Research 5th EC framework programme 1998-2002: results dissemination, participation of undertakings, universities

1997/0309(SYN) - 28/05/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

Adopting the report by Mr Pedro MARSET CAMPOS (GUE, E), the European Parliament amended the Commission proposal as follows: - indirect RDT actions may be performed by a cluster of SMEs and one large enterprise, one or more of which may be established in different EU Member States or in an associated state; - particularly in the case of highly innovative and rapidly changing projects relating to the information society, an exception may be made to the rule that an enterprise must have been operational for any least one year in order to be eligible for EU financing. Advance financing of this type of project by a consortium must never continue for longer than six months; - during the preparatory stage, after submission of the project on the basis of the call by the Commission, the consortium partners are authorised to negotiate with one another about legal and contractual obligations. If, once the contract establishing the consortium has been drawn up, the partners are unable to sign the definitive contract within four months, the Commission will withdraw its approval; - the time limit between the deadline for presenting projects and the decision on their eligibility must not exceed four months; - the contract must lay down what contribution the consortium must make to the plan for disseminating and using the research results secured and the output criteria with which the project must satisfy. In the case of highly innovative projects in a rapidly changing market, the planned technological implementation may be adapted to changes in the situation. Other amendments by Parliament concern: - the protection of the Community's financial interests and measures to combat fraud: before conclusion of a contract, the Commission must check whether the contracting partner is reliable and may reject contractors deemed to be unreliable. If serious failings or accounting or contractual irregularities are found during financial inspections, the Commission may suspend payment of instalments and refuse to finance any further participation by the undertaking concerned until the inspection procedure has been completed. The contracting party concerned will be debarred from further participation in Community research programmes; - information: infodesks will provide contractors from the Member States with all necessary information on programmes in the Community languages. Parliament called for the Commission to make full information on expressions of interest and invitations to tender available on websites and to take measures to facilitate access by SMEs and research centres to the programmes (specific brochures, creation of an administrative assistance unit); - reasons for decisions: Parliament called on the Commission to provide in writing substantive, detailed reasons for acceptance or rejection.