

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Committee on Budgets

2006/0014(CNS)

23.6.2006

OPINION

of the Committee on Budgets

for the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

on the proposal for a Council regulation laying down the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in actions under the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community and for the dissemination of research results (2007-2011) (COM(2006)0042 – C6-0080/2006 – 2006/0014(CNS))

Draftswoman: Marilisa Xenogiannakopoulou

PA_Leg

SHORT JUSTIFICATION

1. Main elements of the proposal

This proposal for the Rules for Participation for the Seventh Framework Programme is based on Article 7 and 10 of the European Atomic Energy Community Treaty. These rules define the rights and obligations of legal entities wishing to take part in the framework programme and establish the principles for the use and dissemination of their work resulting from that participation.

The proposal consists of four chapters:

- introductory provisions (subject matter, definitions and confidentiality);
- participation in indirect actions (minimum conditions to participate, procedural aspects, including minimum numbers of participants, their place of establishment, proposal submission evaluation, implementation and grant agreements, monitoring of projects and programmes, Community financial contribution: eligibility for funding and forms of grants, reimbursement rates, payment, distribution, recovery and guarantees);
- rules for dissemination, use and access rights (ownership, protection, publication, dissemination and use, access rights to background);
- specific rules for participation in activities under the thematic area "fusion energy research".

2. Comments by the draftswoman

- It is important that the present proposal is coherent with the provisions established by the Financial Regulation and its implementing rules, the rules on state aid for research and development. The Financial Regulation as well as any other sectorial regulation are regulations and therefore stand legally on the same level.
- The long duration of funding procedures under the current Framework Programme must be avoided as much as possible. According to the Special Report No 1/2004 on the administration of indirect RTD measures under the Fifth Framework Programme (1998-2002) issued by the European Court of Auditors, an average of 263 calendar days elapse between the receipt of documents by the Commission and the signing of the contract. This also calls into question the principle of annuality¹.
- Long pre-financing by participants has to be avoided where possible. In particular, SMUs are often not able to cope with this hurdle.

A simplification of the procedure is badly needed. The draftswoman therefore proposes the

¹ See Working Document 5 on grant application procedures and the Financial Regulation in connection with the Sixth Framework Programme for Research by Ingeborg Gräßle and Borut Pahor of 2 June 2005 (DT 569074).

creation of a database for the submission of applications.

Proposal for a regulation

Text proposed by the Commission¹

Amendments by Parliament

Amendment 1
Recital 13 a (new)

(13a) The Commission must implement the Seventh Framework Programme in accordance with the principles of an integrated internal control framework.

Justification

Controls should be applied to a common standard and coordinated to avoid unnecessary duplication. The overall cost of controls should be in proportion to the overall benefits they bring in both monetary and political terms.

Amendment 2
Recital 15 a (new)

(15a) Payments will be made as soon as possible in order to minimise prefinancing by participants.

Justification

In view of the long times - to -payment, which the Commission itself acknowledges, the institutes are often forced to prefinance many items of expenditure to the detriment of the project budget. Especially SMU's are often not in a position to pre-finance expenditure.

Amendment 3
Article 13, introductory part

The Commission shall not issue calls for proposals for the following:

In accordance with the Financial Regulation and its Implementing Rules, the Commission shall not issue calls for proposals for the following:

¹ OJ C 104, 3.5.2006, p. 21.

Justification

It is important that the provisions established in the regulation are coherent with the Financial Regulation.

Amendment 4
Article 15, paragraph 1 a (new)

1a. Access to funding shall be facilitated by the application of the principle of proportionality as regards the documents to be supplied and by the creation of a database for the submission of applications.

Justification

The methods and the procedure need to be simplified in order to speed up the transparency of the selection procedure and to facilitate access to the programme.

Amendment 5
Article 15, paragraph 1 b (new)

1b. The Commission shall take appropriate measures to ensure that data regarding all indirect actions funded under the Seventh Framework Programme is recorded and processed in integrated databases and using a common computerised system.

Justification

The methods and the procedure need to be simplified in order to speed up the transparency of the selection procedure and to facilitate access to the programme.

Amendment 6
Article 15, paragraph 3 a (new)

3a. The Commission shall conclude the evaluation, selection and award procedure

in an appropriate timespan which is proportionate to the funding involved. Participants shall be informed in advance of the date on which a decision can be expected.

Justification

The lengthy procedures impose both a wide range of constraints and serious budgetary risks on research institutes. In budgetary terms, the result is an extremely lengthy preliminary procedure, which calls into question the budgetary principle of annuality.

Amendment 7
Article 15 a (new)

Article 15a

To avoid double verification, the Commission will certify a successful verification, which until further notice will be considered as sufficient for all proposals submitted by the same participant. For this purpose the Commission shall set up a single verification and certification system and shall adopt and publish specific rules.

Justification

The proposed modification will ensure a coherent approach within the Commission, avoiding unnecessary bureaucracy for participants and speeding up the negotiation of selected proposals.

PROCEDURE

Title	Proposal for a Council regulation laying down the rules for the participation of undertakings, research centres and universities in actions under the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community and for the dissemination of research results (2007-2011)
References	COM(2006)0042 – C6-0080/2006 – 2006/0014(CNS)
Committee responsible	ITRE
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	BUDG 16.3.2006
Enhanced cooperation – date announced in plenary	0.0.0000
Drafts(wo)man Date appointed	Marilisa Xenogiannakopoulou 20.9.2004
Previous drafts(wo)man	
Discussed in committee	22.6.2006
Date adopted	22.6.2006
Result of final vote	+: 14 -: 2 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Herbert Bösch, Simon Busuttil, Bárbara Dührkop Dührkop, Markus Ferber, Ingeborg Gräßle, Nathalie Griesbeck, Anne E. Jensen, Wiesław Stefan Kuc, Janusz Lewandowski, Vladimír Maňka, Antonis Samaras, Esko Seppänen, Nina Škottová, Helga Trüpel, Yannick Vaugrenard, Ralf Walter
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote	
Comments (available in one language only)	...