EC/Switzerland agreement: scientific and technological cooperation, EC/Euratom 5th framework programme

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PURPOSE: conclusion of an agreement with Switzerland on scientific and technological cooperation. CONTENT: In the context of the overall package of liberalisation agreements negotiated with Switzerland and initialled by the parties on 26.02.1999, the Commission is proposing an agreement regarding scientific and technological cooperation aimed at facilitating the participation of this country in the two Community Framework Programmes for RTD (1998-2002). The approach advocated by the Commission is a 'global' one integrating in each of the 7 agreements a common clause regarding simultaneous entry into force (this is to avoid that the referendum process in Switzerland applicable to the approval of these agreements does not give rise to a partial application of the agreements). Following the specific character of the research sector, the S&T Agreement shall apply for the period between its entry into force and the expiry of the two Framework Programmes. While research entities established in Switzerland may participate in the specific programmes of the two Framework Programmes, also research entities established in the EU may participate in research programmes and projects in Switzerland, which will guarantee the reciprocity of the activities. The financial contribution by Switzerland to the budgets of the research programmes is based on the ratio of Switzerland's GDP to that of the Member States of the EU. From an institutional perspective, the Agreement itself does not contain any provisions too set up co-operation committees for each specific programme. However, a 'horizontal 'Council Declaration would provide for Swiss participation, as observers and for the points which concern them, in the research programme committees, including CREST.