

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4118/00

by Vitaliano Gemelli (PPE-DE), Michl Ebner (PPE-DE), Guido Bodrato (PPE-DE) and Mario Mantovani (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Future of the Common Research Centre

The Common Research Centre (CRC) is a very effective instrument of Community research, which not only brings together scientific expertise from the various branches of European academia, but examines scientific activities being pursued in the Member States for their possible implications in every area of interest (environmental, economic, social, etc.) There have been plans in the past to scale down the role of the CRC by a corresponding scaling down of research activities, including cutting the establishment plan by 200 posts. It now appears that once again there are plans to reduce the number of staff by a further 200 posts, despite the Council of Ministers having agreed in 1998 to maintain the establishment plan at 2080 posts in accordance with the Fifth Framework Programme.

Would the Commission and more particularly its President, Mr Romano Prodi, and Commissioner Philippe Busquin state whether reports of the establishment plan being reduced by 200 posts are true, whether the aim really is to rationalise research and whether, in the event of the JRC being scaled down, the Petten and Ispra centres would pass from Community control to that of the Member States where they are situated?