

**Question for oral answer O-000092/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 128

Jerzy Buzek

on behalf of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

Subject: Implementation of the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA) under Article 185 TFEU

In April 2012 the Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Research and Innovation, held by the Commission in Barcelona, called for a renewed partnership in research and innovation, based on the principles of co-ownership, mutual interest and shared benefit. As a follow-up, the Commission highlighted the potential of using Article 185 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) as a basis for implementing such a partnership.

As a result, several Member States and Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPCs) established the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA), which has prepared the components of an initiative pursuant to Article 185 TFEU: an implementation structure to be established within the framework of the Union for the Mediterranean, and a scientific joint programme focusing on food systems and water resources. This proposal has already obtained significant indicative financial commitments from the Member States and MPCs participating in PRIMA, on the understanding that the cooperation will be implemented pursuant to Article 185 TFEU.

During the Cypriot, Hellenic and Italian presidencies of the Council, ministers backed the concept that such cooperation has the potential to give research and innovation a bridging role between participating countries and to significantly enhance the EU's scientific diplomacy with its southern neighbours in the long term, while providing concrete solutions to common challenges facing Member States and MPCs.

Given the Commission's strong support for fostering euro-Mediterranean cooperation in general, and in research and innovation in particular, and the fact that participating Member States and Mediterranean Partner Countries have recently made long-term financial commitments that are conditional on implementation through an initiative pursuant to Article 185 TFEU:

1. Does the Commission acknowledge the potential of Article 185 TFEU to provide high visibility and institutional stability and to secure long-term commitment from participating countries to implementing the PRIMA proposal?
2. What timeframe does the Commission envisage for assessing the PRIMA proposal and coming up with a possible legislative proposal for an initiative pursuant to Article 185 TFEU so that cooperation can be implemented as soon as possible?

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