

Research RTD, 7th Euratom Framework Programme 2007-2011: participation of undertakings, research centres and universities, dissemination of research results

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The committee adopted the report by Anne LAPERROUZE (ALDE, FR) amending, under the consultation procedure, the proposed regulation on the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in actions under the 7th Framework Programme of the Atomic Energy Community and for the dissemination of research results (2007-2011).

MEPs sought to provide greater clarification in certain areas, such as the arrangements for calls for proposals, the definition of evaluation principles and selection and award criteria, and the implementation of indirect actions and grant agreements, particularly with regard to issues such as access rights, ownership and confidentiality. On the question of appointing independent experts, the committee said that, for the evaluation and monitoring of investigator-driven "frontier" research, experts should be appointed by the Commission on the basis of a proposal by the Scientific Council of the ERC.

Many of the amendments mirrored those tabled in the report on the main regulation on the rules of participation of the 7th Framework Programme (see COD/2005/0277), including provisions on a Guarantee Fund, the definition of the various categories of eligible costs and new provisions stipulating that the flat rate to cover indirect costs should gradually be decreased from 60% of the total direct costs in the first three years (2007-2009) to 45% in 2010-2012 and should then be set at 30% from 2012 onwards. The committee also adopted an identical amendment on the ceiling for the Community contribution to the total eligible costs of R&D activities: while agreeing with the Commission that this upper funding limit should be 50% for most activities, it wanted the ceiling for space and security research to be 75%. And the case of non-profit public bodies, secondary and higher education establishments, research organisations and SMEs, the Community financial contribution should be "at least" 75% of the total eligible costs.

In line with the other report, the committee also sought to avoid cumbersome bureaucracy and therefore introduced new provisions whereby audit certificates would not be required in the case of grants of less than EUR 25 000 towards involvement in an indirect action or in the case of indirect actions entirely reimbursed by lump sums or flat rates.

Lastly, MEPs called for the Commission to carry out a mid-term review - no later than 2010 - of the rules for participation in FP7 EURATOM and to put forward proposals for them to be amended where necessary.