

Euratom/Switzerland agreement: scientific and technological cooperation, 6th Framework Programmes and European Research Area

2005/0135(CNS) - 25/07/2005 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to approve, on behalf of the Community, the Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the European Communities of the one part and the Swiss Confederation of the other part.

PROPOSED ACT: Decision of the Council and of the Commission.

CONTENT: by joint decision of 4 April 2002 the Council and the Commission concluded the Agreement on Scientific and Technological Cooperation between the EC and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC) of the one part and the Swiss Confederation of the other part. The Agreement entered into force on 1 June 2002.

This Agreement associated Switzerland in the specific programmes of the Fifth Framework Programmes. Article 9(2) provided for renewal of the Agreement should the Community adopt new Framework Programmes.

On 7 June 2002, as the Sixth Framework Programmes were being adopted by the Communities, the Swiss Confederation requested the Commission to renew the Agreement with a view to being associated in the programmes. It is in the interest of the Communities to renew this Agreement and thereby expand the European Research Area. Negotiations for renewal of the Agreement were completed on 5 September 2003 and the Agreement and the Annexes were signed on 16 January 2004 in Brussels.

This new Agreement is based on the principles laid down in its predecessor, particularly with regard to the Swiss Confederation's contribution to the budgets for the Sixth Framework Programmes. However, it has been adapted to take account of the specifics of the Sixth Framework Programmes. In addition, Annex C contains new provisions on cooperation between the Communities and the Swiss Confederation on control of Community funds.

Following the entry into force of the Sixth Framework Programmes, in view of the fact that the associated States make annual contributions to the respective budgets and of the time needed for negotiation of this renewal, it is proposed that this Agreement should enter into force on 1 January 2004 and, if it is not concluded in time, should apply provisionally from that date on, subject to signature at a later date.

The Agreement stipulates that the eleven official languages at the time of signing are to be authentic. Regulations No 1/1958 oblige the EC and the Euratom Community to draft documents of general application in all the official languages of the Member States, which since enlargement, total 20 languages. The Council must decide that the Commission should conclude the Agreement in such a way that the languages of the new Member States are authentic, without formally amending the Agreement. This additional agreement should take the form of an exchange of letters annexed to the Agreement.