INFORMAL MEETING OF OECD MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR REGIONAL POLICY

Vienna, Austria, 13th April 1994

Austrian Federal Chancellor Franz Vranitzky will open and chair an informal one-day meeting of OECD Ministers responsible for regional policy, organised by the OECD and the Austrian Federal Government, in Vienna on Wednesday, 13th April.

The 24 OECD Ministers and heads of Delegations will be joined by their counterparts from seven Central and Eastern European Countries: Slovenia, Poland, Czech and Slovak Republics, Hungary, Russia and Ukraine.

The meeting, which will be attended by about 100 participants, will also hear introductory addresses by Jean-Claude Paye, OECD Secretary General, and by Jean-Paul de Gaudemar, Rector of the Academy of Strasbourg and Chairman of the OECD Working Party on Regional Policy.

Ministers will exchange views about the future of regional policies and in particular during the morning session on current major objectives of these policies, before looking in the course of the afternoon at possible new dimensions of these policies.

Participants are likely to show particular interest in policy measures to improve regional and local labour market operations, and especially in governmental ability to stimulate job creation and to facilitate mobility. They will also devote attention to regional policy priorities devoted to the reduction of interregional disparities and express views on the role of governments to improve regional competitiveness.

Exchanges of ideas will also take place on more specific issues. Ministers are likely, in particular, to emphasize the contribution of infrastructure to regional productivity and growth, taking into account not only transport and communication infrastructure but also R&D education and health infrastructure. In that context they will also give their views on the integration of technological progress within territorial development. Finally, particular aspects of structural adjustment in areas affected by defense cuts will be dealt with.

A press conference will be held at the conference venue, the Ferstel Palace, Strauchgasse, 4, Vienna, at 12h30 on Wednesday 13th April.

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