Resaerch RTD, 5th framework-programme EC 1998-2002: research, technological development and demonstration activities

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The European Commission has presented the 2002 annual report on the research and technological development activities of the European Union. This annual report covers the period from January 2001 to March 2002, which was marked by unprecedented development of the Community's research policy: - the proposals for the Sixth framework programme and the means for implementing it were adopted by the Commission between February and September 2001. The Council and the Parliament reached broad agreement on the overall amount, the structure, the priorities and the instruments; - at the same time, the Commission drew up the procedures for implementing the various instruments, including integrated projects, networks of excellence, and participation in research programmes implemented by several Member States; - major milestones in the construction of the European Research Area were reached with the publication of the first results of the benchmarking of national RTD policies and the mapping of scientific excellence in Europe and the adoption of a mobility strategy for researchers, the European innovation scoreboard, the action plan for science and society, and communications on the international and regional dimensions of the European Research Area; - a framework agreement on cooperation in the field of research was signed between the Commission and the European Investment Bank, and the GEANT European Scientific Communications Network became operational; - implementation of the Fifth Framework Programme continued successfully in 2001 with the signing of nearly 5 000 contracts involving more than 23 000 participants and Community financial support of more than EUR 3.7 million. - international cooperation was stepped up: agreements were signed with Malta, Ukraine, Russia and India and "bi-regional" relations were developed with Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Balkans; - lastly the various advisory groups which assist the Commission in the implementation of its research activities played their role to the full, with reports and opinions from the Scientific and Technical Research Committee (CREST), external advisory groups and the high-level groups set up in 2001. The EU Research Advisory Board (EURAB) was set up and started work in the second half of 2001.