



**European Cooperation
in the field of Scientific
and Technical Research
- COST -**

Secretariat

Brussels, 3 October 2006

COST 290/06

NOTE

To : COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)

Subject : Facilities and financial support for COST activities at national level

At the 164th meeting of the COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO), the Secretariat was invited to collect information from Member States concerning the facilities and financial support available to researchers at national level in order to give guidance to COST National Coordinators (CNCs) in their efforts to seek support for COST activities at national level.

It is recalled that, during preparations for the COST Ministerial Conference held on 27 May 1997, a number of questions were submitted to delegations for the purpose of presenting position papers. One of these questions related to finances, the main question at that time being the amount of financial support from the Community RTD Framework Programme and that of the COST Fund.

In the corresponding document (COST 331/96), it was noted that only a few countries, Poland, Slovenia and Switzerland, earmarked yearly appropriations in their national budgets to encourage participation of scientists in COST.

Several delegations wished to see an increase in the Community COST budget line in view of the fact that the number of Actions at that time had risen. This point of view could be expected again during the forthcoming exchange of views on the level of financial support to COST through a renewed contract between the Commission and the ESF as implementing agent for the duration of the Seventh RTD Framework Programme.

In the interests of learning how best to proceed at national level and given that the number of COST countries has increased to 35, including one associated member, since the abovementioned Ministerial Council took place, delegations are kindly asked to inform the Secretariat **by the end of the month** what facilities and means of financial support, if any, currently exist at national level. The information received will provide the Secretariat with an overview of the national measures in place. This could serve as a basis for an exchange of views at the Committee's next meeting scheduled for 20/21 November 2006.

In order to illustrate the sort of brief comments the Secretariat is expecting from delegations, five delegations are quoted below during preparations for the Prague Conference:

Spanish delegation: "Funding is done through many different non-earmarked funds. The present situation is a guarantee for the quality of the funding selection at national level".

Norwegian delegation: "No money earmarked for national support of research work in COST. The researchers must use funds from their own institutions or obtain support from the Research Council of Norway in competition with other projects. The Research Council will cover travel costs for the preparatory work in COST. This funding situation is not likely to change in future".

Danish delegation: "Denmark has no national budget to finance researchers' participation in COST Actions and we are not planning for such a budget line in the future. Scientific and technical work should be financed ordinarily at national level before researchers enter into COST Actions".

Turkish delegation: "Successful COST initiatives could be awarded extra funding through different agencies to encourage the participants towards further collaboration, to achieve pre-set targets which would be complementary to other R&D programmes. Nearly all of the COST Actions in which Turkey is participating are funded by the Scientific and Technical Research Council on a competitive project-proposal basis".

Polish delegation: "In 1996 Poland introduced a budget line to finance part of the participation of its research groups in COST Actions on the basis of an assessment of the value and quality of the scientific topics and the scientific level of the work being carried out. The increase of this support is being foreseen. Poland does not believe this should be a common action by all members".
