



COST

COoperation in Science and Technology

" COST: Past, Present, Future"

Stefan Cairen
Vice-President COST Committee "Senior Officials"

COST



1971

**Conference of the Ministers of Research of
19 European countries convened in
Brussels in November 1971**

The Brussels Ministerial Conference opened the possibility of cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical research for :

- the 6 countries of the European Community**
- 13 countries not belonging at that time to the European Community**

Conclusion of an intense preparatory work carried out in the late 60's

European response to the international challenging situation (Jean Jacques Servan Schreiber "Le defi Americain")

Strategy adopted by the 6 countries :

- **to recuperate the delays of Europe in many areas of scientific and technical research**
- **to open the COST cooperation to other 13 European countries**

COST

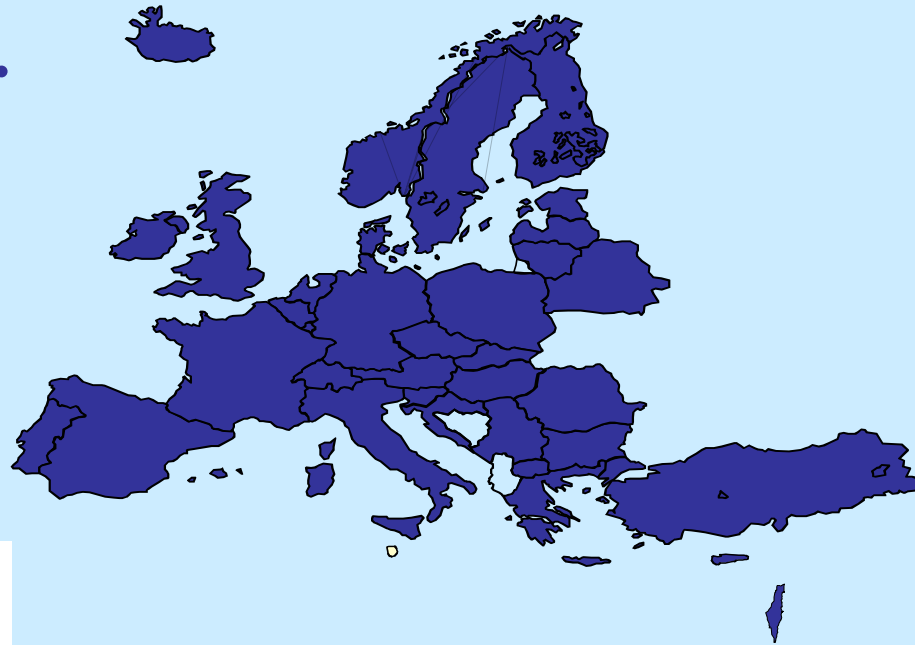


- In 1971 COST research initiatives (Actions) are the only form of cooperation in Europe
- In 1974 the European Science Foundation, in 1983 the First Framework Programme and in 1985 EUREKA
- The existence of these initiatives notwithstanding, the interest of the European scientific community in COST constantly increased

COST



**From 19 countries in
1971...**



...to 35 countries in 2004

From 7 scientific domains in 1971to 12 scientific domains in 2004

Agriculture, Food Sciences and Biotechnology

Chemistry

Environment

Forests and Forestry Products

Materials

Medicine and Health

Meteorology

Physics

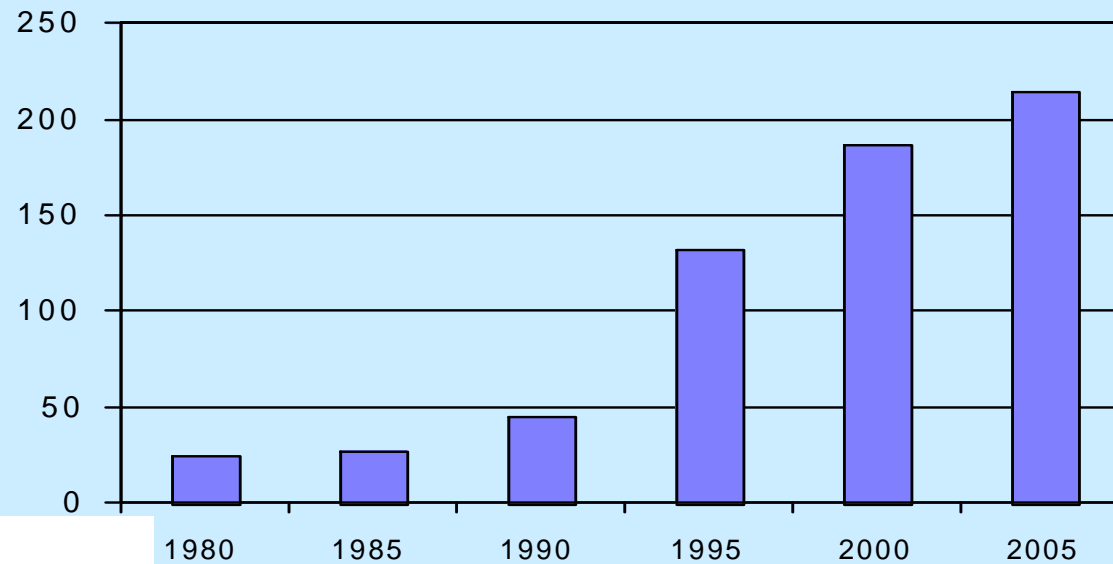
Social Sciences and Humanities

Telecommunications Information Science and Technology

Transport

Urban Civil Engineering

From 7 Actions in 1971...



**...to > 200 running Actions in
2004**

COST CHARACTERISTICS

- **Bottom- up approach**
- **“A la carte” participation**
- **Equality of access**
- **Concerted Actions**
- **Multiplier effect**
- **Flexibility and agile management**

COST CHARACTERISTICS



- a fast, efficient, effective, flexible framework
- to get brilliant scientists together
- under light strategic guidance
- to let them work out their ideas

COST STRUCTURE



- **The Committee of Senior Officials**
- **The Technical Committees**
- **The Management Committees**
- **The Secretariat**

QUALITY CONTROL



- The assessment of proposals for new Actions
- The monitoring of the Actions in progress
- The evaluation of completed Actions

RESULTS



- **Scientific importance**
- **Contribution to European competitiveness**
- **Importance for the Society**
- **Contribution to the Framework Programmes**

THE FUTURE OF COST



In the recent official communication from the European Commission

- ***“Science and Technology, the key to Europe’s future: Guidelines for future EU policy to support research “***
- six major objectives were identified
- To most of these objectives COST can give a substantial contribution

THE FUTURE OF COST



Council of the EU

in September 2004

“ stressed the importance of reinforcing the ties between the Framework Programme and European intergovernmental organizations such as COST”

In November 2004

“ underlined that European technology initiatives should achieve synergies with existing schemes such as COST taking into account its important contribution to R&D”.

CONCLUSIONS



“If COST did not exist it would be necessary to invent it”

**The European scientific community needs COST
which deserves:**

- a full appreciation of its potential**
- an increasing support to its activities**
- the full recognition of its role in the ERA**