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DIRECTORATE GENERAL – Information Society

Information Society Technologies Advisory Group



Brussels, 20 November 2000

ISTAG-2000/5-1

DRAFT “OPERATIONAL CONCLUSIONS” OF THE MEETING OF THE INFORMATION SOCIETY TECHNOLOGIES ADVISORY GROUP (ISTAG)

Held in Nice, November 9th, 2000

1. Opening of the meeting – Mr. A. Airaghi

Mr. Airaghi opened the meeting noting that it was the last ISTAG-meeting in 2000 and that it would therefore be important to agree on the activities between now and the next ISTAG-meeting on the 18th and 19th of January, especially keeping in mind the tight time-schedule for the WG5 activities and the importance of making timely input for FP6.

Mr. Airaghi explained that the ISTC had agreed with the content of the joint one-page document “eEurope, the IST programme and FP6”. However, in consideration of the separate roles of ISTC and ISTAG, they had decided to inform the Council of their similar conclusion independently. The one-page document “eEurope, the IST programme and FP6” will therefore be sent to the Council as the ISTAG-view.

Mr. Airaghi also referred to the informal ISTAG/ISTC-meeting on the WG5 scenario building exercise, which had taken place on the 7th of November. The full room and the lively debate demonstrating a strong interest in this activity. It was agreed that the ISTC would be kept fully informed on the scenarios as they evolve.

2. IST Programme update – Mr. G. Metakides

At the moment the IST-programme has roughly executed half of the total budget. The overall acceptance rate of proposals is 1 in 4 (proposals) and 1 in 5 (requested funding). Mr. Metakides also stated that the SME-participation has risen to 23%, which is higher than in the prior programmes (ESPRIT, ACTS, Telematics) combined.

He reported that the ISTC had given a favourable opinion endorsed WP2001 on the 4th of November and the workprogramme will be submitted for Commission Decision which is expected before the end of the year. In 2001 there will be two calls; call-6 will open in January 2001 with an estimated budget of 400 M€ and call-7 will open in June 2001 with an estimated budget of 450 M€. The 8th, and probably last call, will be in 2002.

The preparation for WP2002 will start in January 2001 and ISTAG is asked to give its recommendations for April 2001. The aim will be to have WP2002 adopted by October 2001.

Another important issue for the immediate future is the preparation for FP6. Mr. Metakides explained that the preparation could be subdivided into 3 categories: content, structure and execution with inputs from ISTAG being invited on all aspects. A main component, in terms of technological content and relationship to the ambient intelligence vision should follow from ISTAG's scenario planning exercise, the challenges that derived from them and the roadmapping activity that is foreseen.. Given the tight timetable for the preparation of FP6, Mr. Metakides stressed that ISTAG should, as quickly as possible, put forward concrete recommendations for FP6.

3. IST-programme in FP6 – G. Comyn

Mr. G. Comyn presented the first (Commission internal) reflections on an "IST-programme in FP6". These result from discussions on the "European Research Area" (ERA) and have been elaborated by a

group of about 20 staff drawn from across the IST programme. Mr. Comyn addressed issues like why there's a need for an IST-programme in FP6, the lessons learned from the past, an outline objectives and challenges for FP6, and a possible architecture which incorporates both focus and flexibility in programme execution by building research activities around so called "Targeted Research Initiatives" (TRIs). He explained that the "IST-programme in FP6" paper would be ready for circulation to ISTAG in the next couple of weeks.

In the following discussion ISTAG-members stressed that an important issue for FP6 will be to help Europe catch up and compete with the US. Also the need for major simplifications in the execution procedures was emphasised by many members. Several ISTAG members raised the question of how the programme would adjust to the rapid pace of changes taking place in the IST area. Mr. Comyn answered that an important topic to be discussed is indeed which part of the programme should be pre-defined at the start of FP6 and which part should be defined as the programme evolves. In reaction to questions about the nature of the TRI's, Mr. Comyn explained that they are conceived as incorporating a set of actions which are all geared towards the achievement of common goals (TRI goal). TRI's are a way to focus the IST in FP6 programme on a smaller number of important strategic objectives.

Mr. Airaghi stressed that an important task for the ISTAG in the near future will be to give timely input for the content of the TRI's. Input could be related to initiatives in IST-areas or to initiatives in other programmes (e.g. space technology, transport, health, environment) where an IST input would remain a vital element. Also the scenario-exercise of WG5 will provide important input for the content of FP6. Mr. Airaghi also suggested that the issues of Europe / US competitive positions should be address in one of the next ISTAG meetings. In preparation of this discussion a paper should be provided by the Commission, giving relevant information on the comparative positions of the US and Europe.

4. ISTAG scenario's – Mr. K. Ducatel

Mr. Ducatel (from IPTS who are co-ordinating the scenario exercise), stressed that the scenarios as presented are at a mid-way-point in terms of their development and that they are not yet checked or validated by the expert group. The next scenario workshop takes place in the first week of December and that the final report will be ready in January 2001.

At the moment 4 draft-scenario's have emerged: Maria, Mercedes, Digital Me and Social Learning (draft scenarios from the Brussels October 2000 Workshop" was distributed during the meeting and by email to all ISTAG members). These scenarios can be used to identify common technological baselines, which correspond largely with the key enabling technologies that were formulated by ISTAG WG4. The next step in the process includes a further elaboration of the service and business models plus a deeper examination of the individual scenarios, the baseline trends and the related technology time-lines.

ISTAG members suggested that the scenarios should also give insight into the elements of generating a "competitive edge" for Europe. The business perspective appears weak, so far, the scenarios are more oriented towards end-user applications than to business-to-business applications. Mr. Ducatel answered that these are indeed important issues to be further incorporated in the scenarios.

Mr. Schuurmans also stressed that it's important to keep the objectives of the scenario building exercise in mind, and not ask too much of them. The aim is not to ask people to choose between scenarios but to give a provocative statement on possible futures. An important aspect of scenarios is the learning process; they should stimulate discussions on opportunities for Europe, and give insight in possible convergences and bifurcations. The scenarios will provide input for the definition of priorities regarding IST and could animate policy discussions (e.g. industrial decision makers, CREST, European Parlement, the Commission, Eureka High Level Group) on these possible futures. But it is finally up to businesses and research institutes to decide if they want to follow any, one, or a combination of the scenario's.

ISTAG-members agreed that the scenario's should be kept on a general level and that the adding of technology time lines would be very interesting. There were a number of suggestions of modifications to the four scenarios and a discussion about the possibility of adding issues such as spectrum pollution & congestion to the baseline trends.

In view of the urgency of producing ISTAG input to the definition of FP6, it was agreed that Mr. Schuurmans will prepare an interim document of about 3 pages containing the “essence” of the scenarios, the implied technological challenges and socio-economic business issues.

This draft-document will be circulated, first among the WG5 members and then among all the ISTAG-members. This document will be finalised before Christmas.

It was also agreed that the ISTAG-members would provide input to Mr. Schuurmans in the form of brief proposals for TRI's, before the 17th of November. These proposals could contribute to any one or more of the current scenario's.

Mr. Airaghi then proposed to Mr. Schuurmans that a next step would be to discuss in January the outcome and implications of the scenario-exercise with Commissioner Liikanen.

5. Any other business

- Mr. Wierzbicki introduced his paper “the role of software and terabit networks in creating European competitiveness for global Information Society” (distributed during the meeting), both of which should be an important theme for FP6 according to Mr. Wierzbicki.
- ISTAG-members discussed briefly the important issue of shortage of ICT-professionals and entrepreneurs in ICT.
- The position of the accession states (e.g. the nature of their participation) in relation to the IST-programme will be discussed at the next meeting.
- Mr. Airaghi added that there was no time to discuss the important new communication: “Making a reality of the European Research Area: Guidelines for EU Research activities (2002-2006)” which was published by the Commission on the 4th of October. This will be dealt with next time
- The discussion on the comparative position of Europe versus the US in IST will, due to time restraints, not take place at the next ISTAG-meeting, but on the following one (~March 2001). In preparation of this discussion a "facts" paper is requested from the Commission.

6. Next meeting

The next meeting will take place on the 18th and 19th of January 2001, in Brussels

Footnote

The initial ISTAG mandate was for 2-years and a number of ISTAG members will retire. ISTAG will continue its work and their replacements will be appointed by the Commission before the end of 2000.

Annex 1, List of participants at the ISTAG meeting - November 9th 2000

ISTAG	Angelo Kiril Alain Michel Christos Michael Rosemary Paul Gregers Ann Marie Martin Javier Andrzej Piotr	AIRAGHI BOYANOV BRAVO FENEYROL HALKIAS HEALY HORWOOD LAGASSE MOGENSEN NILSSON SCHUURMANS UCEDA WIERZBICKI	Chairman
<i>Unable to attend</i>	<i>Tarja Paolo Juhani Bernard Wolfgang Cesare Ursula Ian Jacob Luc Hannes</i>	<i>CRONBERG GALLUZZI KUUSI LARROUTUROU MERKER MOSSOTTO PACHL PURVES VORTMAN WAGNER WERTHNER</i>	
Commission	Spyros George Rosalie Gérard Mike Bernard David Ken Khalil Norman Marian	KONIDARIS METAKIDES ZOBEL COMYN REEVE SMITH BROSTER DUCATEL ROUHANA SADEH SANDERS	

Annex 2, Agenda of the ISTAG meeting - November 9th 2000

**Information Society Technologies Programme Advisory Group
Thursday, 9th November, 2000
NICE (F)**

Draft Agenda

ISTAG Meeting Venue: *Hôtel Sofitel Nice Centre,
Tel: +33(0)492 12 00 18, fax: +33(0)493 26 27 00*

08:30	Opening remarks	Angelo Airaghi
	- approval of the agenda	
08:45	IST update	George Metakides
09:00	Status of WP2001	Gerard Comyn
09:15	Outcome of joint ISTAG/ISTC meeting	Angelo Airaghi
	- discussion & follow-up	
09:30	Update on ISTAG Scenario 2010 activity	Martin Schuurmans
	- discussion & follow-up	
10:30	Commission's October 2000 ERA paper	Angelo Airaghi
	- discussion & follow-up	Gerard Comyn
11:15	Combining the elements	All
	- linking WG5 & WG6 activities	
	- next steps towards FP6	
	- discussion & follow-up	
12:45	Any other business	All
	- dates of future meetings	
	- 18 January 2001, Brussels (proposal)	
	-	
13:00	Close of Meeting	
13:00	Lunch	