



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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Council adopts common position on the 7th research framework programme

The Council adopted today¹ a common position on a draft decision establishing the 7th research framework programme (FP7) of the European Community (EC) for the period 2007-2013 (*12032/06 +ADD1*). The Council's common position will be forwarded to the European Parliament with a view to reaching an agreement in second reading under the co-decision procedure. Adoption follows a political agreement achieved by the Council on 24 July² (*for more information see press release 11554/06*).

The Council's common position reflects to a great extent both the Commission's proposal and the Parliament's opinion as regards structure, scientific and technological content, means of implementation and budgetary resources. A total of EUR 50.5 billion will be allocated to FP7-EC for seven years.

¹ The common position was adopted, without discussion, by qualified majority, at the Competitiveness Council meeting.

² The Council also reached political agreement on 24 July on a draft decision establishing the FP7 of the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) for research and training activities (2007-2011). This decision will be adopted simultaneously with the EC framework programme decision.

P R E S S

In addition to fulfilling the objectives laid down in the EC treaty and contributing to the reform strategy laid down in 2000 in Lisbon (creation of a more competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in Europe capable of sustainable economic growth, with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion), the new FP7 has the following characteristics:

- concentration on a selected number of thematic priorities in which Community action can provide the greatest possible added value;
- support for research at the frontiers of knowledge, through investigator-driven basic research performed by the most excellent research teams in Europe, through the creation of an independent European Research Council;
- better education and research training, easier access to research opportunities and better recognition of the researcher's contribution to the goals of society, through the strengthening of human resources policy;
- optimising the use and development of European research infrastructures; strengthening the innovative capacities of SMEs and their ability to benefit from research; supporting the development of research-driven clusters; bringing science and society closer together, and giving support to the coherent development of research policies at Community and national level;
- strengthening the role of the EU's Joint Research Centre in providing customer-driven scientific and technological support for the conception, development, implementation and monitoring of Community policies;
- simplification and streamlining of the implementation arrangements, on the basis of improved decentralised management procedures.