 3-month service time is a feasible target for FP6. The Panel fully endorses the proposed target. The three main factors determining the long time-to-contract seem to be:

- The mode of operation and timing of consultations with the IST Programme Committee, and with other DGs.
- The processes and procedures deemed necessary in developing a common and co-ordinated FP5 approach. This has entailed a move from a high degree of parallel processing of contract negotiations and decision making to more rigidly sequential activities in FP5.
- The common approach across the IST Programme itself, which entails progress at the pace of the slowest activity.

Recommendation 9: *By mid-2001, Programme Management should publish the critical milestones, with guaranteed service times, for the proposal submission and contract process — the Time to Contract.*

3.2.3 Role of the IST Advisory Group (ISTAG)

The IST Programme Advisory Group, ISTAG, is a single grouping covering the work of all IST Programme Activities¹⁶. It has a membership of 24, of whom 8 represent industry and 2 represent users. It has produced an influential Programme "Vision" which has had a strong impact on the development of the 2001 work-programme. In conjunction with Programme Management, it has produced some important studies¹⁷.

The Panel and a number of Programme Directors have concerns related to the composition of the Advisory Group and its relationship to individual Programme Activities:

- A number of Key Actions feel that they do not have their legitimate concerns for the direction and application of technological research represented on ISTAG. As this may damage the development of the Programme itself, there may be need for a bridging structure that ensures all Programme Activities have their concerns equally represented.

¹⁶ <http://www.cordis.lu/ist/istag.htm>

¹⁷ Most recently *Scenarios for Ambient Intelligence in 2010*, ISTAG/IPTS, March 2001 - <ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/ist/docs/istagscenarios2010.pdf>

- The Panel's view is that the representatives of academic researchers, users and industry on the Advisory Group should be of the *very highest* level. The IST Programme is Europe's IT flagship, and this should be reflected in ISTAG. The essential balance between researchers, users and industry needs to be continually assured by the Programme.
- The support provided to ISTAG through foresight activities has been successful and well appreciated. This activity should be continued, with the proviso that it reflects the full breadth of the IST Programme's concerns.

Recommendation 10: *The Commission should ensure that the concerns of all Programme Activities are fully reflected in the composition of any Advisory Group(s), and that such Groups should contain a balanced representation from the highest levels of academia, industry and users.*

3.3 SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

3.3.1 Take-Up Actions and SMEs

Take-up Actions in the IST Programme are a form of accompanying measure. They help to transfer leading-edge (as well as established but insufficiently deployed) methodologies and technologies to industry and other organisations in order to achieve greater efficiency, higher quality and greater economy. The utility of Take-Up Actions is well recognised, and they are also seen as a good entry point for SMEs into the Programme and as a means of increasing SME participation. They are usually associated with a strong technology user application element, and as such have an additional regional development dimension. The participation of SMEs (under 250 employees) in the various types of IST Programme measures is shown in Annex 2.

A number of points should be noted:

- The main participation of SMEs within the Programme is in the large, mainstream RTD projects. Over 60% of all SMEs are in this category. This is probably a healthy state of affairs, rather than having them ghettoised into minor activities.
- The sheer variety of potential areas of SME participation is confusing: certainly to the Monitoring Panel, and probably to SMEs and to the IST Programme itself. The variety is due to the lack of integration of such measures in passing from the FP4 Programmes (ACTS, Esprit, TAP) to the supposedly integrated IST Programme under FP5.
- That Take-Up Actions are unevenly used across the Programme¹⁸ was explained by a number of Heads of Unit as also being a historical legacy: if a Project Officer had used the measure under FP4, he/she would promote it under FP5 — rather than a measure that was novel and not well understood.
- The Take-up Actions have no necessary connection with the core RTD projects. It is not known how many, if any, are being used to support and valorise the core RTD projects of either FP4 or FP5. This was somewhat surprising to the Panel. The

¹⁸ See Annex 5 of *Integrated Programme Portfolio Analysis - Report on the Analysis done following the second IST call*, May 2000, IST Programme, Brussels, <http://www.cordis.lu/ist/cpt/ipa.htm>

expectation was that direct synergy would be sought between these smaller Take-up Actions and the core RTD research of the Programme — particularly given some of the criticisms of take-up and dissemination of previous research results. This, though, does not seem to be the case.

However, a more fundamental question also arises. Given the procedures and time-delay requirements of all EU RTD Programmes, including the IST Programme, are such Programmes the best environments for promoting and supporting these kinds of measures? There may be good reasons for dropping or transferring to other EU Programmes some of these current activities. However, for the measures that are to be maintained within the Programme, their variety in terms of Call procedures, organisation, financing rules, and so on is an obstacle to their effective use by proposers and by the Programme itself.

Recommendation 11: *Programme Management should review Take-Up Measures with a view to reducing their number, simplifying procedures and developing synergy with the RTD projects. A brief report should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.*

3.3.2 Start-up Companies

The IST Programme accounts for an estimated 30% of all FP5 SME participation. In the Programme itself, SMEs currently account for about 23% of the budget. The Panel is concerned at the approach to SMEs at two levels:

- At the strategic level, there is a major contradiction between the emphasis on innovation and SMEs as a dynamo of European industry and the Commission's low risk / no risk approach to including SMEs in the Programme. This problem is not tackled in either the Work Programme or in FP5 documentation.
- At an operational level, to the Panel's knowledge, there is no analysis of the roles the SMEs play in research projects and in what circumstances. This means that no analysis is possible as to what is the optimal level of SMEs in EU research Programmes.

New high-tech start-up companies suffer particularly acutely from the present financial and legal approach which 1) refuses any financial risk whatsoever in contracting with projects, and 2) emphasises inappropriately detailed ex-ante controls. They are effectively excluded from the IST Programme by the requirement to produce three years of audited accounts. At the same time, a CRAFT SME award for relatively small amounts of finance (€20 000) can take in the order of 9 months to activate. Such an approach does not tally with the European need for rapidly undertaken and commercialised research.

Recommendation 12: *Programme Management should undertake a policy-oriented analysis of SME participation in the IST Programme. The report and proposed actions should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.*

3.4 CONTRIBUTION TO THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA

3.4.1 Clustering

Clustering is used for many different purposes — market analysis, dissemination, technology watch, increasing project impact — and is backed up by a variety of philosophies and approaches following on from the separate Programmes of FP4. This wide variety is not necessarily wrong. It is simply that there has not been adequate analysis¹⁹. With the lack of analysis and shared experience, the opportunities to choose the best form of clustering have not been made equally available across all the Programme Activities.

Clusters are sometimes seen as a first step towards the big integrated projects under discussion for FP6, and they might also have a role in defining big projects. Again, such discussions, in the absence of adequate analysis of the clustering experience, are extremely difficult.

Recommendation 13: *Programme Management should undertake the necessary policy-oriented analysis of cluster activities. The report and proposed actions should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.*

3.4.2 Applicant Countries

Probably the largest and most important political and organisational challenge to the EU over the next decade will be the entry and integration of the next group of new EU Member States. A clear, integrated, medium-term IST Programme Plan to support the initial steps of the negotiating Applicant Countries²⁰ (ACs) towards integration is necessary now. Current IST activities lack the additional coherence that would come from such an approach.

The ACs face problems in interfacing with the EU and in particular in having a large enough industry sector to take advantage of certain research opportunities. Standard information days have not proved to be sufficient. The proposals of a series of AC think-tanks are supported by the Monitoring Panel but may require further strengthening, and certainly require implementation as part of an integrated IST Plan with clear commitments and targets. Issues such as preventing brain-drain also need to be addressed, as well as clarification of capacity-building measures. In the coming year, the Programme will launch a new activity to incorporate AC partners into existing project networks. This should also be integrated into the Plan.

The difficulty of developing an effective Plan should not be underestimated. The currently negotiating ACs have a combined population of about 105 million people. The financial resource currently allocated is just €26 million, or about 1% of the IST Programme budget. While their success rate in proposals has been increasing in recent

¹⁹ The recent report *Clusters and Networks of Excellence in the IST Programme*, DG INFSO, March 2001, provides a listing of clusters by Programme Activity but no adequate analysis, save within the "Future and Emerging Technologies" section. See <ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/ist/docs/clusters-networks-excellence.pdf>

²⁰ Those negotiating: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia. <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/negotiations/index.htm>

calls, participation rates in proposals are still unsatisfactory, particularly by industry, where it is half the level of EU Member States. Further, the combination of low participation in proposals and low success rates will make it difficult for the larger ACs to obtain a full claw-back of their own contributed funds.

Recommendation 14: *Programme Management, in conjunction with DG Research, should draw up a medium-term plan for the integration of Applicant Countries into Framework Programme activities, including short-term measures such as capacity-building and integration into existing networks. This Plan should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.*

3.4.3 European Added Value

Despite being the core reason for FP5, European Added Value (EAV) remains an extremely difficult concept to be made meaningful for Programme Management, project proposers and evaluators alike²¹. The definition and operation of EAV is a common problem across all Specific Programmes²². The IST Programme should consider publishing a number of concrete project-based examples of EAV from the IST Programme aimed at developing the basis for a combined definition and operational approach for proposers and evaluators.

3.4.4 European Research Area

The IST Programme has been actively preparing for FP6 for some time. The Programme has also undertaken an analysis of funding instruments, R&D and take-up activities as they relate to the developing European Research Area concept²³. Projects launched during the final year of IST in FP5 will serve to round-off coverage of the objectives originally set for the Programme.

The Programme also intends these projects to form a bridge to initiatives and mechanisms that will follow on from IST within FP6. However, the Monitoring Panel reiterates that as FP6 approaches, it will be important for the IST Programme to start operational planning for a coherent and integrated approach to the management of all phases of the successor to the IST Programme (see Recommendation 6, section 3.1.4 above). The Panel also strongly suggests that the EU consider the establishment of a long-term strategy committee to consider strategic issues and topics for the promotion of European research and development for the benefit of industry, commerce and the citizen — as for example the Bangemann Report on the Information Society²⁴.

The debate about ERA has now been underway for some time with wide consultation among Member States. The ERA represents a substantial opportunity for European research and development to have a major and leading impact on the international arena with substantial benefits for European industrial, commerce and social activities. Within the European Union there is a vast knowledge and reservoir of experience and expertise

²¹ *Identifying the Constituent Elements of European Added Value (EAV) of the EU RTD Programmes*, Yellow Window for DG Research, November 2000

²² See Recommendation 3 of the 1999 Framework Programme Monitoring Panel.

²³ *Reorientation of the fifth FP in the context of the ERA: IST Programme*, DG INFSO, February 2001

²⁴ *Europe and the global information society — Recommendations to the European Council*, May 1994, <http://europa.eu.int/ISPO/docs/basics/docs/bangemann.pdf>

to help make this happen. However, combining all this knowledge and expertise into a long-term coherent strategy will require ongoing and sustained input from a wide range of interests. The Panel supports the proposal to establish a European Research Area.

3.5 HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

3.5.1 Human Resources Issues

In terms of management and operational Programme development, the staff are the Programme's most valuable resource: a resource to be developed and its potential fully utilised. However, the Panel has concerns at a number of levels:

- Project Officers are becoming overloaded with administrative details more appropriate to B- and C-grade staff. This arises, at least in part, from unnecessary complexity deriving from the uniformity of procedures across the whole of FP5 and from the Commission's "no-risk" procedures.
- The scientific, technical and human skills of Project Officers are not being sufficiently utilised at present. They have an intimate knowledge of their part of the Programme, have negotiated, monitored and assessed projects, and have dealt with the administrative structures of the Programme — as have B and C Grades.
- The credibility and effectiveness of staff in dealing with project development and participants requires a certain level of up-to-date scientific skills plus management abilities. There is concern that these skills and knowledge are not being sufficiently maintained and developed. Greater support for Project Officer knowledge development, in technical matters as well as in management skills, is required.
- Annual training needs to be explicitly and visibly linked to the strategic needs of the Programme, as well as to personnel assessment procedures and individual career-planning instruments. These two latter functions are weak.

Recommendation 15: *A common IST Human Resources Policy should be developed that links human resource development (training, career development, new employees, gender issues, etc.) to Programme development. This Policy should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.*

3.5.2 Gender Issues

The existing gender profile of the IST Programme is shown below. There is one woman out of 27 staff at Director or Head of Unit level. Only 12% of statutory, permanent A-grade posts are held by women. On the other hand, women occupy 87% of supporting C-grade positions. If the European Parliament, Council and Commission²⁵ subscribe to "equal opportunities", then there is a need for radical action.

Staffing Numbers and Gender Breakdown

Status	Male	Female
DIRECTORS	3	1
Heads of Unit	23	0
other statutory A grades	201	28
other non-statutory A grades	25	12
B grades	47	37
C grades	26	171
D grades	2	0
Total IST staff	327	249

The Monitoring Panel recognises the existence of initiatives to support knowledge development for female professionals (management courses for women, female networks etc.) However, these initiatives are not effective in terms of impact on gender balance at A-grade level. It is of deep concern to the Monitoring Panel that the unbalanced gender distribution has not been met with more powerful measures. A formal gender policy and strategy statement by the IST Programme, along with a set of targets for achieving the targets, is urgently required. Tough measures seem to be needed. The issue of temporarily replacing female staff that go on leave of absence, for example, during pregnancy, should be addressed. Part-time and teleworking will be necessary in order to attract young professionals, women as well as men. Although more flexible ways of working are not seen as specific gender issues, in the short term they may well support the possibility of recruiting competent women.

Recommendation 16: *Explicit targets for a better gender balance should be formulated. Adequate measures for reaching these targets should be initiated and a report on the outcome should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.*

3.6 PROGRAMME MONITORING

The IST Programme is to be congratulated on:

- The serious effort it has made to implement the recommendations of the previous Monitoring Panels. Most recommendations that can be acted on in the short term are in place, and progress is being made on the others.
- The thorough and well-documented follow-up structure put in place for tracking and reporting on the implementation of the recommendations of the Monitoring and Assessment Panels.

²⁵ Third Commission Action Programme on Equal Opportunities for Women 1997-2000, April 1997

- The Programme's own Qualitative Assessment²⁶ of its work. This has been undertaken and published for the second year. It provides a solid summary of the management challenges for the coming year and the achievements of the past year.

In 2000, Programme Management has had to respond to three sets of recommendations (see annex 1):

- 1999 IST Programme Monitoring Panel
- 1999 Framework Programme Monitoring Panel
- IST 5-Year Assessment Panel.

The IST Programme Monitoring Panel in turn needs to respond to the advances of the Programme:

- ◆ The recommendations of the Monitoring Panel should indicate an expected timetable, where appropriate. Similarly, Programme Management's commitments made in response to recommendations should include a timetable.
- ◆ The Monitoring Panel needs to make recommendations that cover improving its own effectiveness and learning from year to year.
- ◆ The separate functioning of the Framework Programme and the Specific Programme Monitoring Panels can lead to poor communications, lack of mutual understanding and weak implementation of the Framework Programme Panel's recommendations. For this reason it is recommended that at least one person from each Specific Programme panel should be a member of the corresponding Framework Programme panel.

Recommendation 17: *Each commitment made by Programme Management in response to a Monitoring Panel recommendation should incorporate an implementation timetable, and appropriate resources should be allocated for its realisation. A significant degree of continuity should be ensured from one year's Monitoring Panel to the next. One member, at least, of each specific programme's Monitoring Panel should be a member of the corresponding Framework Programme Panel.*

²⁶ *Implementation of the IST Programme: a qualitative assessment*, DG INFSO, October 2000

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The IST Programme has undertaken a good year's work and has brought about a number of important innovations that will add to the Programme's effectiveness. The Research Targeting and Proposal Evaluation phases of the Programme are first-class and continue to improve. However, the Programme's Project Monitoring System is a source of deep concern as is the tracking of Project Outputs and Impacts. A major effort is needed in these two areas along with better forward planning for FP6: it is essential to avoid these problems re-occurring in three or four years' time.

The IST Programme operates within a wider administrative system that is not of its own making. This system has caused increases in needless bureaucracy within the IST Programme as well as a significant increase in the Time-to-Contract for research proposers. While the IST Programme can make some progress in these areas, the real reforms can only occur in conjunction with DG Research and other Commission services in the move to FP6. That said, a number of improvements in the administrative structure of the Programme are recommended — particularly as regards the electronic submission of proposals, which has not developed well.

The recommendations of the 2000 IST Monitoring Panel focus on four issues in the management of the Programme:

- ◆ increasing the use of electronic tools
- ◆ improving Programme planning
- ◆ improving administrative structures
- ◆ moving forward to FP6.

Recommendations

- ◆ **Recommendation 1:** A customer satisfaction survey should be carried out as a part of the proposal evaluation quality improvement system by end-2001.
- ◆ **Recommendation 2:** A common, well argued policy on the treatment of proposal budgets should be developed across the IST Programme and made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.
- ◆ **Recommendation 3:** Continued efforts should be made to clarify the socio-economic and European Added Value selection criteria and to communicate their meaning to evaluators and proposers.
- ◆ **Recommendation 4:** An IST *Project Monitoring System* should be put in place immediately to capture data and information from the individual project reviews and generate progress indicators.
- ◆ **Recommendation 5:** An annual review of the performance of the IST Project Monitoring System, undertaken by independent outside experts, should be launched in 2001 and, at minimum, a draft report made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.
- ◆ **Recommendation 6:** During 2001, Programme Management should develop an integrated plan for the operation, under FP6, of Research Targeting, Proposal Evaluation, Project Monitoring, Tracking of Outputs and Assessing Impacts. There should be an accompanying plan for IT support. These outline plans should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.

- ◆ **Recommendation 7:** The new incumbent of the Brussels-based Deputy Director-General position should be given responsibility as overall IST Programme Director.
- ◆ **Recommendation 8:** The Commission services should establish a task-force of all stakeholders (including the financial and legal services, experienced users and other relevant DGs) to investigate and overcome existing barriers to the use of electronic submission.
- ◆ **Recommendation 9:** By mid-2001, Programme Management should publish the critical milestones, with guaranteed service times, for the proposal submission and contract process — the *Time to Contract*.
- ◆ **Recommendation 10:** Programme Management should ensure that the concerns of all Programme Activities are fully reflected in the composition of any Advisory Group(s), and that such Groups should contain a balanced representation from the highest levels of academia, industry and users.
- ◆ **Recommendation 11:** Programme Management should review Take-Up Measures with a view to reducing their number, simplifying procedures and developing synergy with RTD projects. A brief report should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.
- ◆ **Recommendation 12:** Programme Management should undertake a policy-oriented analysis of SME participation in the IST Programme. The report and proposed actions should be available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.
- ◆ **Recommendation 13:** Programme Management should undertake the necessary policy-oriented analysis of cluster activities. The report and proposed actions should be available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.
- ◆ **Recommendation 14:** Programme Management, in conjunction with DG Research, should draw up a medium-term plan for the integration of Applicant Countries into Framework Programme activities, including short-term measures such as capacity-building and integration into existing networks. This Plan should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.
- ◆ **Recommendation 15:** A common IST Human Resources Policy should be developed that links human resource development (training, career development, new employees, gender issues, etc.) to Programme development. This Policy should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.
- ◆ **Recommendation 16:** Explicit targets for a better gender balance should be formulated. Adequate measures for reaching these targets should be initiated and a report on the outcome should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.
- ◆ **Recommendation 17:** Each commitment made by Programme Management in response to a Monitoring Panel recommendation should incorporate an implementation timetable, and appropriate resources should be allocated for its realisation. A significant degree of continuity should be ensured from one year's Monitoring Panel to the next. One member, at least, of each specific programme's Monitoring Panel should be a member of the corresponding Framework Programme Panel.

ANNEX 1: FOLLOW-UP OF PREVIOUS PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS

1999 IST Monitoring Report

The 1999 IST Monitoring Report²⁷ made some 15 recommendations. Good progress has been made on implementation; however, a number of issues are still outstanding.

	1999 IST Monitoring Panel Recommendation	Management Response	2000 IST Monitoring Panel View
1	<p>Programme Integration:</p> <p>Define and measure Cross Programme Activities and integration by Key Actions</p>	Measurement is difficult and Cross-Programme Actions not the only way to integration. Next step is to harmonise some common procedures (proposal evaluation and project monitoring, 4 CPAs in 1999 and 8 in 2000 plus CP clusters).	Actions have been taken, but this is still a very weak area.
2	<p>More Programme Focus</p> <p>Less Action Lines with more resources per call. Study of effect of budget reductions on projects required.</p>	This will occur in 2000 and more so in 2001. But no simple relation between large funding and strategic impact. Study will be subsumed in Socio-Economic Impact Study.	Still an issue. The IPPA study has been very innovative in assisting focus.
3	<p>Requirement for SMEs</p> <p>Minimum level of SME participation per consortia.</p>	Agrees importance of SMEs but needs FP5 discussion and Rules of Participation discussion.	This is still a problem area.
4	<p>Study 5-10 yr Proposals</p> <p>- study of shortfall of proposals</p>	No indication that selection would lead to imbalance. Monitoring should include a continuous impact measurement of project outcome.	IPPA study was excellent response. The Continuous Impact Measures are not in place.
5	<p>Overall Management</p> <p>Review to lead to integrated Programme operations and implementation in 2000.</p>	ONE DIRECTOR PER KA AND ONE HORIZONTAL DIRECTOR FULFILS THIS REQUIREMENT. INFISO DG WILL KEEP UNDER REVIEW.	Not undertaken.
6	<p>Strategic Communications Plan to be prepared at senior level.</p>	Yes.	This has been drawn up, but not implemented.
7	<p>Work Programme Update Timetable in process to help with inputs.</p>	This is already done and presented to ISTAG at beginning of year and consultations published on Web. Will	Implemented.

²⁷ Download: http://europa.eu.int/comm/information_society/evaluation/pdf/reportist1999m_en.pdf

		put timetable in future WPs and invite written comments.	
8	Rejected Proposals to be notified within 6 weeks of last evaluation panel meeting.	Evaluation reports sent within 3 weeks – i.e. about 10 weeks after. Expected to do it officially within 2 months.	Implemented.
9	Evaluation Summary Reports (ESRs) to be clearer.	ESRs in Call 2 now clear. Weaknesses clearly described. Will look at possibility of commenting on all criteria.	Implemented.
10	Evaluation Criteria to be clarified.	Evaluation criteria are spelled out in WP and Guide. Internal cross programme group will make proposals.	Passed on to FP6 but still problem with EAV and socio-economic criteria.
11	Consensus and Ranking Study required.	Different approaches may be warranted. Programme Management will resolve.	Further clarifications made.
12	Usability Study of Call and Evaluation Study	Interservice Group has reported on action to be taken	At Commission level the <i>Simplification Memorandum</i> published
13	Software Tools needed for administrative activities across IST.	Agreed. Informatics Directorate of DG ADMIN to advise	Review performed by SG ADMIN. Effort is needed on continuing improvement of tools and their integration into admin procedures.
14	Project Monitoring Procedures and Core Indicators to be justified to 2000 MP.	Monitoring Guidelines and Core Indicators to be provided to 2000 MP.	This has not been undertaken. There is strong concern about progress in this area.
15	Core Indicators to be provided.	Will provide as requested.	The Qualitative Assessment Report is good. Data provided as requested.

1999 Framework Programme Monitoring Report

The 1999 Framework Programme Monitoring Report's main recommendations were to:

1. improve the Call and Evaluation phase — apart from the time-to-contract, good progress has been made;
2. implement an effective Human Resources Policy linked to Programme improvement / quality improvement — this has not taken place and there is concern as to current human resource practices;
3. improve the impact of research projects — this and associated project monitoring continue to be inadequate.

No.	1999 Framework Programme Monitoring Panel Recommendation	Management Response	2000 IST Monitoring Panel View
1	Improving the "Call for Proposals to Project Contract" Phase by 1) Simplification of the information to applicants, 2) Facilitate the participation of highly qualified evaluators into data base, 3) Clarification to proposers and evaluators of the socio-economic requirements, 4) The installation of an effective information feedback system to proposers on the proposal evaluation, 5) Reassessment of the "legalistic environment".	The Commission services agree.	Simplification: Documentation has been reviewed and revised to a limited degree. Criteria: Criteria definitions have been clarified in consultation with the IST Programme Committee but there are still difficulties. Feedback to proposers is done thorough the Evaluation Summary Reports (ESRs), within 2 to 4 weeks of the last evaluation panel meetings.
2	An effective Human Resources Policy across FP5 should be developed and linked to a programme improvement / quality improvement system. A unified management system is required in both the Information Society Technologies Programme and the Energy areas.	Within the Commission services, DG RTD is finalising a training plan. A need to improve the efficiency of the IST Programme matrix management structure was recognised	Programme / quality improvement system: Many first class initiatives but not, as yet, a systemic approach. Human resources policy remains a cause for concern. Training, personnel evaluation (notation) and career structure exist as independent elements and are still not strategically linked to Programme objectives and improving Programme operation. A unified IST management structure still does not exist. However, a director has been appointed for directorate F, associated with the renaming of this directorate to reflect a stronger focus on the integration of the Programme. In addition, there has been a decision to publish the post of deputy director-general in Brussels, with the post-holder having special responsibility for the administrative and financial management of the Programme.

3	The Research and Development Impact Mechanisms of FP5 must be strengthened. Via Innovation Cells, A support structure for Technological Implementation Plans, 3) Coherent and consistent project Monitoring and Impact Tools 4) Collection of project impact data should be aligned with the collection of information relating to contracts, monitoring, etc. 5) A person charged with co-ordinating Project Monitoring activities	Innovation Cells are already sufficient, Technological Implementation Plan (TIP) operational tools already exist. There is also an "IPR Help Desk", a "LIFT Help Desk" and an "FP5 management website".	Improving Research Impact: This continues to have a very low priority. Systems for monitoring projects or assessing impact still do not exist. Final Programme data risk being very inadequate.
4	Gender awareness should be strengthened and appropriate gender-based data collected. Efforts to encourage female evaluators to apply for inclusion in the Proposal Evaluators' Database should continue to be made.	The Commission Services will continue to implement the action plan "Women and Science".	The initiatives are inadequate given the scale of the problem.
5	A Public Awareness of Science and Technology function should be strengthened	The need to address this issue at FP level is recognised.	The Public Awareness of Science and Technology function in the IST Programme is still inadequate. The strategic communications plan for the IST Programme still has not been implemented.

IST Five-Year Assessment Report

The IST Five-Year Assessment exercise was carried out in 1999/2000. The report²⁸ reviewed the period 1995-1999 and, at a strategic level, took a forward look at future European research requirements in the ICT area. As such, its recommendations are more long-term. This said, a mechanism has been put in place to follow progress and report on the implementation of recommendations.

No.	IST Five-Year Panel Recommendation	Management Response	2000 IST Monitoring Panel View
1	Vision and operational road map system required. Need for focused methodology. The formal consultation mechanism should be reviewed.	Yes.	Moves towards developing a focused methodology for creating and updating the Programme's strategic vision have been made. Also the launch of work on <i>Technology Road Maps</i> . underway. A regular updating mechanism will be needed in which the in-house knowledge, which is available throughout the staff of the key action personnel, is fully exploited.
2	It is recommended that the future programmes are defined to ensure the budgetary and management flexibility to allow for a regular re-assessment of the strategic focus of the programme.	In the FP6 yes.	The issue of greater budgetary and management flexibility will need to be fully considered in moving into FP6.
3	Commission should undertake a fundamental review of its communications plans, including the support documentation given to proposers and the information services provided for them	Yes.	The development of a Programme Communications Plan is still causing certain difficulties. It is drawn up but not implemented.
4	It is proposed that several variants of the project contract model be prepared and used.	After consultation the appropriate Member States committees and in conformance with the Financial Regulations ...maybe.	There has been no significant progress on lightening management requirements for SMEs. It is emphasised again that "one size does not fit all" when it comes to contracts.
5	It is necessary to make project reviews more meaningful and to make the payment cycle more efficient and flexible	In FP6 will be studied if submission and acceptance of deliverables rather than eligible costs will be the basis.	Encouragement should be made to move away from the cost-claim concept with costs based more on deliverables. The Commission should encourage wider use of tracking.
6	The commission should review the operation of clustering to ensure that it is	Yes.	Done.

²⁸ Download: http://europa.eu.int/comm/information_society/evaluation/pdf/reportist5y_en.pdf

	focused on achieving clearly identified synergistic objectives.		
7	It is recommended that a small set of project-related key indicators be defined, and collected as part of a systematic, on-going impact analysis.	Will be implemented.	Still pending.
8	Learning and best practices.		The development of best practice and associated training is still weak. The software tools should be state of the art.
9	The procedure from Call through to the signing of the contract should be modelled as any business process.	The workflow tool is currently undergoing user trials.	There is still no decision on the publication of "service times" of Commission activities to assist proposers. They should be published.
10	Review mechanism to review the how earlier recommendations have been addressed and implemented.	Yes	There is now a clear mechanism for the follow-up of recommendations.
11	Planning of FP6 should be advanced ASAP with priority given to the strategic planning activities as outlined in Rec 14.	Agreed	Undertaken.

ANNEX 2: SME PARTICIPATION WITHIN THE IST PROGRAMME

Signed projects as of February 2001

source: IST Programme management

Note: These figures do not cover CRAFT and SME Exploratory Awards participants

Funding instrument	Number of SME participants	Total number of participants	% of SME participants
Access Action	7	19	37%
Accompanying Measure	178	518	34%
Assessment Action	4	37	11%
Best Practice Action	145	214	68%
Combined RTD & Demo Project	96	344	28%
Concerted Action	2	8	25%
Demonstration Project	18	63	29%
First User Action	1	3	33%
RTD Project	1061	4926	22%
Subvention	3	25	12%
Thematic Network	60	428	14%
Training Fellowship	2	25	8%
Trial Action	154	343	45%
Sum:	1731	6953	25%

ANNEX 3: DOCUMENTS, SOURCES AND PRESENTATIONS

Websites

- IST Programme: <http://www.cordis.lu/ist> - ISTWeb
- PROSOMA: <http://www.prosoma.lu>
- Reforming the Commission: http://europa.eu.int/comm/reform/index_en.htm

Background to 2000 monitoring exercise

- Broad guidelines for 2000 monitoring exercise (DG Research)
- Template for core indicators (DG Research)
- Organigram of DG INFSO (version 1/12/00)

Independent monitoring and assessment reports, reviews, etc

- 1999 IST Monitoring: Report, Commission response and status of follow-up
- 1995-99 5Y Assessment: Report, Commission response and status of follow-up
- 1999 FP Monitoring: Report, Commission response and status of IST follow-up
- Independent observers' report: Call 2 evaluation
- Independent observers' report: Call 3 evaluation
- Review of IST support tools (Informatics Directorate of DG ADMIN)
- Identifying the Constituent Elements of the EAV of EU RTD Programmes (study for DG Research)

Information provided by IST programme management

- Qualitative assessment of implementation of the IST Programme
- Performance against 2000-2001 management targets
- Core indicators (following a template specified by DG Research)
- IST web statistics, by month, January-November 2000
- FP4: ongoing workload to 11/10/00
- Time-to-contract statistics for Calls 1, 2 and 3, globally and per KA
- Integrated programme portfolio analysis (IPPA) report following Call 2
- Integrated programme portfolio analysis (IPPA) report following Call 3
- Strategic communications plan: proposal
- Cluster basics; The differences between concertation and clustering; List of active clusters and planned clusters; Fact-sheets on active clusters; Report on clusters and networks of excellence in the IST programme
- Report on survey on equal opportunities in INFSO
- Gender issues: note for the file and statistics
- Human resource management in INFSO
- Plan de formation 2000/2001
- IST and the reorientation of the fifth FP in the context of the ERA
- IST in FP6: priorities and instruments
- PROSOMA: Bridging the Gap
- IST 2000: Realising an information Society for All
- IST: Successful EU-Eastern Europe Links
- Investment Forum: report on Nice and Helsinki venture capital events
- Towards a full e-submission and evaluation of proposals

Work-programme and operations-related material

- Work-programme 2001
- IST Guide for Proposers
- FP5 Manual of Proposal Evaluation Procedures (with IST annex)
- Guidelines for evaluators of calls
- Vademecum for Call 5
- Guidelines for contract preparation for co-ordinators of IST projects

Advisory group (ISTAG)

- ISAG paper "Implementing the Vision"
- ISTAG paper "Scenarios for Ambient Intelligence in 2010"

Commission Communications, Memoranda, etc

- Towards a European Research Area - COM (2000) 6
- Making a Reality of the European Research Area - COM (2000) 612
- Simplifying the Commission's Decision-Making Process - SEC (2000) 2071/6
- Management Reporting in the Commission: the First Strand of the eCommission - SEC (2000) 1800/2
- FP6: Proposal for an EP and Council Decision - COM (2001) 94

Presentations by Commission staff

- 1999 IST Monitoring: status concerning recommendations (N. Heenan)
- 1999 FP Monitoring: status concerning recommendations (S. Rogers)
- 1995-99 IST 5Y Assessment: status concerning recommendations (N. Heenan)
- Cross-Programme Actions (D. Broster)
- Financial circuits (H. Hünke & M. Tachelet)
- Human resources policy and gender issues (F. Bigi)
- Implementation status of the Programme (R. Verrue to 2000 IST Monitoring Panel)
- Implementation status of the Programme (F. de Bruïne to 2000 FP Monitoring Panel)
- Newly associated states (E. Habers)
- Project monitoring (J. Magan)
- Results valorisation (K-H. Robrock)
- SMEs (K-H. Robrock)
- Take-up measures (M. Møller)
- Time-to-contract: statistics (J. Perez Echagüe)
- Time-to-contract: overview and way forward (F. de Bruïne)
- Workprogramme, FP6 preparation, ISTAG (G. Comyn)

Other presentations

- 1999 Monitoring findings (R. Hird, chair of 1999 IST Monitoring Panel)

ANNEX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

Guidelines for IST Director interviews

General Introduction

- What have been the 3 main achievements of this last year?
- What have been the 3 main management issues which you have had to face last year? How have the issues been resolved?
- Explain the position of your KA in the IST Programme and your role in the co-ordination of the IST Programme. Is improved Programme co-ordination needed? Yes/No – Why? How?

MANAGEMENT

Proposal Evaluation

- Explain the 3 main difficulties, which were faced in the proposal evaluation process?
- What criteria have been used for inter-panel ranking in the proposal evaluation process? And how have they been applied?
- To what extent does the proposal evaluation system within your KA differ from other KAs?
- How can the time between proposal submission and project commencement be reduced?
- Overall, what would be your 3 main recommendations for improving the proposal evaluation process 1) at the KA level and 2) at the IST Programme Level?
- *Contact Person for Further Discussions*

Project Monitoring

- Describe how project monitoring is undertaken within your KA. (On site v. On line in Brussels).
- Are there differences between the project monitoring system in your KA and other KAs? Why? What are the advantages and disadvantages?
- What should be the project monitoring process at IST Programme level? Is a common process needed? Yes/No Why?
- What mechanisms do you use to ensure that the projects change during their lifetime in response to changes in markets and other technologies? Can these mechanisms be improved? How?
- Are there any mechanisms / strategies which could be used to ensure that the projects results are better exploited by the partners?
- *Contact Person for Further Discussions*

Impact Data Collection

- How do you track and record the economic and social impact of you projects 1) during their lifetime 2) after the project has formally finished? What are your recommendations for making these mechanisms more effective?
- What are your views on being able to analyse these data at 1) a KA level, b) a IST Programme level? Can it be sensibly done? How?
- *Contact Person for Further Discussions*

Big Projects

- What size are the very largest projects within your KA? Are there any qualitatively different requirements in their operation / management? What size does a project have to be to have a major European impact? Any qualitatively differences in the type of impact, which big projects have? How do you measure their impact? What would be your recommendations for the future?

SMEs

- What are the 3 main difficulties faced by SMEs participation in your KA? How can SME participation be better facilitated?

Programme Direction

- Do 1) the Programme Committee 2) the ISTAG play a useful role? Explain. How should they change in the future?

PROGRAMME ACTIONS

Accompanying Measures / Take-up Actions

- Could you indicate the different types of Take-up Actions in your KA? Explain why the different types are needed.
- Are there different funding mechanisms associated with the different types? What principles do you use to decide how much to allocate to Take-up Actions vis a vis RTD projects?
- What would be your recommendations for assessing the impact of Take up Actions?
- *Contact Person for Further Discussions*

Clustering

- Why do you use clustering in your KA – what are the objectives?
- Are there different kinds of clusters in your KA? Explain why. How do the different types work? What percentage of projects participate in clusters? Who initiates the cluster?
- How are the clusters funded? Are there contracts? What types of contracts?
- What would be your recommendations for assessing the impact of clustering?
- What would be your three main recommendations for improving clustering within the IST Programme?
- *Contact Person for Further Discussions*

Cross Programme Actions

- *CONTACT PERSON FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS*

Socio-Economic Research Projects

- What are your views on the socio-economic research projects undertaken within your KA? Are they effective? What would be your recommendations on making them more effective? More prospective studies? More demand-driven mechanisms? *Contact Person for Further Discussions.*

YOUR KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- In your opinion, what are the 3 main management recommendations – which could actually be implemented by the IST Programme **over the next 12 to 18 months?**
- **Over the longer period, into FP6,** what would your three main recommendations be for improving the management of the IST Programme?

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS BY IST DIRECTORS

2000 Monitoring of the IST Programme

Please provide the Monitoring Panel a copy of:

1. The *Annual Operational Targets* to which your Heads of Unit / Programme Management have been working in Year 2000.
2. The *Staff Development Plan* which is operational in your KA.
3. The *Quality Assurance or Improvement Programme* which you use

(If not available or not judged necessary, please explain)

Directors are invited to make written submission on the following topics.

Any Further Comment - Proposal Evaluation

- Main difficulties
- Criteria used for inter-panel ranking in the proposal evaluation process
- Different proposal evaluation system within your KA
- Any further recommendations for improving the proposal evaluation process 1) at the KA level and 2) at the IST Programme Level?
- Any further ideas how can the time between proposal submission and project commencement be reduced in your KA?

Any Further Comment - Project Monitoring

- Description of project monitoring within your KA. Differences with other KAs? Why?
- Is a common project monitoring process needed at IST Programme level?
- How do you ensure respond projects response to changes in markets and other technologies? Can these mechanisms be improved?
- What should be done to have projects outputs better exploited by the partners?

Any Further Comment - Impact Data Collection

- How do you track and record the economic and social impact of you projects 1) during their lifetime 2) after the project has formally finished? What are your recommendations for making these mechanisms more effective?
- What are your views on being able to analyse these data at 1) a KA level, b) a IST Programme level? Can it be sensibly done? How?

Accompanying Measures / Take-up Actions

- Any further explanation needed on 1) different types of Take-up Actions in your KA, 2) different funding mechanisms, 3) recommendations for assessing the impact of Take up Actions?

Clustering

- Any further explanation on 1) the use clustering in your KA, 2) different kinds of clusters, 3) Percentage of projects participate in clusters, 4) Funding & contracts? 5) Assessing impact, 6) recommendations

Cross Programme Actions:

Any further explanation

Socio-Economic Research Projects

Any further explanation on their effectiveness and use. Any further recommendations?

**GUIDELINES FOR NATIONAL CONTACT POINT (NCP) AND PROGRAMME COMMITTEE
MEMBER (ISTC) INTERVIEWS
2000 MONITORING OF THE IST PROGRAMME**

Guideline questions for interviewing:

- **ISTC members (Programme Management Committee)**
- **NCPs (National Contact Points)**

1. The IST Programme in general

- 1.1. What are the three main issues that concern you?
- 1.2. What three key improvements would you recommend?

2. Management and procedures

- 2.1. What are your concrete recommendations for:
 - 2.1.1. Making the programme more user-friendly?
 - 2.1.2. Improving the programme's flexibility and its correspondence with participants' needs?
 - 2.1.3. Making it easier to prepare proposals?
 - 2.1.4. Improving the overall proposal evaluation process?
 - 2.1.5. Reducing the time between proposal submission and project start?
- 2.2. What are your views on the criteria used to evaluate proposals?
- 2.3. Do you have any comments on clustering?
- 2.4. Do you have any comments on take-up measures?

3. Information flow

- 3.1. Regarding the programme documentation made available to potential proposals, what are your three top suggestions for improving its content, presentation and distribution?
- 3.2. How would you like to see Commission support for NCPs improved?
- 3.3. How could NCPs further support the Commission services?
- 3.4. Regarding results, what are your three main recommendations for improving their dissemination?

4. Achievements

- 4.1. What are your general views on the effectiveness, as programme instruments, of RTD projects, accompanying measures and take-up actions?
 - 4.1.1. Is the current balance between them satisfactory?
 - 4.1.2. What would you recommend for the future?
- 4.2. What would you recommend for reducing time-to-market?
- 4.3. How would you define "European Added Value" (EAV)?
 - 4.3.1. What three examples would you use to illustrate this?
 - 4.3.2. How would you assess the programme's success in your country in terms of helping achieve "European technology leadership" and fostering "European capability"?

5. European Research Area (ERA)

- 5.1. Do you have any comments or concerns about how the ERA will be implemented?

Questionnaire for National Contact Points in Newly Associated States 2000 MONITORING OF THE IST PROGRAMME BY AN INDEPENDENT PANEL

Questions for NCPs in Candidate Countries (CCs)

1. Information flow

- 1.1. Regarding the programme documentation made available to potential CC proposers, what are your three top suggestions for improving its content, presentation and distribution?
- 1.2. How would you like to see Commission support for NCPs in CCs improved?
- 1.3. How could NCPs in CCs further support the Commission services?

2. Management and procedures

- 2.1. What are your concrete recommendations for:
 - 2.1.1. Making the programme more user-friendly for potential CC participants?
 - 2.1.2. Improving the programme's correspondence with CC participants' needs?
 - 2.1.3. Making it easier for CC organisations to prepare proposals?
 - 2.1.4. Making it easier for CC organisations to find partners in EU countries?
 - 2.1.5. Improving communications between the Commission and potential CC participants?
- 2.2. What are your views on the criteria used to evaluate proposals?
- 2.3. How can the participation of CC industry (and especially SMEs) in the IST programme be facilitated and encouraged?
 - 2.3.1. What sort of special action could be helpful in your country?
 - 2.3.2. Are information days a good method for addressing SMEs? If not, what would you recommend?
 - 2.3.3. Have you identified any model actions or measures in FP5 (or FP4) that could accelerate the integration of organisations from your country into EU RTD programmes? Particularly for industry?
 - 2.3.4. How could the participation of organisations from your country be further increased? What are your expectations over the next three years?

3. Projects, measures and take-up actions

- 3.1. What are your general views on the effectiveness, for CCs, of RTD projects, accompanying measures and take-up actions?
 - 3.1.1. Is the current balance between them satisfactory?
 - 3.1.2. What would you recommend for the future?

4. European Research Area (ERA)

- 4.1. Do you have any comments or concerns about how the ERA will be implemented?

5. The IST Programme in general

- 5.1. What are the three main issues that concern you?
- 5.2. What three key improvements would you recommend?

Answers will be merged and treated at an anonymous, general level in the Monitoring Panel's report. Thank you very much for your help!

ANNEX 5: TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Background and objectives

The legal base of the IST Programme stipulates that the Commission "shall monitor, with appropriate assistance from independent external experts, the implementation of the specific programme."

The overall objective of the monitoring exercise is to help the IST Programme's managers to implement the Programme by:

- giving quick feedback on implementation and current orientation;
- reinforcing best practices;
- identifying weaknesses and making concrete suggestions for their correction;
- providing an independent view of progress made.

2. Issues to be addressed

The 2000 monitoring exercise covers the second year of the implementation of the Fifth Framework Programme together with ongoing activities under the Fourth Framework Programme.

Monitoring will focus on:

1. Progress towards achieving the IST Programme's objectives, including:
 - 1.1 progress towards achieving socio-economic impact and European Added Value;
 - 1.2 the processes of proposal evaluation, project monitoring and collecting data on socio-economic impact;
 - 1.3 the quality of the programme's internal co-ordination;
 - 1.4 an appraisal of the contribution of the programme committee and the advisory group to the programme's implementation;
 - 1.5 the quality of the programme's involvement in the Framework Programme's horizontal programmes.
2. Implementation, monitoring and follow-up of clusters
3. Implementation, monitoring and follow-up of take-up measures
4. Contribution to various general objectives
 - 4.1 contribution to the implementation of the European Research Area;
 - 4.2 the degree and quality of participation of countries that are candidates for accession to the European Union;
 - 4.3 contribution of the programme towards implementing other European policies
5. Follow-up of recommendations made by the 1999 monitoring and five-year assessment panels, taking into account the responses of the Commission services
6. Recommendations for 2001

3. Performance of the task

The contractor will work in close liaison with the Evaluation Unit of DG Information Society as a member of a panel of independent experts charged with producing a monitoring report. The Commission will appoint the chair and rapporteur of the panel from amongst the panel's members. The format of the report will be specified by the Evaluation Unit.

The report must be based on:

- information provided by the programme's managers and by the Evaluation Unit;
- information gathered by the experts via presentations and interviews with programme managers and their staff, and members of the programme committee and advisory group;
- information gathered via contacts with programme participants, and other interested parties or organisations.

The panel will hold meetings in Brussels according to a schedule laid down by the Evaluation Unit after discussion with the panel chair. A representative of the Evaluation Unit will participate in each meeting. At these meetings, panel members are expected to discuss and compare their individual analyses, listen and respond to presentations, and carry out interviews. Members must keep a log of their contacts with Commission staff and other interested parties, and inform accordingly the panel and the Evaluation Unit.

The panel's report must reflect a consensus of opinion amongst its members. The chair of the panel will send the final version of the report to the Evaluation Unit. The chair or another representative of the panel will be expected to present the panel's findings to the programme committee and to the panel assisting in the monitoring of the Framework Programme.

4. Work schedule

The draft final report must be ready by mid-February 2001. On this basis, the work schedule is as follows:

<i>November 2000—March 2001</i>	panel meetings
<i>18 December 2000</i>	panel chair (or other representative) participates in meeting between the Framework Programme monitoring panel and the monitoring panels of the thematic and horizontal programmes
<i>by mid-February 2001</i>	panel chair sends draft final report to Evaluation Unit of DG Information Society for circulation to the programme management
<i>February – March 2001</i>	panel discuss draft final report with programme management and Evaluation Unit
<i>March 2001</i>	panel chair (or other representative) discuss panel's findings with programme management committee, Framework Programme monitoring panel, and other bodies
<i>by mid-March 2001</i>	panel chair sends final report to Evaluation Unit

ANNEX 6: CVS OF PANEL MEMBERS

Kaj Linden (SF) (*chair*)—Former Senior Vice-President, Technology, of Nokia. Prior to this was responsible for world-wide R&D in Nokia Mobile Phones, MD of Technophone Ltd in the UK, Director of Nokia Research Centre and Chairman of Board of Directors at Advanced SAW Products in Switzerland. Before Nokia he worked for ITT/Alcatel in Belgium, USA and Finland. Member of 5-Year Assessment Panel of IST Programme in 1999-2000 and of ACTS Monitoring Panel in 1998. He earned an MSc and a Licentiate Engineering degree in telecommunications from Helsinki University of Technology and was made doctor honoris causa in Engineering at Oulu University in 1998.

Tom Casey (IRL) (*rapporteur*)—Director of CIRCA Group Europe Ltd, a company specialising in research and policy analysis. Educated at Imperial College (Physics), Manchester University (SciTech Policy) and Université Paris - Dauphine (Economics). Has worked for the OECD, and in Ireland for the National Board for Science & Technology, the National Enterprise Agency, and FAS (Training & Employment Authority). Experience in evaluation and monitoring work for DGs Research and Information Society. Has also undertaken research and policy analysis for DGs Education and Employment-Social Affairs, especially in the areas of technological skills requirements and industrial change.

Martial Chevreuil (F)—Martial Chevreuil is currently scientific and technical director of ISIS (EGIS Group) and manager of its Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) Centre. He was previously manager of the interurban transport division and before that senior consultant and director of European projects. Before joining ISIS he worked in the Road Safety Directorate of the French Ministry of Transport, in charge of traffic information policy and the development of new technologies. He has participated in evaluation and reviewing activities for DGs II, VII and XIII. He has lectured widely on road transport telematics and the evaluation of traffic management strategies.

Wolfgang Frohberg (D)—Dr. Frohberg graduated in telecommunications in Dresden University of Transport and Communications in 1983. He became an assistant professor and gained a PhD in 1987. He joined the R&D department of Alcatel (Stuttgart) in 1991. Currently he is manager, Technology Watch and Intelligence, Alcatel HQ. In 1996, Dr. Frohberg held a senior research position at the International Computer Science Institute in Berkeley, CA. He is author and co-author of various books on telecommunications and is a member of the editorial board for telecommunications-related publications of a German publishing house.

Eva Lindencrona (SW)—Dr. Lindencrona gained her Ph.D. in Informatics in 1979 at Chalmers Technical University. She is currently research manager at the Swedish Research Institute for Information Technology (SITI) and was until 1998 MD of the Swedish Institute for Systems Development (SISU). She had previously worked in industry as a systems developer and a consultant. Dr. Lindencrona has been active in international standardisation and has been the international chair of an ISO subcommittee on data exchange. Dr. Lindencrona has served as an evaluator for a number of EU R&D programmes as well as for R&D programmes in Sweden, Norway and Germany.

Ron Perrott (UK)—Dr. Perrott is Professor of Software Engineering in the School of Computer Science at Queen's University, Belfast. He has been involved with EU projects since 1986 both as a participant and an evaluator. He has served twice as chair of the EuroPar Steering Committee. At the UK national level he has been involved with the Research Councils for many years, and is currently Chair of the Technology Watch Panel for High-End Computing. Locally he has been instrumental in the promotion and extension of the software industry in Northern Ireland, for which he received the British Computer Society's IT Professional of the Year Award in 1993. In 1997 he was elected a Fellow of the US Association for Computing Machinery. Professor Perrott is author/editor of five books and over 100 technical papers.

Alberto Pollmann (IT)—Dr.-Ing. Pollmann graduated in electronic engineering at U. Santa Maria, Chile, in 1977 and received his PhD. at Technical U. Braunschweig (D) in 1984. He then moved to SIEL SpA in Italy, where he was responsible for the development of AC drives. From 1988-92 he was manager of R&D at BMB Elettronica Ind.le, a member of the Ansaldo group, where he was responsible for the automation and control of rolling mills. From 1993-97 he was head of power electronics at Cemont, a company in the Air Liquide group. Dr. Pollmann has served as reviewer and evaluator in the Esprit and IST programmes. The author of several technical publications, he has worked since 1997 as an independent consultant.

PART B:

**Responses of the Programme Management to the
external Monitoring Report**

Responses of the Programme Management to the recommendations of the Monitoring Panel

The Commission services would like to thank all members of the 2000 Monitoring Panels for their dedicated work and the efforts invested in this complex task. Some of the recommendations included in the monitoring reports address issues of relevance to all specific programmes. Such issues are discussed from the Framework Programme viewpoint in the responses to the recommendations of the Framework Programme.

The following comments represent the responses of the relevant Directorates General to the recommendations regarding the specific programme *User-Friendly Information Society*.

	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Target date for implementation / progress
1	A customer satisfaction survey should be carried out as a part of the proposal evaluation quality improvement system by end-2001.	<p>The Programme Management agrees with this recommendation, and is taking steps to make better use of customer feedback that is already being received from a variety of sources.</p> <p>A study has recently been launched to identify suitable indicators for measuring end user satisfaction, to analyse existing sources of customer feedback, to identify any gaps existing in the coverage of these and to propose cost effective and efficient ways of filling any such gaps. The study will in itself provide benchmark data on end-user satisfaction, and will help determine how best to structure and to target any new customer satisfaction survey, to be launched in the year ahead.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Study launched April 2001; results published November 2001: http://europa.eu.int/information_society/programmes/evaluation/pdf/iststudy2report_en.pdf</p>
2	A common, well-argued policy on the treatment of proposal budgets should be developed across the IST Programme and made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.	All proposals are evaluated to common procedures, which include an evaluation of the resources necessary to perform the work specified. DG-INFSO's own Implementation Plans are prepared to common guidelines on structure and form, but these do not presently specify precisely how to deal with evaluators' advice to accept only part of proposals, or how to deal with highly inflated budgets. An investigation will therefore be conducted to explore the rationale for and effects of any differences of approach, so that a well-argued policy can be set-up, based on the findings.	Done as part of accelerated time-to-contract pilot (see Rec. 9 below)

	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Target date for implementation / progress
3	Continued efforts should be made to clarify the socio-economic and European Added Value selection criteria and to communicate their meaning to evaluators and proposers.	<p>A significant effort was made during 2000, to revise and substantially improve the Guides for Proposers used to support IST Calls. Further explanation of the existing criteria is given to all evaluators in a standard briefing on arrival. Though changes to the criteria themselves is still possible for the final IST Call in 2002 – this would be of doubtful value, taking into account the confusion that may also result from any significant change to the by now "familiar" concepts and documents of the Framework Programme-5.</p> <p>This said, serious thought should be given to a better formulation and explanation of these and all other evaluation criteria for the sixth Framework Programme. In this context it may be possible for example, to revert to Programme-specific definitions and interpretations of criteria, or to use additional criteria specific to the IST Programme.</p>	<p>No intention to change criteria in remainder of Fifth Framework Programme</p> <p>Reflection underway for the sixth Framework Programme</p> <p>Implement by May 2002</p>
4	An IST <i>Project Monitoring System</i> should be put in place immediately to capture data and information from the individual project reviews and generate progress indicators.	<p>The 1999 Monitoring panel requested that <i>quantitative indicators</i> be established. Drafts have been prepared, and these are currently in consultation at Directorate level. Implementation of the format finally agreed will take place across the Programme.</p> <p>A <i>Qualitative review</i> – of feedback on the performance of projects is already undertaken at Unit level. (Such feedback is received via regular contacts with projects, as well as formal reviews). With lead responsibility for an Action Line being attributed to a single Unit, this is certainly the “frontline” for consolidating implementation of IST. Aggregation of information on projects’ performance at Directorate and overall Programme level is undertaken to a limited extent, to cover annual reporting requirements.</p>	<p>Adopted October 2001</p> <p>No additional implementation proposed</p>
5	An annual review of the performance of the IST Project Monitoring System, undertaken by independent outside experts, should be launched in 2001 and, at minimum, a draft report made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.	The "IST project monitoring system" in its wider sense is supported by the day-to-day management routines of the Directorates. The Panel’s recommendation is understood to focus on the technical aspects of management of the programme, and of project officers’ work. To the extent that our technical management of the programme is not yet being fully understood and appreciated, an additional external assessment of this is to be welcomed. To meet the time scale requested, this recommendation would need to be implemented using experts drawn from our reserve lists, e.g. for evaluations.	Assessment to be done February 2002 with report end-March 2002

	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Target date for implementation / progress
6	During 2001, Programme Management should develop an integrated plan for the operation, under the Framework Programme 6, of Research Targeting, Proposal Evaluation, Project Monitoring, Tracking of Outputs and Assessing Impacts. There should be an accompanying plan for IT support. These outline plans should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.	<p>Operational Planning for the sixth Framework Programme has already begun, and is proceeding in parallel with elaboration of the Specific Programmes and the legal instruments to be used for their implementation. The Programme's Management would be pleased to brief the 2001 Monitoring Panel on such plans as have been prepared, by the end of the year.</p> <p>IT Support is kept under constant review. Improvements are specified by an inter-service group (that includes DG-Research), which is supported by external teams of systems analysts. In 2001, this group will produce a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feasibility study - Detailed plans <p>... before further development of tools commences.</p> <p>Note: the continuous cycle for development and improvement of tools and IT support is no longer directly linked to the 5-year cycle of successive framework programmes</p>	<p>Underway</p> <p>Study delivered July 2001</p> <p>from January 2002</p>
7	The new incumbent of the Brussels-based Deputy Director-General position should be given responsibility as overall IST Programme Director.	On 25 April, the Commission decided to appoint Mr Peter Zangl as Deputy Director General DG-INFISO. Mr Zangl will assume responsibility for the administrative and financial management of IST and the future RTD programmes of DG-INFISO, including the follow-up of the annual monitoring exercise. In the framework of reform, he will supervise the process adopted within DG-INFISO for simplification of procedures, decentralisation of management and reform of financial control networks. He will also ensure that RTD activities contribute to the eEurope initiative.	This appointment took effect 1 June 2001

	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Target date for implementation / progress
8	The Commission services should establish a task-force of all stakeholders (including the financial and legal services, experienced users and other relevant DGs) to investigate and overcome existing barriers to the use of electronic submission.	<p>INFSO-F7 has recently launched a Call for Tenders to undertake a wide-ranging external assessment of the acceptance and effectiveness of the present fifth Framework Programme tools and the ways in which these have been promoted. Based on this, and a study of the best practices and tools available in Europe and the USA, a strategy for our future deployment of electronic tools and services will be developed.</p> <p>The ultimate aim is to ensure that high quality tools and services are first "provided" and second "continuously maintained" to meet the evolving needs of the Commission Services and of the proposers.</p> <p>An additional investigation by an internal taskforce to determine the barriers to use of existing tools is now under consideration</p>	<p>Launch of study July 2001</p> <p>Results in February 2002. E-submission rate 22% in Call 7.</p> <p>July 2001</p>
9	By mid-2001, Programme Management should publish the critical milestones, with guaranteed service times, for the proposal submission and contract process — the <i>Time to Contract</i> .	<p>The Programme Management supports the recommendation to publish service times, and would link this to a published overview of the corresponding procedures that have to be followed. Such "general" service times should be set as realistic targets, which could be progressively improved (or reduced) as we are able to streamline the procedures on which they are based.</p> <p>The model letter used for inviting proposers to negotiations is to be developed to state clearly the process and time to contract, that is to be followed in their specific case. (Service time specified per project).</p> <p>For Call 6, Key Action 1 has offered to test an experimental fast-track procedure which aims to achieve a significant reduction in <i>Time to Contract</i>, if this could be scaled up and sustained by the whole Programme. Progress will be regularly reported to ISTC, and included in the Qualitative Assessment report for the 2001 Monitoring Panel.</p>	<p>Improvement to be applied from evaluation of Call 6 — June 2001</p> <p>from June 2001</p> <p>from June 2001</p>

	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Target date for implementation / progress
10	Programme Management should ensure that the concerns of all Programme Activities are fully reflected in the composition of any Advisory Group(s), and that such Groups should contain a balanced representation from the highest levels of academia, industry and users.	The Programme Management fully supports this recommendation. The mandate and composition of ISTAG is established by Commission Decision. In March 2001 the Commission renewed the mandate of ISTAG for a further two-year period, and rebalanced its membership. The main focus of the group's activities is now to advise on the preparation of IST in the sixth Framework Programme. Composition of the group is frequently reviewed, and when necessary adapted again.	Ongoing
11	Programme Management should review Take-Up Measures with a view to reducing their number, simplifying procedures and developing synergy with RTD projects. A brief report should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.	The number of take-up actions launched has already reduced significantly from levels attained in the fourth Framework Programme and from the early calls of IST. The results of current take-up actions are being consolidated e.g. as contributions to implementation of the eEurope Action Plan concerning SMEs. Simplification issues fall under the general review of procedures being conducted for the sixth Framework Programme Though Take-Up actions may address issues which do not directly arise from EU-RTD, the Programme Management accepts that greater synergies should be sought, and would propose to review this particular issue as part of the Qualitative Assessment report on IST, that will in any case need to be prepared for the 2001 Monitoring Panel towards the end of the year.	On simplification, see response to Recommendation 6 above. Types of take-up measures reduced from six to three. November 2001
12	Programme Management should undertake a policy-oriented analysis of SME participation in the IST Programme. The report and proposed actions should be available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.	The Programme Management would propose to address this particular issue as part of the Qualitative Assessment report on IST, that will in any case need to be prepared for the 2001 Monitoring Panel towards the end of the year.	Report provided to IST monitoring experts - November 2001
13	Programme Management should undertake the necessary policy-oriented analysis of cluster activities. The report and proposed actions should be available to the Monitoring Panel by end-2001.	The Programme Management would propose to address this particular issue as part of the Qualitative Assessment report on IST, that will in any case need to be prepared for the 2001 Monitoring Panel towards the end of the year.	Report published November 2001: ftp://ftp.cordis.lu/pub/ist/docs/cpt_clusters-12-2001.pdf

	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Target date for implementation / progress
14	Programme Management, in conjunction with DG Research, should draw up a medium-term plan for the integration of Applicant Countries into the Framework Programme activities, including short-term measures such as capacity-building and integration into existing networks. This Plan should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.	<p>East-West co-operation is considered to be an important asset to IST research. Short-term measures (such as the Action Line VIII.1.6) to support the full participation of organisations from the accession countries are therefore considered as mainstream. These have been complemented by workshops organised for organisations from the NAS countries, on measures to improve their participation and success. Furthermore, continuous efforts are being made to strengthen and improve networks facilitating partner search, and providing feedback on the reasons why proposals involving such countries may have been unsuccessful.</p> <p>The Programme Management will report on progress being made as part of the Qualitative Assessment report on IST, that will in any case need to be prepared for the 2001 Monitoring Panel towards the end of the year.</p>	Ongoing
15	A common IST Human Resources Policy should be developed that links human resource development (training, career development, new employees, gender issues, etc.) to Programme development. This Policy should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.	In line with the current process of reform, DG INFSO lays particular stress on mobility, and also on training. By 2005, <i>all staff</i> will be expected to have increased their average number of days spent on training and personal development from 2.5 to 10 per year. In this context, greater stress is placed on capturing and consolidating the knowledge and experience gained by individuals involved in the management of the IST programme, and on applying this as a basis for training others. A life-long approach to learning is being followed, with training adapted to individual needs and aspirations, and also to the specific needs of the Service. First steps towards implementation of this policy can be communicated to the 2001 monitoring panel as requested.	Ongoing

	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Target date for implementation / progress
16	Explicit targets for a better gender balance should be formulated. Adequate measures for reaching these targets should be initiated and a report on the outcome should be made available to the 2001 Monitoring Panel by end-2001.	<p>With respect to gender issues, the specific policy of DG-INFOS is to implement the Commission's targets for the recruitment and appointment for women in 2001, enabling the Commission to have a common set of data and objectives for staff paid from the research budget, to be added to that already available for those on the operating budget. Operational steps include a greater effort to recruit wherever possible, an equal proportion of male and female administrators / scientific officers from reserve lists, (in 2000 for the IST Programme, 11 women were recruited compared to 17 men).</p> <p>Affirmative measures for 2001 include the organisation of specific gender-awareness training, the impact of which can be reported to the 2001 Monitoring Panel as requested.</p>	Report by February 2002
17	Each commitment made by Programme Management in response to a Monitoring Panel recommendation should incorporate an implementation timetable, and appropriate resources should be allocated for its realisation. A significant degree of continuity should be ensured from one year's Monitoring Panel to the next. One member, at least, of each specific programme's Monitoring Panel should be a member of the corresponding Framework Programme Panel.	<p>This response to the Monitoring Panel includes target dates for implementation and an estimate of the resources needed. The follow-up on the commitments given will be overseen by the Deputy Director-General (see response to Recommendation 7 above).</p> <p>DG INFOS fully supports the recommendation to establish a significant degree of continuity from one year's monitoring panel to the next, and to ensure effective co-ordination with the corresponding Framework Monitoring Panel. On the first point, every effort will be made to reappoint at least one member of the 2000 panel to the 2001 panel. In addition, an early debriefing of the 2001 panel by a representative of the 2000 panel will be organised, and will include the transfer of reference material. On the second point, the chair of the 2001 IST Monitoring Panel will be appointed as a member of the 2001 Framework Monitoring panel. This is in line with changes underway in the overall external monitoring system for the specific programmes and Framework Programmes.</p>	<p>Done</p> <p>Done</p>