COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Brussels, 20 May 2010

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RECH 189

NOTE

From: Portuguese Delegation
To: Delegations
Subject: COST

Delegations will find, in annex, a note from the Portuguese Delegation on the above-mentioned topic.
COST

COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is one of the longest-running European instruments supporting cooperation among researchers across Europe. This intergovernmental framework for European Cooperation was created in 1971, at a ministerial Conference gathering 19 European Ministers responsible for S&T in Europe. In total there are 36 COST countries at the moment.

All 27 EU member states are also COST member countries. Furthermore COST is primarily funded by the EU RTD Framework Programme, i.e. “Financial support for the administration and coordination activities of COST will be provided so that COST can continue to contribute to coordination and exchanges between nationally funded research teams”.

Following a contract between the European Science Foundation (ESF) and the European Commission, the ESF is the legal entity which provides and manages the scientific, administrative and technical secretariat for COST as the COST implementation agent.

At the level of senior officials, a discussion regarding the future legal status and governance of COST has been launched but no agreement has yet been reached.

The European Commission is conducting its Mid-term evaluation of COST which will be finalised soon.

In view of the above mentioned, Portugal considers that the Competitiveness Council should discuss the future of COST.

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1 Council Decision of 19 December 2006 concerning the specific programme Cooperation implementing the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007 to 2013), 2006/971/EC.
Furthermore, Portugal would like to ask the Commission to consider the present situation of COST in the context of the Mid-term evaluation, namely, the possible role of COST within the ERA and its funding by the EU RTD Framework Programme.