European research area: research and training activities, framework programme EURATOM 2002-2006

2001/0054(CNS) - 21/02/2001 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : to present a proposal for a Council Decision concerning the multiannual framework programme for 2002-2006 of the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) for research and training activities aimed at contributing towards the creation of the European Research Area. CONTENT : in the space of just over a year, the European Research Area (ERA) has become the reference framework for research policy issues in Europe. The EU has a specific role to play through its legal instruments, such as for example, the Community patent and also its financial instrument for promoting research and the European cooperation in this area, namely the framework programme. The raison d'être of this new framework programme is to help to make a reality of the European Research Area with a view to stepping up innovation in Europe, in conjunction with all the efforts made to this end at national, regional and European level. The new framework programme will be based on the following main principles: - concentrating on a selected number of research areas in which EU action can add the greatest possible value; - defining the various acitivites in such a way as to enable them to exert a more structuring effect on the research activities conducted in Europe thanks to a stronger link with national, regional and other European initiatives; - simplifying and streamlining the implementation arrangements, on the basis of the intervention methods defined and the decentralised management procedures envisaged. Two fundamental aspects of this new framework programme are the opportunity for the candidate countries to participate fully in all the activities as countries associated with its implementation, and the fact that to a large extent it opens up EU research activities to the rest of the world. This proposal lays down that the multiannual framework programme for research and training activities in the field of nuclear energy (2002-2006) shall comprise all research, technological development, international cooperation, dissemination and exploitation activities as well as training in the following fields: - treatment and storage of waste; - controlled thermonuclear fusion; - other Euratom activities; - the Joint research Centre's Euratom activities. The financial reference amount for the implementation of this framework programme for the period 2002-2006 shall be EUR 1 230 million, of which EUR 150 million for the treatment and storage of waste, EUR 700 million for controlled thermonuclear fusion, EUR 50 million for other Euratom activities, and EUR 330 million for the Joint Research Centre's activities. The framework programme is open to the participation of: - the EEA countries, in accordance with the conditions established in the EEA agreements; - the central and eastern European candidate countries (CEEC), in accordance with the conditions established in the Europe Agreements, in the additional protocols thereto and in the decisions of the respective Association Councils; - Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, on the basis of bilateral agreements to be concluded with these countries; - Switzerland and Israel, on the basis of bilateral agreements to be concluded with these countries. To enable this new framework programme to be implemented on schedule, the aim is that it should be adopted no later than the first half of 2002.