

Euratom Framework Programme 2012-2013: participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in indirect actions, dissemination of research results

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The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted the report by Jan BREZINA (EPP, CZ) on the proposal for a Council regulation (Euratom) laying down the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in indirect actions under the Framework Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community and for the dissemination of research results (2012-2013). It recommended that the European Parliament made some amendments to the Commission proposal.

The main amendments are as follows:

Framework Programme: the text clarifies that the Framework Programme (2012-2013) is intended to complement the other actions of the Union in the area of research policy that are necessary for the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy, in particular those relating to education and training, competitiveness and innovation, industry, employment and the environment. It contribute to achieving the [Innovation Union](#) that is one of the flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 strategy, by reinforcing competition with a view to scientific excellence and accelerating the implementation of key innovations in the field of nuclear energy, especially as regards nuclear fusion and safety, while also playing a part in meeting the challenges of the energy sector and climate change.

The design and implementation of the Framework Programme (2012-2013) should be based on the principles of simplicity, stability, transparency, legal certainty, consistency, excellence and trust following the recommendations of the European Parliament in its report on simplifying the implementation of the Research Framework Programmes.

The committee adds that the Framework Programme's activities research activities should be based on **respect for fundamental ethical principles**, especially those laid down in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

Financing: the report states that increased attention and budget spending are needed for initiatives ancillary to core nuclear research, in particular as regards investment in human capital and actions aimed at addressing the risk of skills shortages in the coming years (e.g. grants to researchers in the nuclear field) and the consequent loss of leadership for the Union. Special attention should be paid to the development of contractual arrangements that reduce the risk of failure to perform as well as the reallocation of risks and costs over time.

ITER: the implementation of ITER in Europe, pursuant to the agreement of 21 November 2006 on the establishment of the ITER International Fusion Energy Organisation in the context of the joint implementation of the ITER project, should constitute the central element of research activity in the area of fusion under the Framework Programme (2012-2013).

Evaluation, selection and award: Members state that all stages of the process should be optimised in order to avoid delay and encourage cost-effectiveness. That involves access to draft work programmes, publication of calls for proposals, drafting of proposals, the selection procedures and the time taken to approve and to pay grants.

Appointment of independent experts: the report states that appropriate measures shall be taken when appointing groups of independent experts to ensure a reasonable gender balance and a balance between Member States undertaking research and training in the nuclear field, and also to ensure an adequate balance between industry (including SMEs) and academia when appointing groups of independent experts.