Research RTD, 6th framework programme 2002-2006: results dissemination, participation of undertakings and universities

2001/0202(COD) - 28/05/2002

The committee adopted the report by Godelieve QUISTHOUDT-ROWOHL (EPP-ED, D) broadly approving the proposal subject to a number of amendments under the codecision procedure (1st reading). It emphasised that the minimum number of participants for each research project should be at least three independent legal entities established in three different Member States or Associated States, of which at least one legal entity must have its registered office in a Member State or associated State. The committee insisted that the evaluation of projects must follow a two-stage procedure. It argued that many potential participants were deterred by the disproportionate cost-benefit ratio and that a two-stage procedure, particularly in the case of very complex tenders, would mean that expensive, detailed applications would not have to be made until benefits were likelier. It also said that applicants could opt to include other partners before the second stage but the nature of the proposal could not be changed as a result. The selection procedure should be so designed that in its two stages it lasted no longer than the present single-stage procedure. The scientific and technological quality of an application and the degree of innovation should be the first criterion for selection, according to the MEPs, as this reflected the strategic objectives of the Lisbon summit. However, in applying the main criteria the Commission should also be able to take into account completely new criteria proposed by the committee such as synergies with education at all levels, capacity to engage with actors beyond the research community, and activities to increase the role of women in research. In programmes concerning an outermost region, greater weight should be accorded to the criterion of Community added value. The committee was also concerned to clarify the consortium contracts and adopted a number of amendments specifying the relationship between the members of the consortium. Lastly, it wanted calls for tender to be publicised as widely as possible, including on the internet.