

Euratom research and training programme 2014-2018

2011/0400(NLE) - 10/12/2012 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted the report by Peter SKINNER (S&D, UK) on the proposal for a Council Regulation on the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2014-2018) complementing [Horizon 2020](#) – The Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.

The parliamentary committee suggests amending the Commission's proposal as follows:

Objectives of the programme: Members consider that the Euratom programme should also have as its general objective the contribution to other areas of research related to nuclear research such as **medical research** and the **guaranteeing of the long-term future of European nuclear research**.

1. Indirect actions of the Euratom programme should, among other things, focus on the following specific objectives:

- support **safe operation** of all existing and future civilian nuclear systems;
- support the measures necessary to ensure suitably trained **human resources**;
- seek to maintain the **highest level of working conditions** for those working directly with nuclear materials;
- support the **long-term sustainability of nuclear fission** through improvements in the field of reactor time extension or in the design of new reactor types;
- promote innovation and **European industrial leadership** in fission and fusion;
- promote the development, of **new research infrastructures** of pan-European relevance.

2. Direct actions of the programme should focus on:

- improve nuclear safety working conditions for those working directly with nuclear materials and dealing with the **direct consequences of nuclear safety incidents**, however unlikely they may be;
- increase the **uptake of nuclear research among European scientists** as well as attracting those from outside the Union;
- work towards the development of **internationally recognised standards** of nuclear safety for fission reactors;
- address any skills shortage with relation to nuclear expertise and prevent any future skills leakage or '**brain drain**' of nuclear scientists from the Union;
- complement all required safety improvements suggested following the **results of the stress tests** carried out on all nuclear reactors in the Union and third countries that border the Union;
- support the **simplification** agenda of Horizon 2020, reducing the administrative burdens of previous frameworks, **in particular on SMEs**, universities and smaller research institutes.

Support the strategic plan for energy technologies (SET Plan): the Euratom Programme shall contribute to implementing the SET-plan. Its indirect and direct actions shall be aligned with the Strategic Research Agenda of the three existing European technology platforms on nuclear energy: SNETP, IGDTP and MELODI.

Budget: in accordance with the overall approach adopted by Parliament on the negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2014-2020, Members refrained from making specific

suggestions concerning the amount of budget for the programme. However, they consider that funding for Euratom, whether for fusion or fission, has been **notoriously inadequate**. Furthermore, they consider that the administrative expenditure proposed by the Commission (13.5%) is too high and propose that it be **reduced to 7%**.

Members call for the **ITER project to be funded from within the MFF** so as to prevent any perception of disengagement from the project, which could be seen as harmful to the Community's interest. They also call for the **wider and more frequent use of structural funds for nuclear research**.

Greater participation of SMEs: SMEs are vital to Europe's economy but are often under-represented when it comes to nuclear research. This is why Members consider that the Eureka Eurostars Programme and the Marie Curie Actions should widen their rules of participation to allow SMEs involved in nuclear research to participate. The attempts at increased simplification in terms of participation shall be communicated to all participants, including SMEs and academic institutions.

International cooperation: in this field, Members call for support for all international attempts to (i) combat **nuclear proliferation and trafficking**; (ii) develop common international safety standards; and (iii) contribute to the improvement of knowledge exchange. Particular attention shall be paid to all reactors and nuclear installations **located in third countries but which are geographically very close to Member State territory**.

Evaluation: the report calls for Member States to provide the Commission but also the **European Parliament** with data and information necessary for the monitoring and evaluation of the measures concerned.