

Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013)

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On the basis of a Presidency note, the Council held an orientation debate on the sections dealing with "Ideas" and "Capacities" of the Commission proposal for the 7th Framework Programme (FP7) for research and technological development (2007-2013). The other two parts of the proposal, "Cooperation" (collaborative research) and "People" (human resources), were examined in-depth by the Council last June.

In the light of the discussions and also taking into account work done under the Luxembourg Presidency, the UK Presidency intends to draw up a revised draft text covering the whole Framework Programme proposal as a basis for future work with a view to enabling the Council to reach a partial general approach at its session on 28/29 November.

The new FP7 is aimed at helping to implement one of the EU's priority goals of increasing the potential for economic growth and of strengthening European competitiveness by investing in knowledge, innovation and human capital. The Commission envisages the bulk of the funds continuing to go to collaborative, applied research as under FP6 but several new elements have been added. The main new actions proposed by the Commission are funding for basic research through a European Research Council run by eminent scientists; support for large-scale public-private partnerships to take forward industrial projects; funding for new research infrastructures; and research in the field of security.

It should be recalled that the FP7 proposals are to be considered in parallel with the proposal concerning the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme and that detailed modalities for the implementation of the FP7 are set out in the Specific Programmes adopted by the Commission on 21 September 2005. Both the Framework Programme and the Specific Programmes have to be adopted by the Council by qualified majority, in accordance with Article 166 of the EC Treaty.