

European research area: activities within the scope of the EC framework programme 2002-2006

2001/0053(COD) - 14/11/2001 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted the report by Gerard CAUDRON (PES, F) and made several amendments to the draft decision on the Sixth Framework Programme on the European Research Area. The most significant amendments include: - a prohibition on certain forms of genome research (see previous document), with exceptions for stem cell research and research on supernumerary early-stage embryos. - the maximum overall amount for Community financial participation in the entire framework programme was kept at EUR 16.270 billion, but Parliament specified that at least 15% of the budget should be assigned to SMEs, and that SMEs must represent at least 15% of the integrated research priorities in the Sixth Framework Programme. - Parliament introduced a new instrument "Stairway to excellence", with the objective of creating a smooth transition from the Fifth to the Sixth Framework Programme. It stated that in the implementation of the Framework Programme, the Commission must aim to allocate 30% of the financial resources assigned to the heading "Integrating Research" to this instrument. It also stated that it should be possible to implement the new participation instruments concurrently with the participation instruments available under previous framework programmes (partnership projects, concerted actions) with the aim of making the implementation of the framework programme more accessible. The instrument must provide for arrangements to accommodate small-scale participants with innovative research projects, and the potential to meet the criteria with regard to critical mass and centres of excellence. These projects must be relevant to the main themes of the framework programme. Funding will be limited to 20% of the total budget of the framework programme. - The integrated programme is made up of eight distinct subsections. The subsection on life sciences for health and safety has been subdivided into: genomics and biotechnology for global health and welfare; and, the major diseases. With regard to the latter, Parliament states that a priority approach will be pursued to combating Aids, malaria and tuberculosis. The subsection on energy, sustainable development and global change has been subdivided, and has an additional subdivision on transport (see previous document). The subsection on energy emphasises research into clean energy and minimising waste. There are also a significant number of details added to the section on Information Society Technologies.