



Recommendation 619 (1971)¹

Computer industry in Europe - Hardware manufacturing

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having considered the report on the computer industry in Europe ([Doc. 2893](#)) presented by its Committee on Science and Technology ;
2. Expressing its satisfaction at the readiness of computer firms in Europe to participate in the "hearings" with the Committee on Science and Technology, which is an important procedural innovation at European parliamentary level ;
3. Aware of the economic and political significance for Europe of the new techniques of data processing, and therefore of the central importance of investment policy in this field ;
4. Noting with some concern the present domination of the computer industry in Europe by American technology and American industry, but appreciating the contribution which this has made to the growth of Europe's technological capacity ;
5. Noting that the emergence of a genuine European alternative has been impeded by the failure to develop a legal and administrative framework suited to multinational companies ;
6. Insisting that the utmost emphasis should be placed on the efficiency with which the new technology and data processing systems are utilised, and that the development of a strong European-controlled segment of the industry should not prejudice these wider objectives ;
7. Considering it essential, nonetheless, that Western Europe should seek to regain and maintain a position of real technological independence and leadership in a field pioneered by European science and eminently suited to European skills ;
8. Convinced that a coherent and uniform European computer policy, worked out in common by European governments and through co-operation agreements between European-owned computer firms, would contribute significantly to Europe's technological capacity ;
9. Reserving the right to submit, in due course, further recommendations to governments on other aspects of the computer industry,
10. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :
 - a. invite all governments of member States :

to initiate as a matter of urgency efforts to come to an agreement on common European standards and on common European public procurement and development contract policies in the computer field ;

to instruct their representatives at the Council of OECD to give effective support to the important work of that Organisation in its investigation of the basic requirements of effective European computer utilisation ;

1. Assembly debate on 20 January 1971 (20th Sitting) (see [Doc. 2893](#), report of the Committee on Science and Technology). Text adopted by the Assembly on 20 January 1971 (20th Sitting).



to instruct their delegations to GATT to negotiate with the USA a true reciprocity of trading arrangements in the computer field ;

- b. invite the governments of member States concerned to instruct their representatives in the enlarged technological working party established on the proposal of the European Communities (the "Aigrain Group") :

to work out regulations which can break through the constraints on the development of data processing in Western Europe, particularly in the field of telecommunications, education and software standards ;

to determine the necessary legal frame-work within which the European-controlled computer manufacturers could be encouraged to merge their research, development and production, with a view to developing units large enough to compete and develop in the world market ;

to lay down the policy for the placing of European research and development contracts for the development of specific computer applications of common interest, offering appropriate incentives for the formation of larger European production units ;

to examine the contribution which could be made to European computer development by the establishment of a European computer agency along the lines of a similar institute set up in Japan, and to charge such an agency with the implementation of a European computer policy.