

*Council Conclusions*  
**- INFRASTRUCTURES IN THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA -**

THE COUNCIL

1. RECALLING the Council Resolution of 16 November 2000, where reference was made to the benefits of a European approach to research infrastructures in order to maximise their effectiveness in a coordinated manner also discussed by the conference on research infrastructures held in Strasbourg, 18-20 September 2000; EMPHASISING the importance of scientific infrastructures in the wider context of the European Research Area;

2. NOTING the importance of developing European collaboration on research infrastructures to maintain and promote advances in European scientific and technological research and development;

3. NOTING that the Innovation 2000 Initiative launched by the European Investment Bank (EIB) may also facilitate investment in infrastructures;

4. RECOGNISING the need to promote optimal use of infrastructures on a European scale, in particular through the mobility of researchers and by facilitating transnational access to scientific infrastructures;

5. RECOGNISING that the Sixth Framework Programme proposal also contributes to the creation of the European Research Area and NOTING that measures concerning infrastructures are included in this proposal;

6. NOTING that the Commission has presented an analysis of the situation in its working document on "A European Research Area for Infrastructures", which seeks to address the main problems in this domain ;

7. Whilst underlining that the prime responsibility for the construction and operation of research infrastructures lies with the Member States, RECOGNISES the need to proceed to an in-depth examination of the relevant issues concerning research infrastructures in the context of the European Research Area.

8. TO THIS END, INVITES the Commission, in close collaboration with the Member States and involving , as appropriate, candidate countries and countries associated with the Community research programmes:

- to study the best means of providing independent scientific advice on the development and use of research infrastructures and of facilitating coordination and decision-making in this domain, by making use, as far as possible, of existing scientific organisations and relevant policy bodies;
- to identify the need for and, where appropriate, to explore the establishment of new arrangements to support policies related to research infrastructures, involving all parties concerned with decision-making and ensuring the exchange of clear information in this respect.

REQUESTS the Commission to report regularly on the progress made on this issue.