



Recommendation 678 (1972)¹

Results of the 3rd Parliamentary and Scientific Conference (Lausanne, 11-14 April 1972)

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having noted the conclusions of the Third Parliamentary and Scientific Conference :

PART I on the problems of society in the scientific and technological age

2. Having in particular considered the views expressed by the conference in its General Declaration and in its [Recommendation No. 1](#) concerning the relationship between scientific progress, economic growth and the environment, the relationship between science and government, the role of parliament in a scientific and technological society, and the place of the individual in society ;
3. Believing that policies for science and technology should be applied to goals defined with reference to the new boundary conditions laid down for technological application by social and physical environmental considerations ;
4. Believing that the formulation of society's aims and the determination of priorities between various objectives must be a political decision, but recognising that there will always be a place for pure scientific research not subordinate to social objectives ;
5. Considering that existing vertical structures of government and of science are ill-adapted to solving problems of horizontal structure with which society is faced ;
6. Convinced that a vigorous system of adult education is an essential basis for informed discussion of political and scientific matters and thus for the working of parliamentary democracy ;
7. Considering also that the language and the scientific expressions used by scientists and experts are very often hardly understandable even to an interested and generally well-informed public and the political community ;
8. Believing therefore that it is of the utmost importance that the scientific community accept the necessity of a popularisation of scientific information ;
9. Believing that it is of fundamental importance that man should establish a philosophy of life which will be satisfying to him in this technological age,
10. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite governments of member States :
 - a. to establish administrative institutions capable of providing and co-ordinating the material indispensable for the solution of society's wide-ranging problems of horizontal structure ;
 - b. to examine what are the most important problems facing society and their interrelationship, aiming particularly at developing horizontal structures for programming and executing research and development ;

1. Assembly debate on 19 October 1972 (11th and 12th Sittings) (see [Doc. 3181](#), report of the Committee on Science and Technology). Text adopted by the Assembly on 19 October 1972 (12th Sitting).



Recommendation 678 (1972)

- c. to ensure that the creation of new industrial products or processes is compatible with the need to protect the social and physical environment ;
- d. to encourage the development of adult education in scientific fields by giving a high priority to adult scientific education within the national education systems ;
- e. to promote studies in new management techniques leading to better job satisfaction ;

PART 2 on the role of parliaments

- 11. Having further noted the views expressed by the conference with regard to the parliamentary function in a scientific and technological age ;
- 12. Recalling its [Recommendation 400](#), of 1964, following the Second Parliamentary and Scientific Conference ;
- 13. Convinced that contacts between members of parliament and scientists must be encouraged, in order that each may achieve a fuller understanding of the other's problems, and that members of parliament may be properly informed with regard to the decisions on scientific and technological policy they are called on to take ;
- 14. Believing that parliaments must make use of scientific methods and call on scientific and technological skills in order to carry out their function of controlling governmental activity, both in the field of scientific and technological policy and generally,
- 15. Welcomes the conference's proposal that parliaments and scientists in Europe further develop the system of joint committees, as recommended by previous Parliamentary and Scientific Conferences and in Assembly [Recommendation 400](#), for their mutual information and to contribute to the work of defining national objectives ;
- 16. Expresses its appreciation of the conference's support for the work of the European Joint Committee on Scientific Co-operation, set up by its Order No. 323 ;
- 17. Welcomes in principle the proposal that an international scientific and technological association of parliamentarians be set up to provide a mechanism for regular personal contacts among interested members of parliament and to promote the exchange of science policy information, and declares its preparedness to support at the European level, preferably within the framework of the Council of Europe, any initiative to set up such an association ;
- 18. Expresses the hope that parliaments of member States will study the proposal before the United States Congress to create an Office of Technology Assessment, and instructs its Committee on Science and Technology to follow the progress of this proposal ;
- 19. Instructs its Committee on Science and Technology to report separately on proposals made by the conference relating to computer-based aids to parliamentary work ;
- 20. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite governments of member States to consider the applicability in their own circumstances of the conference's proposal that visible national science budgets, comprising the totality of proposed public sector expenditures on research and development and other scientific activities, should be made available to parliaments at as early a time in the budgetary process as possible, and in any event prior to the commitment of public funds to the component expenditure ;

PART 3 on European co-operation in scientific research

- 21. Having further noted the conclusions of the conference relating to European co-operation in fundamental and applied scientific research ;
- 22. Recalling its [Recommendation 665](#) on European co-operation in specific scientific fields ;
- 23. Convinced that it is part of the mission of the Council of Europe to encourage the development of European scientific co-operation,
- 24. Reserves its comments on the principles the conference suggested should govern European scientific co-operation through specific institutions or projects until it gives the opinion on the University of Sussex's "Preliminary Examination of Intergovernmental Co-operation in Science and Technology affecting Western Europe" (PERSEUS Project) requested by the Committee of Ministers ;

25. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers :
- 25.1. pay favourable attention to the conference's proposal that European governments arrange for the free movement of scientific instruments and their parts, in making its decision on [Recommendation 664](#) on the movement of scientific research equipment in Europe, which is now before it ;
 - 25.2. invite governments of member States to make appropriate budgetary provision to facilitate contacts between scientists and to promote the integration at the European level of co-operative projects of a type suitable to such treatment, and to undertake a study of the role which might be played by a European Science Foundation set up to encourage scientific co-operation and to provide machinery for the pooling of human resources, and on how such a foundation might be organised and financed ;

PART 4 on European technological development

26. Having further noted the principles the conference suggests should guide national and European technology policies ;
27. Considering that the ability of European industry to survive in the world market will depend on its achievements in the field of advanced technology ;
28. Convinced that the possibilities for autonomous and effective action in this field by European States acting separately will be increasingly limited ;
29. Believing that European co-operation has been hindered by an insufficient integration of technological policies and programmes, and a failure to appreciate the dynamic nature of the new political power relationships between industry and the public authorities,
30. Recommends that the Committee of Ministers invite the governments of member States :
- a. at the national level :
 1. to identify the principal public and private research and development centres and organisations capable of contributing to product and process innovation, in order to establish in concert a group of priority objectives to which public funds may be allocated ;
 2. to assess the contribution of State enterprises to process and product innovation, and their role in the State's general economic policy ;
 3. to analyse the role of the multinational corporations which regulate a significant proportion of technological innovation in Europe, and to investigate whether these activities are in conformity with the social and environmental interests of society ;
 4. to encourage universities to undertake interdisciplinary research in the social and political sciences, and in particular into the interrelation between technological, economic, social and political development, as well as studies of decision-making processes and of structures for regulating the development and use of new technologies ;
 - b. at the European level :
 1. to institute co-operation in international institutions in the field of economic and technological long-range forecasting and planning ;
 2. to grant the relevant European institutions the necessary powers to formulate advanced technology policies, especially as regards research and development, the readjustment of industrial structures and the concerting of public contracts ;
 3. to encourage public authorities and organisations, whether international, national or regional, to concert their initiatives in advanced technology, and ensure that their purchasing policies tend to eliminate administrative obstacles to the establishment of a unified market for the products of advanced technology, even in fields not covered by a common research and development programme.