Research RTD, 6th EC Framework-programme 2002-2006: strengthening the European Research Area

2001/0122(CNS) - 17/10/2001 - Modified legislative proposal

The Commission submitted its proposals for Decisions concerning the Framework Programme 2002-2006 on 21 February 2001 and its proposals for the associated Specific Programmes on 30 May 2001. During the course of the debate on the Framework Programme, and to ensure that this is conducted under the best conditions, the Commission has subsequently indicated its intention to provide further information to the Council and European Parliament, in respect of the activities to be carried out under the heading "Anticipating the EU's scientific and technological needs", in the form of a modified proposal for the specific programme "Integrating and strengthening the European Research Area". The present proposal fulfils this commitment, and provides the further information needed by the Council and European Parliament to understand the full implications of this part of the Commission's proposals, which equip the Framework Programme with a means to anticipate, and respond quickly to, emerging needs and new scientific and technological developments. In particular, the proposal: - Provides a sharper image of the types of activities to be carried out within this part of the specific programme under the headings "policy-orientated research" and "research to explore new and emerging scientific problems and opportunities". In both cases the activities envisaged complement those in other parts of the framework programme, notably research activities within the thematic priorities. · As regards policy-orientated research, the activities to be pursued derive from the research needs of Community policies that cannot be satisfied from within the thematic priorities. They will be implemented by means of specific targeted projects and though specific co-ordination actions. - As regards research to explore new and emerging scientific Problems and opportunities, the activities are designed to respond to new and unforeseen developments or unexpected issues, and to pursue exploratory research in new and emerging areas at the frontier of knowledge outside the thematic priority areas, in particular on transdisciplinary or multidisciplinary topics. - Gives a more extensive presentation of the programming method to be used to identify the research activities to be carried out under this heading, and identifies the features of the programming method which are specific to policy-orientated research, on one hand, and research to explore new and emerging problems and opportunities, on the other. - Presents a demonstration of the first application of the programming method, which has been used to identify the policy-orientated research needs, other than those included in the priority thematic areas, which can already be identified prior to the beginning of the programme. Further research needs will be identified in subsequent applications of the programming method, during the implementation of theprogramme. This approach, with the experience in its application gained over time, will allow the development of a much more direct and transparent link between Community research and the needs of policy, as well as a better-informed articulation of policy research needs through the involvement of the key stakeholders. - Sets out the research activities which will be carried out to respond to needs which have been identified in this way, · Specifies a budget of 50% of the amount attributed to the activities under the heading of "policy orientated research and leading edge topics" (now re-titled "anticipating the EU's scientific and technological needs") in their entirety, ie a budget of Euro 440 million as the amount which will apply to the specified research activities, with the remaining 50% to be allocated to research activities that are identified during the course of implementation of the specific programme.