European metrology research and development programme 2009-2017

2008/0230(COD) - 03/12/2008 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to enable the participation by the Community in a European metrology research and development programme (EMRP) undertaken by several Member States.

PROPOSED ACT: Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council.

BACKGROUND:Decision No 1982/2006/EC concerning the 7th R&D Framework Programme (2007-2013) provides for Community participation in research and development programmes undertaken by several Member States, including participation in the structures created for the execution of those programmes, within the meaning of Article 169 of the Treaty.

Metrology is a cross-disciplinary scientific field which is a vital component of a modern knowledge-based society. Metrology research has a strong public-good character and is a main supporting activity for government regulation and standardisation. All major economic powers in the world have recognized that technology R&D in metrology is critical to an advanced nation's long term economic growth. Reliable and comparable measurement standards, appropriate validated measuring and test methods underpin the processes of scientific advancement and technological innovation and thus have a significant impact on economy and quality of lives within Europe.

The actors in European metrology research form a specialised community loosely linked to research organisations or academia. It is highly fragmented, comprising a few centres of global excellence which would benefit from wide competition on an international scale.

The European potential in metrology research is not fully exploited. Joint action between Member States and the Community is needed in order to provide for a modern research effort in metrology.

CONTENT: the purpose of this proposal, based on Article 169 of the EC Treaty is to establish a European Metrology Research Programme (EMRP) **bringing together 22 national metrology research programmes** to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public metrology research. It aims to contribute to structuring the European Research Area through better coordination, thereby tackling common European challenges, increasing the impact of these programmes and removing barriers between national programmes.

The following Member States or associated countries to the Framework Programme 7 (FP7) are involved: Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom as well as Norway, Switzerland and Turkey. The Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements of the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission may be an Associate to the programme.

This initiative was announced in the FP7 Cooperation Specific Programme. The EMRP initiative has a planned national contribution of participating countries of EUR 200 million including a flexibility at national level of up to 50% of national contribution and an expected Community contribution of **EUR 200 million**.

The EMRP will accelerate the development, validation and exploitation of new measuring techniques, standards, processes, instruments, reference materials and knowledge aimed at driving innovative

developments in industry and commerce, improving the quality of data for science, industry and policymaking and supporting the development and implementation of directives and regulations.

The EMRP will achieve these objectives in the following way:

- Pooling excellence in metrology research - by creating competitive joint research projects marshalling capability for sufficient critical mass from the networks of National Metrology Institutes (NMI) and Designated Institutes (DI) from the participating States to tackle major metrology challenges faced at European level;
- Openness of the system to best science - by increasing participation from the wider European researcher community through researcher grants;
- Capacity building - by increasing the capability of the European metrology researcher community through researcher mobility grants targeting those EURAMET Member Countries with limited metrology research capability.

The EMRP will complement ongoing national programmes and activities aimed at addressing purely national priorities.