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

1997/0119(COD) - 31/03/1998 - Commission communication on Council's position

The Commission's major concern is the maximum overall amount of the Framework Programme: ECU 12 740 million according to the common position while the Commission proposes ECU 14 833 million. For the first time the overall amount has decreased in real terms in relation to the funding for the previous Framework Programme and casts doubt on whether it is sufficient to cover the scientific and technological content as extended by the Council. The Commission considers that it sends a negative signal to industrial concerns, the scientific community and the users, at a time when the Union's major competitors are recognizing the importance of research for competitiveness and employment and continue to invest more than does the EU. If the final amount falls too far short of ECU 14 833 million, it should not be excluded that one or more activities may be dropped if they cannot be allocated what the Commission considers a minimum critical amount. The Commission is also concerned by the risk of fragmentation of the fourth thematic programme, devoted to the environment and energy (two different committees to be set up). It is also concerned at the cumbersome additional constraints with regard to management. The Commission calls on the Parliament and the Council to support the Community research effort at its proper level and to divide it appropriately. It emphasizes the need to allow work to be completed within time limits which are compatible with the Community's continuing research effort.