II

(Preparatory Acts)

COMMISSION

Proposal for a Council Decision establishing a third Community action programme to assist disabled people — Helios II (1992 to 1996)

(91/C 293/02)

COM(91) 350 final

(Submitted by the Commission on 8 October 1991)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Articles 128 and 235 thereof,

Having regard to Council Decision 63/266/EEC of 2 April 1963 laying down general principles for implementing a common vocational training policy (1), and in particular the 10th principle thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee,

Whereas the completion of the single market, with its social dimension and the changes resulting therefrom, a rapidly developing technical environment and the context of more complex labour markets make it necessary to adopt suitable measures to assist disabled people;

Whereas the conclusions of the Council and of the Ministers of Education meeting within the Council of 14 May 1987 concerning a programme of European collaboration on the integration of handicapped children into ordinary schools (2) and the resolution of the Council and of the Ministers of Education meeting within the Council of 31 May 1990 (3) affirm the need to remove material barriers, to use flexible education methods to meet individual needs and to facilitate the transitions to education, to working life and to adult life, to establish as active a policy of cooperation as possible with specialized institutions, to make use of the various possibilities offered by new technologies with regard to education and to foster links between the family, the community, social and health services and the world of work;

Whereas the Handynet system, through the availability of the technical aids module, assists in improving conditions for the integration of the disabled and in making the institutions, professions and associations involved in the process of integrating the disabled aware of applied research in the field of technical assistance; whereas the Handynet system thus plays a fundamental role with regard to the aims of this programme;

Whereas the present programme is designed to complement action taken at national, regional and local levels, in particular by ensuring an exchange of experience and information relating to these actions;

Whereas, as provided for under item 26 of Title I of the Community Charter of Fundamental Social Rights for Workers (4), all disabled persons, whatever the origin and nature of their disablement, must be entitled to additional concrete measures aimed at improving their social and professional integration; whereas these

(1) OJ No 63, 20. 4. 1963, p. 1338/63.

(2) OJ No C 211, 8. 8. 1987, p. 1.

(3) OJ No C 162, 3. 7. 1990, p. 2.

(4) COM(89) 471 final.

measures must concern, in particular, according to the capacities of the beneficiaries, vocational training, ergonomics, accessibility, mobility, means of transport and housing;

Whereas the communication from the Commission concerning its action programme (1) relating to the implementation of the Community Charter of Basic Social Rights for Workers emphasizes that the implementation in the Member States of measures to develop and further a coherent overall policy to promote occupational and social integration and an independent way of life for the disabled, both at national and Community level, is an important element of the social dimension of the single market, to be completed in 1992; whereas a European integration policy for the disabled should be pursued and furthered in order to provide greater equality of opportunity for disabled people, who form one of the most disadvantaged sections of the population;

Whereas, because this Decision is concerned on the one hand with principles for implementing a vocational training policy and one promoting employment and on the other with measures, including those to promote functional rehabilitation, integration into schools, social integration and an independent way of life for the disabled, which need to be adopted in order to attain one of the objectives of the Community, and the Treaty has not provided the necessary specific powers, it is necessary to invoke both Article 128 and Article 235 of the Treaty,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

A Community action programme to promote educational, occupational, economic and social integration and an independent way of life for disabled people (Helios II programme), hereinafter called 'Helios II', is hereby established for the period 1 January 1992 to 31 December 1996.

Article 2

For the purposes of Helios II, 'disabled people' means people with serious impairments, disabilities or handicaps resulting from physical (including sensory) or mental (including psychical) impairments and restricting or making impossible the performance of an activity or function considered normal for a human being.

(1) COM(89) 568 final, p. 53.

Article 3

The objectives of Helios II shall be as follows in respect of functional rehabilitation, integration into education, vocational training, occupational rehabilitation, economic and social integration and an independent way of life for disabled people:

(a) to promote the development of a comprehensive Community integration policy based on the best innovative and effective experience and practice in the Member States;

(b) to identify those innovation approaches and measures to be promoted in order to improve the convergence and coordination of actions carried out under point (a);

(c) to continue to develop exchange and information activities which can make a useful contribution as referred to in (a) and to ensure that they are given as wide a circulation as possible;

(d) to strengthen cooperation with the Europe-wide non-governmental organizations.

Article 4

1. The general measures designed to attain the objectives referred to in Article 3 shall be as follows:

(a) to coordinate, undertake and encourage activities based on precise annual topics, with the intention of promoting innovation, facilitating exchanges of experience and encouraging the dissemination of successful experiences and the transfer of effective practices. These activities shall closely involve disabled people, their families, representative organizations, experts, researchers, professionals working in the field, voluntary helpers and the two sides of industry;

(b) to meet the information needs of disabled people by pursuing, within the context of the computerized information and documentation system Handynet, on the basis of national data, the collection, adaptation at European level, updating, exchange and dissemination of information gathered in the Member States by the national collection and information centres.

The Handynet system is also intended to stimulate research into and production of technical aids through establishing an inventory of applied research undertaken in this area;

(c) to promote the participation of disabled people in existing Community programmes, in particular in the areas of training and preparation for working life, new technologies, vocational training and employment, of equal treatment of women, the learning of languages, and mobility of and exchanges by young people within the Community;

(d) to ensure close coordination with activities undertaken by inter-governmental organizations, and cooperation with other activities at international level in the areas referred to in Article 3.

2. The specific measures designed to attain the objectives set out in Article 3 are listed in the Annex.

Article 5

The Commission shall ensure the implementation of Helios II.

Article 6

1. The Commission shall be assisted by a committee of an advisory nature, hereinafter called the 'committee', composed of two government representatives from each Member State and chaired by the representative of the Commission.

2. The opinion of the committee shall be requested:

— for the constitution and for the definition of the selection criteria of the innovative local integration and exchange activities (AILE),

— for the establishment of the list of annual themes to be dealt with in the course of conferences, seminars and study visits organized within the framework of these networks,

— on any measure of a general or specific nature to be undertaken within the framework of the application of Article 4.

3. The representative of the Commission shall submit to the committee a draft of the measures to be taken. The committee shall deliver its opinion on the draft, within a time limit which the chairman may lay down according to the urgency of the matter, if necessary by taking a vote.

The opinion shall be recorded in the minutes; in addition, each Member State shall have the right to ask to have its position recorded in the minutes.

The Commission shall take the utmost account of the opinion delivered by the committee. It shall inform the committee of the manner in which its opinion has been taken into account.

Article 7

1. Before 31 December 1994 the Commission shall submit an interim summary report to the European Parliament, the Council and the Economic and Social Committee on the implementation of Helios II.

2. Before 1 July 1997 the Commission shall submit a full report to the European Parliament, the Council and the Economic and Social Committee on the implementation and results of Helios II.

ANNEX

SPECIFIC MEASURES TO ATTAIN THE OBJECTIVES REFERRED TO IN ARTICLE 3 OF THE DECISION

1. GENERAL REMARKS

These specific measures will be undertaken by the Commission in consultation with the Member States, associations of disabled people and of their families, the two sides of industry and professional and voluntary bodies involved in the integration of disabled people.

The conditions and procedures for participation by network partners, the Handynet system and European non-governmental organizations are set out below.

Special attention will be given to the role of new technologies in the integration of disabled people. The pedagogical and practical potential of new technologies can be a useful tool in the development of teaching aids, the adaptation of workplaces, means of communication and mobility and as a way of ending the isolation of disabled people.

2. COMMUNITY NETWORKS FOR INNOVATIVE LOCAL INTEGRATION AND EXCHANGE ACITIVITIES (AILE) (1)

2.1. General conditions and procedures for participation by the AILE

2.1.1. The members of each network must in each Member State represent innovative institutions of high standing and with a high technical level, recognized in the integration sector and giving evidence of interest and experience in this field.

The AILE will be designated as members of a network by the Commission on the basis of proposals from the Member States and may be replaced.

Those AILE which are candidates for membership of a network must undertake to attain clearly defined objectives linked to specific and innovative topics.

Each AILE will draw up an annual programme of activities with a Community dimension, together with a provisional timetable. Each AILE will undertake to cooperate at Community level and to supply information obtained to the other network partners and to partners in the external network.

A network's activity programme will consist of study visits, training courses, seminars, conferences and other European-scale cooperative activities and will be established on the basis of annual topics.

Positive actions, studies and cooperation with European non-governmental organizations (Euras) and Member States will be carried out in cooperation with the activities of each Community network.

Working parties grouping together AILE, and given responsibility for implementing various topics relating to the integration process, may be set up. An assessment group will be set up.

The AILE will be called upon to cooperate closely with the relevant representatives of local, regional or national authorities, European non-governmental organizations and organizations and associations representing disabled people, their families and professional and voluntary helpers.

2.1.2. Rate of Community financial contribution: up to 50 % for conferences (in cooperation with national authorities) and up to 100 % for seminars, working party activities, study visits, training courses and publication of a magazine.

2.2. Specific activities

2.2.1. *Community network for innovative local integration and exchange activities in the field of functional rehabilitation (AILE I)*

Creation of a network of innovative local integration and exchange activities consisting of medical rehabilitation centres (AILE I) set up on the basis of clearly defined criteria. The task of this

(1) The acronym AILE (with the phonetic pronounciation 'L') remains unchanged in all Community languages and is both singular and plural.

network will be to facilitate exchanges of information and experience with regard to the principles and criteria for complete and coherent functional rehabilitation (early timing, completeness, continuity and multi-disciplinary nature of individual operations).

The AILE will be represented at network meetings by full-time professionals in the field of rehabilitation.

2.2.2. *Community network of innovative local integration and exchange activities in the field of education (AILE II).*

Creation of a network of innovative local integration and exchange activities in the field of education (AILE II) based on specific criteria which are to be drawn up. The task of this network will be to facilitate exchanges of information and experience in nursery, primary, secondary, university and para-university education and in continuing training.

This network will pursue, on the basis of annual programmes, the implementation of the European cooperation programme for the integration of handicapped children into ordinary schools (87/C 22/01) and of the resolution (90/C 162/02) concerning the implementation of the integration of children and young people with disabilities into ordinary systems of education.

2.2.3. *Community network of innovative local integration and exchange activities in the field of vocational training and employment (AILE III).*

Amalgamation of the network of vocational training and rehabilitation centres and of the network of local model activities in the field of economic integration (LMA II) from the first Helios programme in a new network comprising innovative local integration and exchange activities in the field of vocational training and employment (AILE III), on the basis of clearly defined criteria. The task of this network will be to facilitate exchanges of information and experience with regard to the principles and criteria governing vocational training and employment, particularly with regard to topics such as guidance and assessment, training innovations, employment, sheltered employment (in particular sheltered workshops), the transition to employment in an ordinary environment, the adaptation of workplaces and evaluation of employment capability.

This network will continue to implement recommendation 86/379/EEC and conclusion 89/C 173/01 on the employment of disabled people in the Community and will contribute to the application of the Community Charter of Fundamental Social Rights of Workers.

The Commission will promote a 'European code of good practice' on integration into the labour market, drawn up in cooperation with the Member States.

2.2.4. *Community network of innovative local integration and exchange activities in the social field (AILE IV)*

Transformation of the network of Local Model Activities in the field of social integration (LMA III) from the first Helios programme into the network of innovative local integration and exchange activities in the social field (AILE IV), on the basis of clearly defined criteria. The task of this network will be to facilitate exchanges of information and experience and to encourage as independent a way of life as possible and a full social life, with particular regard to the rights of disabled people, their participation in normal life, access to accommodation, public buildings and transport and the removal of architectural and psychological obstacles and those hindering communication.

Exchanges of experience in the following fields: accessibility of public buildings (including cultural and leisure facilities), adaptation of private accommodation (including equipment and home help to permit an independent way of life in one's own accommodation) and provision of facilities to assist the mobility and transport of disabled people.

3. COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION SYSTEM (HANDYNET)

3.1. **General conditions and procedures for participation by national collection and coordination centres and by national information and advice centres.**

National collection and coordination centres will have as their task the transmission to a central point of data collected at national level concerning the various fields of integration and, depending on the circumstances, commercial or non-commercial organizations having a link with technical aids and concerning the regulations in force in respective Member States.

The task of the national information and advice centres will be to inform and advise both disabled people and their professional helpers about the social and economic integration process on the basis of data made available at Community level.

3.2. **Specific activities**

Continued development of the technical aids module, collection of information relating to products and to commercial and non-commercial organizations associated with these products and an inventory of regulations concerning these products.

Extension of the Handynet system through the creation of new modules dealing with employment and training, sport, creativity, tourism and other leisure activities, a research bibliography, documentation, a multilingual thesaurus statistics.

Carrying out positive and forward-looking activities to encourage the adaptation of new technologies to the needs of disabled people, and to encourage research.

Rate of Community financial contribution: up to 100 % (to cover the European dimension of the system).

4. COOPERATION WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

4.1. **General conditions and procedures for cooperation with the Commission**

4.1.1. The Commission will strengthen its cooperation with the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), primarily with those which are representative at European level.

4.1.2. The European NGOs (Euras) (1) will participate at various levels on the basis of respect for the criteria of representativeness within the Community, as follows:

— at the first level, the Euras will be represented in the 12 Member States, have some competence in dealing with each type of disability or be specialized in dealing with the main problems of integrating disabled people,

— at the second level, the Euras will represent a specific disability or integration issue in more than one Member State. They will be invited to join forces and be represented at liaison group level by an NGO representing their type of disability or their integration issue.

(1) The acronym Euras remains the same in all Community languages and is both singular and plural.

The Commission will invite the Euras taking part in the programme within the liaison and/or dialogue groups to establish a national committee in each Member State, grouping together the various national associations representing a type of disability or an integration issue.

4.2. **Specific activities**

To draw up, each year, a programme of activities eligible for financial support from the Commission and to give a balanced opinion on the priority rating of these activities.

To organize innovative rehabilitation activities (AIR) (1) in all fields concerned with the integration of disabled people, such as prevention and early assistance, functional rehabilitation, integration into schools and training, vocational rehabilitation, vocational training and employment, new technologies, independent living, access to cultural activities, creativity, sports, leisure and tourism, the families of disabled people, the elderly disabled and social, economic and legal protection. These innovative Rehabilitation Activities (AIR) will be carried out by means of conferences, seminars, study visits, training courses and other European-level cooperative activities on the basis of annual topics.

To provide information for national associations in the Member States and other European NGOs in their respective sector of activity on actions undertaken at Community level.

To advise the Commission, at its request, on the technical aspects associated with the type of disability or the specific integration issue being dealt with.

To submit an annual report on activities carried out which have a European dimension.

The Commission will contribute to the expenses arising from the provision of coordination and expertise for first-level European non-governmental organizations (Euras).

Rate of Community financial contribution: up to 50 % for meetings of the national committees of the Euras, conferences, seminars, study visits, training courses and other European-level cooperative activities, and up to 100 % for expenses arising from the provision of coordination and expertise for first-level non-governmental organizations (Euras).

5. INFORMATION AND AWARENESS-RAISING CAMPAIGNS AIMED AT PUBLIC OPINION

Wide circulation of information to publicise activities and campaigns to make public opinion and the media aware of the problems of integrating disabled people.

The Commission will contribute to raising the awareness of public opinion through the organization of competitions, the presentation of annual prizes for pilot projects in the various fields relating to the integration of disabled people, and through media activities.

(1) The acronym AIR (with the phonetic pronounciation 'R') remains unchanged in all Community languages and is both singular and plural.

The pilot projects rewarded with a prize will be presented at a conference/exhibition.

The Commission will lend its support to the annual organization at national level of information meetings for all participants in Helios II.

Rate of Community financial contribution: up to 100 %.

6. SPECIAL TRAINING MEASURES

The Commission will organize training schemes in the Community for national and Community civil servants and for representatives of the networks and of organizations representing disabled people.

7. SPECIAL THEMES

In implementing the specific measures detailed above, the participants in Helios II will devote special attention to:

— prevention and early assistance, with a view to preventing the appearance or development of an impairment, incapacity or disability,

— difficulties encountered by the families of disabled people, disabled women and elderly disabled people,

— the economic and social integration of disabled women,

— training for professionals and volunteers involved at the various stages of the integration process,

— persons with special responsibilities in respect of disabled children, adolescents and adults.

8. PROGRAMMES, ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES CONCERNED DIRECTLY WITH DISABLED PEOPLE

Special steps will be taken to create a synergetic effect in the field of vocational rehabilitation and employment with the Horizon initiative and, in respect of new technologies, with the Tide initiative.

9. STUDIES AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Studies, consultancy services and technical assistance required for the drawing up of proposals or for providing technical support in the fields referred to in Article 3.

Rate of Community financial contribution: up to 100 %.

10. ADDITIONAL SPECIFIC ACTION WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE ACTIVITIES REFERRED TO IN ITEMS 2 TO 5

Cooperation with outside experts responsible for assisting the Commission in coordinating, guiding and evaluating the activities referred to in items 2 to 5.

Rate of Community financial contribution: up to 100 %.