

Research RTD, 7th Euratom Framework Programme 2007-2011: specific programme through direct actions by the Joint Research Centre JRC

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The committee adopted the report by Daniel CASPARY (EPP-ED, DE) amending - under the consultation procedure - the specific programme to be carried out by means of direct actions by the Joint Research Centre implementing the 7th EURATOM Framework Programme (2007-2011) for nuclear research and training activities. In the legislative resolution, the committee said that the indicative financial reference amount indicated in the legislative proposal must be compatible with the ceiling of heading 1a of the new multiannual financial framework, and pointed out that the annual amount would be decided within the annual budgetary procedure. It also adopted a new Article 5a stipulating that the Commission should provide prior information to the budgetary authority whenever it intends to depart from the breakdown of expenditure stated in the remarks and annex to the annual budget. The other key amendments were as follows:

- the JRC should seek to "maintain its own level of scientific excellence" and hence "step up activities devoted strictly to research, without prejudice to those directly intended to meet the requirements of Community policies";
- given the lack of new scientists and engineers in the area of nuclear technology, the JRC should establish itself as a European centre for the dissemination of information and for training and education. It should implement a programme aimed at retaining knowledge, as well as a programme designed to attract young people into the field of nuclear energy research;
- another objective should be the further development of collaboration through networking, leading to a broad consensus on a number of issues at European and world level. The committee stressed that the application of safeguards by the Euratom Safeguards Office and the International Atomic Energy Agency required R&D support and direct assistance, and that special attention would be given to cooperation with future EU Member States;
- the JRC should contribute to the search for solutions to the increasingly important urgent of nuclear waste disposal and environmental impact;
- lastly, the committee felt that it was crucially important that the necessary technical capacities to evaluate and deal with the threat of proliferation of nuclear weapons should continue to be available within the JRC.