**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS

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Subject :	Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament "Next Generation Internet – priorities for action in migrating to the new Internet protocol IPv6" - Council conclusions

The Council conclusions annexed to this document were adopted at the

Transport / Telecommunications Council of 17 and 18 June 2002.

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Council Conclusions

on the transition to Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the eEurope 2002 Action Plan, endorsed by the Santa Maria da Feira European Council in June 2000, and which aims to ensure that all EU citizens, businesses, schools and public administrations can participate in the opportunities provided by the Information Society,

Whereas:

(1)   The European Council of March 2002 attached priority to the widespread availability and use of broadband networks throughout the Union by 2005 and the development of Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6);

(2)   As indicated by the Commission in its Communication of March 2001 in relation to 3G services[1], any delay in the transition to all-IPv6 networks, which will require several years of effort, risks hindering the deployment of advanced service features at a later stage;

(3)   The Commission, in its Communication of 21 February 2002[2], focused on the priorities for action in migrating to IPv6 and stressed the need for a concerted effort by all stakeholders, such as the economic and industrial sectors likely to be impacted by IPv6, including consumer organisations, research institutions, and independent data protection authorities as well as representatives of national or regional IPv6 councils and the candidate countries.

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[1] COM (2001) 141 final
[2] COM (2002) 96 final

Bearing in mind that:

(1) The expanding market for services and terminals will inevitably place increased demand for more IP addresses and that there is a risk at some point in the future of the global IPv4 address space becoming exhausted;

(2) Appropriate actions are needed to maintain widespread availability of sufficient internet addresses,, thereby contributing to meeting the objectives of the Lisbon European Council on economic reform;

(3) The increased Internet IP address space, as offered by IPv6, is expected to provide opportunities for industry to introduce many innovative Internet services and applications;

(4) The rapid uptake of new information society tools and technologies through appropriate awareness-raising campaigns, training and education programmes, needs to be further promoted;

(5) The current research effort on IPv6 needs to be sustained, in particular to ensure a rapid availability of required standards and specifications;

(6) The operational experience in next generation national and regional research networks and their integration in European wide networks needs to be increased;

(7) The need will arise to develop IPv6 transition and integration guidelines that will recognise that the coexistence of IPv4 and IPv6 will last many years.

Therefore:

1.   STRESSES the need to remove obstacles to facilitate the transition to IPv6.

2.   ENCOURAGES the Member States:

♦ To facilitate the efforts of stakeholders regarding the adoption and the deployment of IPv6, for instance through awareness-raising campaigns ;

♦ To facilitate, inter alia by enabling IPv6, the integration of research networks with European-wide networks (e.g. GEANT);

♦ To monitor and assess the current development and take-up of IPv6, including the definition of guidelines and dissemination of best practice related to the transition towards IPv6, in cooperation with the private sector and standardisation bodies.

3.   WELCOMES the Commission's intention to support RTD in the context of the 6th Framework programme related to the deployment of IPv6 in fixed and wireless network infrastructures and in advanced infrastructures for Research (e.g. GEANT and Grids);

4.   SUPPORTS the Commission's intention to renew the mandate of the IPv6 Task Force by :

♦ Enhancing co-operation with international standardisation organisations, industry associations and Internet Governance bodies;

♦ Providing a review and "European IPv6 Roadmap" on the development and future perspectives of IPv6, including guidelines for transition from IPv4 to IPv6;

♦ Establishing collaboration arrangements and working relationships with similar initiatives being launched in other regions of the world.

5. INVITES the Commission to:

♦ Evaluate the social impact on society, citizens and businesses of the implementation of IPv6;

♦ Investigate security issues related to IPv6.

6. INVITES the private sector:

♦ To consider initiatives aimed at the integration of IPv6 infrastructures, including the interoperability aspects of IPv6 services and applications;

♦ To participate actively in the establishment of a European wide, vendor-independent, training and education programme on IPv6;

♦ To provide regularly updated information on the increased demand for IP addresses and the current status of IP4 address space;

♦ To actively contribute towards on-going IPv6 work within standards and specification bodies;

♦ To fully participate in R&D activities in the context of the 6th Framework Programme, notably in the large scale tests of IPv6 based services and applications.

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