

**Commission Communication on
the information strategy
for the euro**

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A/ COMMUNICATING THE EURO : OBJECTIVES AND ROLES.

The launch of Economic and Monetary Union on 1 January 1999 and the smooth introduction of the single European currency, the euro, is a primary objective of the European Union. Its achievement requires effective information and communication actions, as was underlined in the Green Paper on the introduction of the euro, adopted by the Commission in May 1995.

As the transition to EMU moves into a decisive phase this year, the Commission has prepared this Communication on Communications because it wishes to recall the very high priority that needs to be given to this activity. Therefore, it is addressed not only to the Member States and the European Parliament but also to regional and local authorities, economic actors throughout the private sector and to many other groups whose activities will be touched by the arrival of the euro.

Much of what is said here reflects the lessons of the Commission's experience drawn from its information and communications activities on the euro over the past two years.

1.0 The Challenge Ahead.

When it launched its own communications strategy at the beginning of 1996, together with the European Parliament in the context of the Information Programme for the European Citizen (PRINCE), the Commission's objectives were two-fold : to strengthen belief throughout the EU that EMU would be achieved according to the Treaty on European Union and to raise awareness among banks, financial services providers and large companies of the need to begin early preparations for the changeover to the euro. These objective have been achieved through information and communications actions developed by the Commission and the European Parliament on the basis of decisions taken by Heads of State and governments.

Assuring a successful transition in the years ahead imposes today more specific objectives for communications strategies :

- explaining the euro to as many citizens as possible so as to promote its acceptance and a readiness to use it. This also means explaining the reasons why Europe is moving to EMU and what the euro will mean for them;
- helping every citizen to become familiar with the new currency, to acquire a sense of its value and to handle it with ease and confidence. This strategy is made for the general public. To achieve this objective, it is also necessary to adress specific targets, for example consumers.
- encouraging small and medium-sized companies throughout all economic sectors to begin their preparations. This means helping them to understand the advantages of a serious preparation and the penalties of arriving late at the date of final transition, 1 January 2002.

- ensuring that there is a good understanding of EMU among political, administrative and business actors in third countries.

1.1 Communications responsibilities are widely shared.

These are ambitious objectives. The effort will require pursuing well conceived, sustained and adequately funded information actions over several years and at all levels, from European to local. Communications strategies must not only deliver concrete information in an accessible form, but also aim to explain the consequences of the introduction of the euro for each citizen. The greater the support among citizens, the easier the political and practical transition to the euro.

Preparing the population in general for the euro is not just a task for public authorities:

- information relays and multipliers - trade and professional associations, European federations, consumers associations and a multitude of public bodies - are vital sources of practical information. They need to be encouraged and supported in their actions;
- companies must tell their employees, their shareholders, their suppliers and their customers about when, how and for what purposes they will use the euro during the transition to the introduction of euro notes and coins, the 1 January 2002. They will also have to explain the impact of the euro on their business, and on matters of key concern to employees such as wages and pensions;
- banks must tell their customers how they may transact in euro during the transition period from 1 January 1999 and help to familiarise them with euro values;
- retailers, large and small, have a fundamental interest in helping the consumer to become familiar with the euro, to learn its values and to use it with ease;
- providers of financial services such as insurance and pensions must explain the impact of the euro on their products.

2.0 The Communications Challenge : Roles and Responsibilities.

2.1 A central role is incumbent upon Member States.

To be credible and effective, communication actions must be shaped by the culture, language and concerns of the citizen. Information will best be provided from sources which are close to the citizen and regarded both as authoritative and reliable. This means focusing the communications responsibility firmly on the Member States who must not only create information tools and products, but also encourage regional and local authorities, publicly owned utilities and networks of civil organisations (NGOs) such as trade unions, professional organisations and consumers associations to act as vehicles and channels for information on the euro.

Most Member States, in cooperation with the European Union, have launched implementing national information actions on the euro. A meeting in Brussels organised

by the Commission on October 30 1997 of directors of information on the euro in national administrations revealed a rich variety of initiatives from Member States.

2.2 Partnerships with the European Institutions ensure coherence.

Since 1996, the EU institutions and several Member States run a close collaboration in developing information activities on the euro. In 1998, ten such partnerships are likely to be established on the basis of tripartite memorandums of understanding between the Member State, the Commission, and the European Parliament. These are supported by conventions which provide for EU funding for communications actions in Member States who so wish. A tripartite management group, composed of the Member State, the Commission and the European Parliament, ensures coordination of these activities.

Altogether two thirds of the funds allocated by the EU budget for information actions on the euro in 1998 will be committed to these partnerships. Their advantages are :

- they ensure that communications actions are coherent and appropriate for each Member State;
- they avoid excessively overlapping and repetitive initiatives by the Member States and the EU institutions;
- they enable the general public to perceive that national actions are placed in a European context.

2.3 The Role of the Commission : to supply information, to stimulate, to coordinate.

The Commission has acquired considerable experience of informing and communicating on the euro, and the fruits of this experience will be put at the service of the Member States. In the next four years the Commission, in close association with the European Parliament, can:

- make available to Member States and others needing to communicate on the euro a considerable variety of information instruments. These include technical reports, question and answer texts for the general public, videos, pictorial presentations of euro notes and coins etc;
- stimulate and encourage communications actions by Member States and non governmental organisations;
- ensure coherence in the information and messages being given on the euro across the Union;
- organise and support transnational communications initiatives. Purely national projects will be examined and funded at the national level;
- organise information activities in third countries.

B/ A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO COMMUNICATION ACTIONS.

3.0 A basis of achievement upon which to build.

The Commission's communication efforts over the past two years have received a large echo. They have :

- helped to inform major currency users that EMU would be launched on 1 January 1999;
- contributed to a growing awareness among financial organisations and large companies on the importance of preparing early and preparing well. Polls show that this work has been launched by more than 50% of organisations in these sectors;
- involved a large number of organisations by means of Round Tables and expert groups in researching and debating technical issues such as dual display of prices, bank charges, the legal status of the euro and a variety of accounting issues. These efforts have helped to promote consensus approaches among interested parties;
- stimulated and encouraged a very wide range of civil organisations - representative organisations, trade unions...- to mount their own information activities on the euro.

This is a very useful base upon which the Community institutions, the Member States and many active groups in civil society can build.

3.1 The importance of the EMU timetable for communications strategies.

Key deadlines have been fixed by the Treaty and by the European Council of Madrid in December 1995. Communications strategies need to be specially focused on three particular dates :

- 2-3 May 1998. This is when the Council, meeting at the Heads of State and Government level will designate the Member States that are qualified to be part of the Economic and Monetary Union from 1 January 1999. Bilateral exchange rates between participating currencies will also be announced. Media attention to EMU will reach a new peak and as a result the general public will be more fully aware of the imminence and irreversibility of the transition to the euro. There is bound to be a qualitative and quantitative leap in the demand for information for which all providers, public and private, must be prepared, in the pre-ins as well as in the euro zone.
- 1 January 1999. The date when the euro becomes the single currency for the participating member states and when the rates of conversion between their currencies and euro are permanently fixed. Citizens, particularly those in the euro zone, will need help in understanding the unfamiliar territory in which they find themselves, without euro cash but with financial markets and various economic actors operating in

euro, a European Central Bank fixing monetary policy and, even, the progressive appearance of dual labelling of prices in some commercial places in some countries.

- 1 January 2002. The date of introduction of euro notes and coins. Intensive communications efforts should long well before this date to enable the citizen to handle the new money with ease and confidence.

4.0 Target audiences.

4.1 The general public.

- Obviously public information actions must acquire a new intensity and breadth in 1998 which cannot be relaxed before the beginning of 2002. They must also become more differentiated through time, responding to the changing needs of particular segments of the general public.

Initially, the task will be one of explaining the changeover scenario to remove what will be an inevitable confusion in many peoples' minds caused by the arrival of the scriptural currency some three years before its "natural" expression in notes and coins. This means explaining how the euro can be used by the citizen during the transition period.

The entire transition period will be crucial for preparing the citizen for the introduction of euro notes and coins and the withdrawal of national currencies. The challenge facing not only governments but also every economic actor serving the consumer is an important and difficult one : people have to learn the value of the new money and eventually relate this value to key issues in their lives, from the prices of food and consumer items to their wages and pensions. Initially and for a long time they will be constantly converting amounts from their national currency into euro. The ultimate objective has to be to familiarise all citizens with the new scale of values to the extent that conversion is no longer necessary.

Realistically, however, it will be difficult to establish this level of competence throughout the population in a mere 24 months. But the more skilful and determined the effort, the easier the transition for the majority of the population.

- Certain groups of the general public merit particular attention :

Consumer protection will need to be ensured by specific communication actions. With this in mind, the round table organised by the Commission the 26 February 1998 will examine the possibility of creating local "observatories" responsible for monitoring the impact of national communication actions on the euro.

In addition, information will need to be adapted to particular needs of different groups of the population, including vulnerable groups (old-aged, handicapped, illiterate people), the young (in particular through the education system), or women.

4.2 Small and medium-sized enterprises.

Many SMEs are bound to be late and slow in preparing their changeover. The danger is that they could be so late and so slow as to disrupt the activities of the large firms that are their customers. Early, consistent and determined communications efforts are needed:

- to raise awareness of the basic tasks that have to be done - changing IT systems, accounting, invoicing, marketing etc.
- to ensure that materials of all kinds are readily available to help SMEs cope with the technicalities of the changeover.
- to encourage them to look for strategic advantage in the euro, possibly by means of new products and new markets.

Governments, banks and professional organisations will carry the main responsibilities for actions directed at SMEs. But large companies must also play an important part - in many cases their own commercial well-being will depend on the capacity of their SME suppliers to handle the new euro environment.

For its part, the Commission will maintain partnerships it has already forged with organisations that act as important channels of information to SMEs.

4.3 Local and regional administrations, elected officials and officials in public administrations.

- Preparations for the changeover by national administrations are considerably more advanced than those that are local and decentralised. This is worrying because regional and local authorities have closer and more regular contact with the citizen. Now that national public administrations have published their changeover plans, local entities and elected officials have a framework in which to make their own plans. But they will have specific information and communications needs that will have to be satisfied by national authorities.

Training schemes will be particularly important for those officials in direct contact with the public. The Commission is ready to help Member States prepare the necessary information and training tools.

- In addition, European institution's employees must display an exemplary competence in EMU subject matter both in their dealings with officials in national administrations and in their contacts with the private sector. The obligation to be able to explain EMU and its benefits is even greater for those in direct contact with the public.

The Commission has devised an information plan for its own personnel and will propose extending it to other European institutions.

4.4 Third Countries.

The euro looks set to emerge as an important reserve currency and instrument for international commercial transactions. Now that the strength of the political will to achieve EMU is being more widely understood in the world, there is a growing demand for information about it. A communications initiative in third countries, will, therefore, be essential. Priority should be given candidate countries for EU membership and Mediterranean partners and to those countries with special commercial relations with the EU (such as association agreements) and to others which are potentially important markets for the Union (in particular United-States and Japan).

At the same time, the information needs of EU nationals resident in these countries should be kept clearly in mind. They are likely to be asked many questions about EMU and should be enabled to respond.

5.0 Measuring the impact and effectiveness of information actions.

Communications strategies on the euro must need to be flexible and adaptable to changing needs - the type of information required will not be constant and nor will be the particular groups or entities that will have to be addressed. The effectiveness of any strategy needs to be regularly evaluated so that any weaknesses can be identified and corrected throughout the process until its conclusion.

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The creation of the euro is a priority for the European Union. This central objective for the Commission can only be achieved through effective information and communication actions. 1998 marks the start of a decisive phase for the achievement of Economic and Monetary Union and is consequently also a crucial satge in the communication campaign on the euro. The action of the Commission and of the European Parliament must therefore change both in terms of scale and by focusing on the general public. The objective should be to help citizens understand the reasons that Europe is progressing towards EMU and to raise awareness of the new currency to allow them to use it comfortably and with confidence. With this in mind, the European Union's information campaign, implemented in partnership with the Member States, must be in a position to meet a challenge which affects each european citizen directly. It is vital for the sucess of this historic project.

DETAILS OF THE INFORMATION STRATEGY FOR THE EURO
(TARGETS, METHODS, ETC.)

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The purpose of this document is to promote or heighten awareness of the importance of information and communication in the process of introducing the euro. It takes stock of the measures already carried out so as to learn the lessons for future activities: time-frame, priority targets, message content, methods to be used, etc. It presents the blueprint for the strategy to be implemented, and spells out the respective roles of the European institutions, the Member States and industry and commerce in the process.

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE INTRODUCTION OF THE EURO

Money is involved in a very large number of acts of everyday life. It goes to the heart of the workings of the economy. It is also a vehicle for values and ideals. The successful introduction of a single currency for Europe therefore depends on work in two main areas of activity:

- technical preparations guaranteeing the smooth distribution of the euro throughout all the workings of the economy;
- preparing all citizens to understand, accept and use the euro.

Information and communication activities regarding the euro form an integral part of these two areas and must help them to succeed. The Commission Green Paper of 31 May 1995 on the practical arrangements for the introduction of the single currency already set out the two main tasks of a euro communication strategy, which are still relevant today:

- to stimulate and encourage the preparations necessary in all sectors of the economy;
- to win the public's support for the single currency.

The introduction of the euro cannot be merely equated with the introduction of a set of technical rules. To an extent which varies according to the Member State or the individual, the currency is a vehicle for values and ideals: preparation of the business community and the general public for its introduction must deal with more than just the practical arrangements.

The communication and information activities must take account of public opinion polls, and of the public's misgivings and concerns. Citizens must be able to count on clear, complete and accessible information which provides all the answers to their questions and enables them to prepare for the single currency. This is the key aim of the communication effort initiated by the European Union and the Member States.

There are various ways of presenting and explaining the euro to European citizens; they vary with national cultures and practices. Such approaches call for a great deal of caution, in that the evocation of the currency may give rise to emotional reactions. For example, some Member States have put the emphasis on the link between the euro and Europe, presenting the euro as part of the common heritage of Europeans, as making for stability in Europe, or as an instrument for preserving the European economic, social and cultural model. In the same way information on the euro will often lead to the provision of additional information on the European Union itself.

2. THE ACHIEVEMENTS

2.1 *Much work in the field of communication has already been done by the national and European public authorities and by various socio-economic groups.*

This work has emanated from the European Parliament, the Commission, the Member States and particularly dynamic communicators (banks, chambers of commerce or trade, business federations and professional associations, etc.).

2.1.1 *The European Parliament*

From the start of initiatives to launch euro communication activities, the European Parliament has endeavoured to provide the necessary impetus to promote an information strategy which meets the needs of citizens. The bodies within Parliament take part in defining the guidelines for this strategy and in monitoring its achievements. It is a partner of the Member States and the Commission in all the countries which have chosen to develop euro communication plans in conjunction with the European Union.

2.1.2 *The Commission*

The Commission has built its communication work around three key guiding principles: subsidiarity, partnership and progressiveness. Following the May 1995 Green Paper on the practical arrangements for the introduction of the single currency, it launched, in cooperation with the European Parliament, the priority campaign “the euro, one currency for Europe”, an element in the PRINCE programme (information programme for the European citizen). As far back as 1996, it embarked on awareness raising and communication activities for the information providers. In the last two years, almost fifty million ecu, representing three-quarters of the appropriations allocated by the Commission to the priority information activities, have already been devoted to this. This initial intensive effort has taken on a number of aspects, in particular:

- the constitution of all the fundamental basic elements of the communication on the euro (assembly of the reference documentation, logo, euro symbol, wide distribution of the designs of euro notes and coins, etc.);
- the production and introduction of communication tools: (“Inf Euro”, newsletter, “Group Euro”, iconography, video, the euro area on the Europa Internet site, the QUEST interactive data base in eleven languages, exhibitions, a partnership with the communicators and multipliers, etc.);

2.1.3 *The Member States*

These information activities by the Commission have, through a leverage effect, encouraged the Member States to embark progressively on information and communication activities. Several have even already launched large-scale government communication activities involving television and the mass distribution of information

material. Freephones and special Internet sites dedicated to the euro have been set up in several countries.

The Commission, in its role as coordinator, took the initiative of organising a meeting in Brussels of the heads of national information services responsible for communication on the euro. This initiative revealed the huge wealth of measures in the communication field. The effort nevertheless still varies significantly in intensity depending on the Member States. As well as the linguistic aspects, these initiatives vary widely, depending on the Member States and the general attitude of their public to the euro. For most of them, this action stems from a partnership with the European Commission and the European Parliament.

2.1.4 The action of the information providers

Many information providers, in more direct contact with the general public, have already been involved in passing on information on the euro with the help of specific material: this action is directed towards targeted sectors of the public, or towards the public at large.

The action of the financial institutions and the banks deserves a special mention: many banks have already circulated extremely detailed information booklets on the introduction of the euro to their customers. These documents inform them of the major institutional stages of the process of economic and monetary union and deal with questions relating to savings and to financial products once the euro is introduced. The banks have also organised conferences which, at local level, attract a wide public consisting of both small businessmen and private individuals.

The major European business federations are another important multiplier: they have distributed a wealth of very detailed information to their members, which has, for example, included the issue of very useful guides for SMEs. The Commission has helped to fund many of these initiatives at both national and regional level in all the Member States. It has also supported the action of the Euro-Info-Centres which in 1997 carried out awareness raising and information activities on the euro for SMEs (5 300 000 contacts).

2.2 *This first stage in the information and communication campaigns has already borne fruit.*

2.2.1 A number of objectives have already been attained.

The major economic operators are now convinced that the euro is sure to be introduced on 1 January 1999 and that the process of monetary union is irreversible.

This applies to the key intermediaries involved in the use of the euro: the financial institutions, the administrations and a good many large enterprises have introduced suitable structures and have made the necessary investment. They also represent valuable and efficient information providers for their customers and for users.

Lastly, the euro is now identifiable in the form of notes and coins and has been given a monetary symbol: €

2.2.2. *Some lessons learnt from experience*

The experience acquired during this first phase of launching communication activities for the euro provides useful pointers to the action of each communicator for the years ahead.

For example, the Community institutions possess most of the “source” information on the general framework for the introduction of the single currency and its different sectoral dimensions. Hence they can make available all these items of information, and reference material or analysis on precise and technical subjects relating to the euro. Since they are in touch with all the players, public and professional, throughout the European Union, they are familiar with the activities, experiences or even innovations produced here and there and can circulate them among the players with a view to broadening each one’s scope for action.

The Member States have a large number of communicators on their territories, and so are in a better position to disseminate information to the general public and to tailor the content to the specific national culture. In the same way, the Member States can adapt the information to take account of the specific characteristics of their plans for changing over to the euro.

It is clear that the public authorities will be unable, by themselves, to respond to all the requests for information on the single currency: institutional activities depend on the support of efforts by enterprises, banks and financial institutions in direct contact with the public. Many of them have already realised that it is in their interests to provide their staff, customers and suppliers with information about the euro.

It is also undoubtedly useful to encourage the spontaneous initiatives emanating from society at large.

The public is displaying mounting curiosity with regard to the euro. On the whole it no longer doubts that it will be introduced. The world of business and the general public, elected representatives and civil servants - all are now feeling the need for specific and very practical information on the euro. This information must allay everyone’s concerns and be directly relevant to daily life.

Information and communication activities on the euro have now been under way for two years, taking a wide variety of forms (conferences, exhibitions, Internet sites, brochures, adoption of the euro symbol, etc.), and involving either the Commission or the Member States or information multipliers.

These activities have already borne fruit:

- **the certainty of the changeover to the euro on 1 January 1999 and the irreversibility of the process leading to monetary union are now acknowledged;**
- **the key players who will lead the way in using the euro, namely financial institutions, large firms and administrations, have begun the necessary preparations in order to be ready to use the euro from 1 January 1999;**
- **the euro now has an image (notes, coins and symbol).**

Assessment of the results of these activities provides useful pointers for determining the approach to be taken by the communication strategy for the euro in the years ahead: importance of subsidiarity, of information multipliers and of practical information at grass-roots level.

3. THE TIME-FRAME FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

The environment and the major institutional deadlines set by the Treaty and the scenario adopted by the Madrid European Council in December 1995 in practice provide a structure for euro information and communication activities. The euro communication strategy should be built around *several crucial periods*:

3.1 From May 1998 to January 1999

This period is organised around two key dates:

- **2 May 1998**, the date on which the Council, meeting at the level of Heads of State or Government, designates the Member States qualified to adopt the euro on 1 January 1999, will constitute an exceptional historic and media event. It will create a favourable “shock” for the general public: as a result of the very broad media coverage expected for this event, this is the date on which the general public will become fully aware of the imminence and the irreversibility of the introduction of the euro. This event will in its turn create a very heavy demand for information which the Member States, the Community institutions, but also the major “intermediaries” between the public and the currency (financial institutions, markets, etc.) and the local and regional authorities must be ready to satisfy.
- **1 January 1999**, the date on which the euro appears and the conversion rates between the euro and the national monetary units are irrevocably fixed, is the turning point for the achievement of economic and monetary union.

These two institutional focal points, which will receive a great deal of media attention, will arouse on the part of the general public and the business community a curiosity for the euro which must not be disappointed. This is even greater justification for the launch, in all the Member States where this has not yet been done, of “general public” communication activities.

By 2 May 1998, decisions will have been taken on the last practical details of the introduction of the euro (length of the period during which euro notes and coins and national monetary units will circulate alongside each other, dual display of prices, conversion costs during the transitional period from 1999 to 2002, etc.). It will therefore be possible to provide precise answers to the questions of the general public and of business. A Round Table on these aspects will also be organised in Brussels on 26 February 1998.

The Commission will complete the process of making all the basic texts and reference texts on the euro, which by then will have been finalised, available to the public. The public will thus have direct access to complete information, in both electronic form and

on paper. The information intermediaries, which are in contact with the public, will thus be able to provide the appropriate answers to the questions they are asked.

Throughout the period special attention will have to be paid to business and more particularly SMEs since some of them will already have decided to switch to the euro. They themselves will act as examples for the general public.

3.2 The end of the transitional period

The transitional period (1999 to 2001) will enable everyone to familiarise himself with the introduction of the euro. The year 2001 itself will be the setting for a second wave of major coverage, in order to enable the general public and business throughout the Union to prepare for the arrival of euro notes and coins and the complete disappearance of the national currencies.

Communication activities to prepare for 1 January 2002 must enable the general public and everyone involved in economic life to familiarise themselves with the practical effects of the tangible introduction of euro notes and coins. Several stages can be envisaged: first, a period during which everyone will learn to convert into euros the values expressed in national monetary units; a second stage can be devoted more especially to getting a feel for a scale of values in euros, as a result of which everyone should be able to recognise the relative values of goods and services in the new currency without having to convert them into national monetary units. This is the period during which intensive communication activities must be carried out on the ground for the benefit of certain groups among the public which require special attention, such as the elderly, those suffering from various forms of handicap, illiterate persons, etc.).

The transitional period from 1999 to 2001 should be used to shift the information effort into a higher gear at a time when the public and everyone involved in economic activity, in particular businesses, will be showing a great deal of interest in the euro, and will be highly receptive as a result of the institutional environment. A second wave of major coverage should be planned for 2001, just before euro notes and coins are actually introduced and national currencies withdrawn.

4. THE EURO INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

4.1 The general principles and the roles of the contributors

4.1.1 Subsidiarity and partnership

4.1.1.1 The principal role of the Member States

The Member States play a pivotal role in the communication strategy directed towards their citizens and businesses. This stems very directly from the principle of subsidiarity: because of the special cultural or linguistic features and sensitivity with regard to the currency, an approach which is tailored to the different national situations is essential to the success of the operation.

Arrangements which can cope with the considerable challenge of a process directly affecting all citizens are gradually being introduced. These arrangements include measures taken by the public authorities and, as far as possible, take into account the needs and the own initiatives of the regions, associations and intermediaries, large public and private enterprises, professional associations and trade unions, etc., in order to disseminate a coherent message on the euro.

Against this background, the Community institutions have offered the Member States an original partnership formula to accompany this movement, including:

- the conclusion of tripartite memoranda of understanding between the Member State concerned, the Commission and the European Parliament;
- the establishment of agreements for part-financing of specific communication plans;
- coordination between the parties and the creation of a unit at national level to implement coordination.

In 1998 agreements will have been concluded in ten of the fifteen Member States. They constitute the natural instrument under which the Union provides financial assistance for nationally-initiated communication activities on the euro. These agreements are a priority for the Community: they account for two-thirds of the priority action budget “the euro, a currency for Europe”. This process ensures that communication will be tailored to each Member State, while ensuring overall consistency, in particular in relation to the strategic guidelines.

In addition to the specific measures planned by each government, these agreements will in particular have to comprise:

a “general public” component, to respond to the requests coming from the public at large in each Member State;

and, where needed, an audiovisual/radio component, to finance media activities essential for raising the awareness of the entire population.

4.1.1.2 The European Parliament

The European Parliament is the Community institution which represents all citizens. By this token it plays an important part as regards the euro information strategy, in the definition of which it takes part. Parliamentary bodies have been and will be associated with developments in the communication effort and in partnerships with the Member States. The members of the European Parliament are called upon to play an active part in the events and initiatives developed under this effort in each Member State.

4.1.1.3 The role of the Commission

The Commission is organising itself to make its expertise available to all the intermediaries who need it, and provide, for their communication and information activities, technical information on the single currency including technical reports, communications, questions/answers and briefing points. These messages and other

contributions will then be adapted and used by the intermediaries. Wherever appropriate, the Commission should attend the conferences and events organised on the euro.

The Commission intends to provide stimulation and encouragement for communication on the euro. This depends on managing the agreements with the Member States, and taking part in the associated activities and monitoring them.

Thirdly, the Commission should ensure that the messages put out about the euro are consistent throughout the Union. This justifies its participation in the coordination units set up under the national agreements in all the Member States. Similarly the meetings of the heads of information departments of the Member States will enable each national head to compare the contents of his own euro communication programme directly with those of the other Member States and to facilitate the exchange of national "best practice".

Lastly, the Commission has a key role to play in organising and providing practical support for cross-border activities as well as activities intended for non-member countries. The latter can be carried out either directly under existing Community instruments, or by the initiatives of Commission delegations and press and information services in non-member countries, in conjunction with the embassies of the Member States. The staff of these representations (Commission and Member States) will have to receive special training and information for this purpose. Embassies and consulates will also play a crucial direct role in informing Europeans resident in non-member countries.

4.1.1.4 The role of industry and commerce

Industrial and commercial firms, public or private, small businesses and retailers are at the heart of economic activity. Where the changeover to the single currency is concerned, they are key players in passing on information to the public. This will take different forms:

- the large account managers (public or private services responsible for the distribution of energy, water or telecommunications, etc.) will play a key educational role for all consumers by providing reference points for the scale of values at a very early stage, by issuing euro invoices;
- the large firms which will switch to the euro early on should prepare and help their subcontractors (often SMEs) to follow them;
- retailers in daily contact with the general public will inform and guide consumers when they make their everyday purchases in euro.

Tourism is a particularly interesting sector for the introduction of the euro. Businesses operating in this area can very usefully contribute to the information on the practical and specific aspects of the euro.

4.1.1.5 The role of the information intermediaries

The use of communicators, in the form of professional associations, business federations, public and semi-public national organisations and local and regional authorities, the

Euro-Info-Centres and all the other Community networks, means that communication can be precisely tailored to particular targets.

It is therefore important to encourage them and to support them in their activity of communicator concerning the euro, in particular by providing them with information that they can adapt and use for their own purposes.

National projects should be appraised directly by the Member States and by the national authorities. Their costs will have to be borne at national level, either by the government itself or by other specific bodies, either in regard to the use of decentralised Community funds under agreements or as a last resort by the Commission Offices to the extent that budget resources are available for this use. The Commission will not finance projects on a European scale where their relevance is purely national, with the exception of unusually innovative or symbolic projects.

4.1.2 Decentralisation and proximity

It is important for European citizens to find information at grass-roots level; they should be enabled to do so by highly decentralised local communication activities. All the networks available in the Member States (local offices of public departments, branches of financial institutions, decentralised offices of certain firms, large account managers, etc.) must be mobilised to contribute.

The operation of partnership at national level under tripartite units comprising a representative of the Member State concerned, of the Commission and of the European Parliament, will assist in tailoring information to local demand.

This objective is facilitated by the communication medium used: the new technologies (freephones, Internet, etc.) make it easier to disseminate information at a local level, and to promote the activities on the ground (travelling exhibitions, information buses, or even, as far as permitted by budget constraints, contributions to sports or cultural events reaching large sections of the general public) already organised by certain Member States.

Communication on the euro must be guided by the principle of subsidiarity and managed under a partnership:

- partnership with the Member States, which makes it possible to devise a message and instruments that are tailored to national cultures and structures;
- partnership with information multipliers which distribute targeted information. It is up to the latter to distribute practical and specialised information.

The Commission's action will be organised along the following lines:

- providing information, basic material and technical support for multipliers and for specialised audiences;
- taking part in the framing and implementation of national communication plans for the euro through partnership based on the conclusion of part-financing agreements with the Member States;

- ensuring that information activities on the euro are consistent across the Community and facilitating contacts and exchanges of information between the Member States;
- encouraging and taking part in cross-border initiatives, and information and communication activities on the euro intended for non-member countries.

Lastly, if all European citizens are to find, in their daily lives, information which is in tune with their concerns, it is essential that communication activities should give pride of place to decentralised work at grass-roots level.

4.2 Priority target groups

The bulk of the information and communication activities carried out so far have been targeted at financial operators and administrations, these being the circles most directly concerned by technical preparations for the changeover to the euro and also the main information multipliers. Many large firms have set the ball rolling, too. All these operators are actively engaged in preparations.

The communication effort must continue and build on these achievements by concentrating on a number of priority target groups:

4.2.1 The general public

The general public (and all its component groups, such as consumers, wage-earners, savers, pensioners, recipients of welfare benefits, women and young people) is hungry for information about the changeover process and its consequences, and the success of the single currency will ultimately depend on public acceptance. But public enthusiasm for the euro cannot be created by a decision from on high: it must be nurtured through unstinting efforts to provide information on highly practical aspects of the single currency at grass-roots level.

The initial objective is to make the entire population aware, ahead of 1 January 1999, of the impending arrival of the euro, the key dates in the scenario (1 January 1999 and 1 January 2002) and how the euro will be used during the transitional period (e.g. payments, cheques, continuity of contracts, tax matters and relations with administrative bodies, particularly those responsible for welfare).

From the beginning of the transitional period, the education system - and teachers in particular - will have a major role to play in informing and communicating with young people. Young people will often in practice act as go-betweens with the older generations, helping them to familiarise themselves with and embrace the euro. The Commission plans shortly to launch an initiative in this area.

Information will also have to be provided which is tailored to the needs of more specific target groups, such as senior citizens, blind and partially sighted persons, illiterate people or the poorest sections of society. The public administrations have a major role to play in communicating with these groups of people, notably via trusted intermediaries who are suitably trained and possess appropriate information tools.

4.2.2 The need for a special effort towards SMEs (particularly in the retail and craft sectors)

Like the general public, small and medium-sized enterprises need to be made aware that the euro is coming and to plan ahead for its arrival. Thanks to their structure or size (existence of a forward studies or planning unit) or their membership of an industry network, some larger firms have become conscious of the arrival of the single currency and have been able to set up their own preparatory structures. This is not usually the case with SMEs, and even less so micro-businesses, single member companies and craft businesses, which still see the euro as a distant prospect. Small businesses should have a general grounding in the changeover scenario and how the euro is to be used.

Over and above this effort, which differs little from the drive to inform all Union citizens, SMEs should be urged to embark on technical preparations. A special communication effort, which should be stepped up from 1998, should make them realise that the arrival of the euro requires them to do some strategic thinking (targets and competitive strategy and possibly new markets) and to make preparations well ahead of the 31 December 2001 deadline. Since SMEs play an essential role in the economy, such preparations will constitute one of the keys to the success of economic and monetary union. And as SMEs provide over two thirds of total employment in Europe, they can exert an important multiplier effect on their employees and customers. This applies particularly to the retail trade, which is in daily contact with members of the public: retailers can contribute directly to informing and reassuring consumers about the changeover to the euro and hence to their acceptance of the new currency.

Banks, the accountancy professions, chambers of commerce and trade associations, including Euro Info Centres and other specialised networks, will have a key role to play in providing SMEs with general and technical information. Likewise, large firms will have special responsibility towards SMEs among their suppliers and customers. This will apply in particular in all subcontracting relationships where the fact that large firms have already switched to the euro will prompt them to encourage and assist their subcontractors to follow suit.

Lastly, IT service providers, who will have to respond to the demand from SMEs, should be urged to prepare themselves in order to avoid bottlenecks in 2001 and saturation of demand which would generate extra costs for user firms. Meetings such as the Euro IT forum held in Brussels on 2 October 1997 with IT service providers and their users will contribute to that objective.

The Commission will facilitate and develop relations initiated with groups channelling information to SMEs and IT service providers.

4.2.3 Local and regional authorities, elected representatives and national and local officials

Compared with the central administrations, preparations are much less advanced among local and regional authorities and elected representatives, although this tier of administration is in a privileged position for communicating with the general public and will be called upon at an early stage. Publication of the public administration's changeover plans in all Member States should, by laying down clearly and irrevocably the precise conditions in which the changeover is to take place in each country, facilitate

preparations by elected representatives and local and regional authorities, which should also be stimulated by means of a specific information and communication effort.

National civil servants should continue to be covered by targeted information and training campaigns on the euro using the administrations' traditional tools. A particularly important training effort should be undertaken for all officials who are in direct contact with the public. Some Member States have, for example, already prepared training packs for instructors on the switch to the euro. Civil servants should, in their own area of activity, have access to and be able to provide the information which their partners (businesses, associations, members of the public, etc.) need. The same approach should be taken towards preparing local officials.

The Commission will assist the Member States in developing the tools necessary for achieving this objective.

4.2.4 EU officials and other staff

At the heart of the machinery for the changeover to the euro, European Commission officials and other staff should themselves be fully conversant with the arrangements for introducing the euro and its consequences. This is all the more necessary in the case of officials in direct contact with the public, who should be able to explain EMU and its beneficial effects to the people they speak to.

The Commission is preparing an information plan for its own staff which will use all the tools at its disposal (information memos and booklets, the usual in-house communication channels and especially its intranet, *Europaplus*). The Commission will offer to extend the programme to cover the other Community institutions.

The European Commission will undertake a special training and information effort for EU officials and other staff.

4.2.5 The need to open up the communication and information campaign to non-member countries

Through EMU the euro will emerge as the currency of one of the world's main trading partners. Now that the credibility of Europe's political determination to create a single currency is no longer doubted anywhere in the world, the Commission's delegations in non-member countries are noting a marked increase in interest in and demand for information on the euro. A communication initiative aimed at the rest of the world is therefore necessary in order to dispel misunderstandings and give this major event its true dimension on the international monetary scene.

Some Member States and the Commission have already launched information campaigns outside Europe, chiefly aimed at the major international financial centres (New York, Tokyo, Toronto, Chicago, Hong Kong, Singapore, etc.). This work should be continued, stepped up and extended to other third-country targets:

- the applicant countries and the EU's Mediterranean partners;

- trading partners and businesses in non-member countries with preferential trading relations with the Community (e.g. association agreements) and also markets which are potentially important for the EU.

This outward-looking campaign should also cover Union citizens living in non-member countries, since not only are such people entitled as Europeans to be fully informed about the changeover, but they will also personally face in their business or private lives questions about the euro which they should be able to answer properly.

The Commission will contribute to the drive to explain and promote the euro in non-member countries, in liaison with the Member States. In practical terms, this activity can be developed through the routine cooperation that has been established on the spot between the Commission's delegations, and particularly its press and information services, and the Member States' embassies and consulates.

Upstream, this action requires systematic briefing and training of diplomatic staff posted abroad.

The general public (including certain specific groups), small and medium-sized enterprises, local and regional authorities and elected representatives, national civil servants and non-member countries should from now on be the main targets of information campaigns mounted by the Commission, the Member States and information multipliers.

4.3 The message to be put across

The meeting of heads of national information services held in Brussels on 30 October 1997 showed how difficult it is to devise tools or messages which can have a similar positive impact in all Member States. A few common principles can nevertheless be identified.

4.3.1 Importance of practical information

The euro will gain acceptance among members of the public only if they are given clear answers to three basic questions: Why? When? and How? Enthusiasm for the single currency can be generated only if the public at large understands, learns to use and embraces the euro. With that end in view, the information campaign should convey practical, precise messages: depiction of the euro in the form of coins and banknotes, possibilities for and practical consequences of using the euro in daily life (incomes, pensions, savings, contracts, etc.) and development of a “feel” for prices in euros once conversion rates have been fixed on 1 January 1999. This information should be useful, usable and put to practical use.

Information disseminated should also be correct: inaccurate information sometimes circulates as a result of unfamiliarity with the subject. This would create confusion in the minds of the public and would be detrimental to the entire changeover process. The Commission will ensure that reference material is available to all information providers to enable them to check the reliability of the information they disseminate.

Clearly, it will become increasingly simple to issue practical information as the remaining technical arrangements for introducing the euro are established at Community and/or national level (dual price displays, conversion costs, duration of the period in which national currencies are withdrawn, conditions in which the euro is used in dealings with the public administrations, etc.).

4.3.2 Dissemination of specific messages for the “pre-ins”

Those Member States which are not on the list of countries in the first wave drawn up by the Heads of State or Government meeting within the Council in early May 1998 will have to contemplate preparing specific messages for their citizens: according to circumstances, these messages could explain the practical consequences of the country’s non-participation in the euro zone, inform the public about the ground to be made up before they can join the countries in the first wave, and provide information about the euro. This is because, quite apart from the choice or possibility of adopting the euro, even if a Member State does not form part of the first wave its economic and trading links with its partners already in the euro zone will involve its citizens and businesses in transactions in euros. If they are not to be placed at a disadvantage, they will have to be given factual, practical information about the single currency.

In any event, the “pre-ins” will constitute a specific group whose information needs (nature, volume of the target audience and content of messages on the euro) will differ from those of the other Member States.

4.3.3 Gauging public opinion and assessing the impact of the campaign

The future information and communication strategy for the euro will have to be progressive and adaptable. An effective action plan must be backed up by evaluation tools that can provide data for assessing the calibre and impact of the action taken.

Assessment of the impact of action already taken will enable future action to be fine-tuned and to achieve better results.

Past experience has shown how difficult it is to devise tools or messages on the euro which can have the same positive impact in all Member States. A few broad common principles can nevertheless be identified:

- **the importance of disseminating practical, concrete information;**
- **the importance of facilitating acceptance of the euro by the general public;**
- **the need to disseminate highly specific messages for the “pre-ins”;**
- **the importance of gauging public opinion and assessing the impact of action taken.**

5. INSTRUMENTS AND MEDIA TO BE USED IN THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

5.1 Radio and television

Radio and television are essential tools in any campaign aimed at the general public. These media should form an integral part of all communication plans, and particularly those covered by a Community joint-financing agreement. The format of broadcasts and advertising spots will of course vary according to the specific features of national audiences and the approaches followed by public authorities.

The Community could contemplate providing more active support: “Europe by Satellite” broadcasts (received by nearly 700 television stations in Europe), organisation of interviews, provision of broadcasting studios, pictures, etc.

5.2 Brochures

Surveys have demonstrated the public’s steady interest in having information in hard-copy form (brochures and leaflets). All the Member States which have already launched their communication plans intend to use this medium, distributing brochures and leaflets through local intermediaries (town halls, post offices, banks, etc.) and/or through inserts in the major national or regional daily and weekly newspapers. Owing to the subsidiarity considerations mentioned earlier, the Commission will not produce brochures for the general public on a large scale, but it will provide useful raw information input for multipliers. It will assist all Member States which plan to publish brochures for the general public by providing them with the necessary information and materials.

5.3 The Internet, CD-ROMs and diskettes

Extensive use will be made of modern methods of communication which enable information to be disseminated effectively and often economically.

A large amount of practical and specialised information will be stored on Internet sites, thereby making it widely available. The Quest database in particular, which contains answers to a host of practical, concrete questions frequently asked by members of the

public and also certain specialised users, will also be accessible, notably on the Europa Internet site.

Sites set up by Member States, central banks, the Commission, the European Monetary Institute or private bodies should be interlinked so as to offer users gateways to all the information on the euro available in Europe.

5.4 Answering services

Member States should be encouraged to set up systems for answering, swiftly and personally, questions about the euro asked by members of the public via special telephone or fax numbers, the Internet, the Minitel, etc. The Commission could help provide the necessary information input for services of this kind.

5.5 Conferences and seminars

Conferences and seminars are being held in growing numbers and are now focusing on technical topics of interest to specialist audiences. The Commission is contributing to these events, of which over 1 000 are already being held each year, by sending officials to give talks or through speakers belonging to the Group[€]uro. The programmes for visits to Brussels also now usually include a module on the euro.

5.6 Communicating at grass-roots level

Communicating at grass-roots level is the surest way of entering into direct contact with members of the public. Some Member States have set store by this approach and have organised travelling exhibitions or “eurobuses” which have proved extremely effective communication tools. Member States are encouraged to stimulate initiatives of this nature. In so far as its resources allow, the Commission could lend technical assistance to projects of this kind. It will also look into the question of whether euro observatories should be set up at local or national level to monitor the transition to the euro, particularly with a view to ensuring that consumers are properly informed, and whether such observatories can be integrated into existing Community networks.

5.7 Pilot projects aimed at specific population groups

One of the essential features of certain specific population groups (e.g. blind and partially sighted persons, illiterate people, the homeless or the poorest sections of society) is precisely that it is difficult to communicate with them using the traditional or standardised media. These groups too will have to be informed about the euro, and the information will consequently have to be distributed through innovative communication channels which are tailored to their situation. The communication effort towards these population groups will involve, among other things, recourse to trusted intermediaries who are close to and familiar with the circles concerned and have access to appropriate information tools or channels of communication. The Commission will launch preparatory work, in liaison with the Member States, on the special approach to be taken towards these population groups, with special reference to the messages to be put across, the places where communication activities are to be carried out and the form they should take.

All the available media will have to be used actively, with special emphasis on radio and television, which are particularly effective tools for mass communication with the general public. Preference should also be given to means of communicating with the public at grass-roots level.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Information and communication activities on the euro have now been under way for two years, taking a wide variety of forms (conferences, exhibitions, Internet sites, brochures, adoption of the euro symbol, etc.) and involving either the Commission, with the support of the European Parliament, or the Member States or information multipliers. These activities have already borne fruit:

- the certainty of the changeover to the euro on 1 January 1999 and the irreversibility of the process leading to monetary union are now acknowledged;
- the key players who will lead the way in using the euro, namely financial institutions, large firms and administrations, have begun the necessary preparations in order to be ready to use the euro from 1 January 1999.

Assessment of the results of these activities provides useful pointers for determining the approach to be taken by the communication strategy for the euro in the years ahead: importance of subsidiarity, of information multipliers and of practical information at grass-roots level.

The period between 2 May 1998 and 1 January 1999 and, thereafter, the period up to 2001 should be used to shift the information effort into a higher gear at a time when the public will be showing a great deal of interest in the euro and will be highly receptive as a result of the institutional environment. A second wave of major coverage should be planned for 2001.

The general public, small and medium-sized enterprises, local and regional authorities and elected representatives, national civil servants and non-member countries are the main targets towards which the information efforts undertaken by the Commission, the Member States and information multipliers should now be directed.

Past experience has shown how difficult it is to devise tools or messages on the euro which are suited to the cultural features and background of different audiences in all Member States. A few broad common principles can nevertheless be identified:

- the importance of disseminating practical, concrete information. This could involve the provision of training and advice for SMEs by the Euro Info Centres;
- the importance of contributing to a climate enabling the general public to understand and accept the euro;
- the importance of gauging public opinion and assessing the impact of action taken.

As far as methods are concerned, communication on the euro should be guided by the subsidiarity principle and managed through partnership:

- partnership with the Member States under tripartite agreements between the Member State concerned, the Commission and the European Parliament and part-financing agreements, which make it possible to develop communication plans comprising messages and instruments that are tailored to national cultures and structures;
- partnership with information multipliers which distribute targeted information.

The Commission's action will, for its part, be organised along the following lines:

- providing information, basic material and technical support for multipliers and for specialised audiences;
- taking part in the framing and implementation of national communication plans for the euro through partnership based on the conclusion of part-financing agreements with the Member States;
- ensuring that information activities on the euro are consistent across the Community and facilitating contacts and exchanges of information between the Member States;
- encouraging and taking part in cross-border initiatives and information and communication activities on the euro intended for non-member countries.

If all European citizens are to find, in their daily lives, information which is in tune with their concerns, it is essential that communication activities should give pride of place to decentralised work at grass-roots level.

Lastly, all the available media should be used actively, with special emphasis on radio and television and the Internet, which are particularly effective tools for large-scale communication with the general public.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

TITLE OF OPERATION

Information campaign - The euro, one currency for Europe : adaptation of the information strategy

BUDGET HEADING INVOLVED

B3-306: Prince (Information programme for European citizens) - Information activities in connection with specific policies.

LEGAL BASIS

Autonomous Commission decision.

DESCRIPTION OF OPERATION

General objectives

The overall objectives of the information strategy for the euro are to prepare all citizens for the changeover to the single currency and to stimulate and help economic and financial operators from the public and private sectors to prepare and implement the necessary changeover arrangements.

Period covered

The priority information campaign on the euro covers the period 1996-2001. This communication covers the period 1999-2001 inclusive.

CLASSIFICATION OF EXPENDITURE

NCE (non-compulsory expenditure)

DA (differentiated appropriations)

TYPE OF EXPENDITURE

Grants for part-financing in partnership with Member States and civil society, and service contracts.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Method of calculating total cost of operation

Based on the experience of the first few years, the main expenditure items are the following:

- Partnership with Member States,
- Information in third countries,
- Partnership with civil society,
- Meetings, debates, conferences,
- Information tools,
- Studies, surveys,
- Miscellaneous.

The total cost of the operation for the period 1999 to 2001 is ECU 100 million.

Prince (ECU million)

Past and present				Future			
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	Total
TOTAL	18.7	30.8	30	38	32	30	100

Partnerships with Member States take high priority. Until 1997 inclusive, the rule was 50% part-financing from the European Union budget. In accordance with the subsidiarity principle, Member States will now have to become gradually more involved in the funding of the campaigns, in particular where the aim is to reach the general public. This should prompt Member States to continue stepping up the resources they dedicate to communication on the euro.

The Community budget should, by maintaining the level of funding reached in 1998 (ECU 21 million), retain the degree of influence necessary to ensure that the role, priorities and information instruments of the European institutions are taken into account. This situation will, in practice, lead to a reduction in the relative share of its involvement in relation to the total funds earmarked for communication on the euro by the Member States.

Information activities in non first-wave Member States and third countries will be very limited in 1998, owing to the lack of funds. It will have to increase from 1999 onwards, taking into account the fact that, for third countries, the requested funding concerns only those countries not already covered by a Community programme with an information component.

Partnership with civil society remains essential for cross-border initiatives involving bodies such as European trade associations, as well as the debates, meetings and conferences which will accompany EMU.

The production of information tools is practically halted in 1998 owing to lack of funds. In 1999 and beyond, the European institutions will have to resume the necessary adaptation of the basic information material. The same applies to surveys, with even more precise follow-up required in 2001.

Apart from the partnerships with Member States, information activities directly supported by the Commission are, for the most part, cross-border initiatives

FRAUD PREVENTION MEASURES

All contracts will be awarded following tendering procedures, according to the Financial Regulation in force.

Partnerships with the Member States are based on a Memorandum of Understanding establishing the framework in which the agreements for part-financing of the communication plans are signed.

Grants to civil society will follow the applicable Commission rules. The current revision of these rules will be taken into account.

ELEMENTS OF COST-EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS

Specific objectives

To contribute to a successful transition to the single currency by ensuring the availability of the necessary information at the appropriate time and in the appropriate places.

From 1 January 1999, it will be necessary to give priority to the general public's practical preparation for the changeover, and to provide citizens with information and answers tailored to their activities and needs.

The action directed towards the economic and financial sectors will also have to be supplemented, making sure that it reaches and meets the needs of SMEs.

To provide public administrations and institutions that are in contact with the public at all levels - they have an essential prescriptive role to play in this area - with the tools and information necessary for them to carry out their task of explanation.

The European single currency will have to be explained and understood in the rest of the world.

Target groups

- The general public (and all its component groups, in particular consumers, savers, pensioners, those receiving social benefits, women, young people, etc.). Specialised information will also have to be provided which is tailored to the needs of more specific target groups: the elderly, blind and partially sighted people, the illiterate, the very poor, etc;

- SMEs - in particular micro-enterprises, one-person businesses, tradesmen and shopkeepers;
- regional and local authorities, elected representatives and public servants;
- third countries, including governmental and non-governmental partners of the European Union, as well as European citizens living outside the EU.

Grounds for the operation

In an area as sensitive and essential as monetary union, the reduction of uncertainties, the awareness of the key players, the acceptance and support of the public at all stages of the process are all factors on which the success of the changeover to the single currency will largely depend.

Monitoring and evaluation of the operation

Monitoring and evaluation of the operation is based on permanent instruments and external evaluations.

The Eurobarometer survey, which is conducted regularly, provides indicators on public opinion and its evolution concerning the single currency. It should be supplemented by more specific surveys, depending on the groups targeted.

Permanent monitoring and evaluation machinery has been put in place in all the Member States with which agreements are implemented. This machinery involves setting up a monitoring group, the production of monthly reports and field evaluation missions.

Under the partnership with civil society, each grant is the subject of a financial and activity report by the beneficiary, which is subsequently evaluated.

ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURE

Effect on the number of posts

No additional needs

Overall financial impact on human resources

No additional needs

Increase in other administrative expenditure as a result of the operation

No additional needs