

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL
RESEARCH COMMITTEE

– CREST –
Secretariat

CREST 1202/05

NOTE

To: CREST

Subject : DRAFT SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS OF THE 299th MEETING OF THE
SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH COMMITTEE (CREST)
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 20 JANUARY 2005

The meeting was chaired by Mr MITSOS (European Commission, Director General) and Mr ESCRITT (European Commission, Director)

1. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

The Committee adopted the agenda as set out in communication CM 90/05 of 11 January 2005. Two information points were added under "any other business" (see section 7 of this note).

2. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS OF THE 298th MEETING

The Commission suggested some minor modifications to item 4 of the draft summary conclusions of the 298th meeting, as set out in doc. 1209/04.

The Committee approved the summary conclusions as set out in doc. 1209/1/04 REV 1.

3. INFORMATION FROM THE PRESIDENCY AND THE COMMISSION

a) Mr DIEDERICH (Luxembourg Presidency) informed the Committee on:

- the discussions planned for the Competitiveness Council on 18 April 2005 and 6/7 June 2005 concerning the expected Commission's proposal on the seventh Framework Programme;
- the work under way for the mid-term review of the Lisbon objectives;
- the preparatory work for the second European Space Council due to take place under the Luxembourg Presidency and prepared in accordance with the EC/ESA Framework Agreement;
- the EU R&D Evaluators' Network Meeting in Luxembourg scheduled for 9-11 April 2005;
- the launch of the "Researchers in Europe 2005" Initiative in June 2005;
- the Informal Forum of IST Research Directors on 9/10 June 2005;
- the eIRG Meeting scheduled for 13/14 June 2005 in Mondorf-les-Bains;
- the launch of GEANT2 (14 June 2005);
- the Helsinki Group meeting scheduled for 21/22 June 2005.

b) Mr MITSOS informed the Committee on progress concerning the Commission's proposal for the 7th Framework Programme. In particular it was pointed out that: -

- there is a clear commitment to have the 7th Framework Programme proposal adopted by the Commission on 6th April 2005. The budget will be based on the Commission's proposal for the financial perspectives, which will double the funding compared to the current framework programme amounts. An "intermediate paper" might be ready in February, outlining in particular financial allocations, before the adoption of the FP 7 proposal by the Commission. If, in the course of discussions, reductions occur in the financial allocation, these will not be linear, but could lead to the abandonment of certain parts of the proposal which will no longer prove viable;
- in line with the Commission's communication of June 2004, the content of the 7th framework programme proposal will cover areas which are already well known, i.e. technological platforms, infrastructure support, human resources, investigator-driven research within the European Research Council;

- the largest part of the budget will be devoted to "collaborative research". Here the key characteristics will be continuity (i.e. no revolutionary changes to priorities and instruments) and simplification (i.e. rationalisation of the administrative procedure and improvement to user-friendliness);
- more emphasis will be given to research topics and sectors as such. The instruments should clearly serve the objectives and not the other way round. This would imply a higher relevance for capacity creating mechanisms, such as infrastructures, "regions of knowledge", participation of SMEs in research efforts in general, the INCO-co-operation with third countries, "Science and Society", etc.;
- the duration of the 7th Framework Programme will be for the whole seven years' period of the financial perspectives, probably with a mechanism for a mid-term review;
- the proposal will cover the research aspects of space and security;
- given the nature of the proposal, certain elements, e.g. the ERC are likely to be dealt with by executive agencies. Implementation mechanisms and the management structure will be clearly laid down in the proposal.

Finally, Mr MITSOS gave some explanations concerning the link between the 7th Framework Programme and the proposal for a Framework Programme for Competitiveness and Innovation (CIP). Mr ESCRITT pointed to important inputs that the Commission had already received by numerous stakeholders via the web-consultation.

4. 3% OBJECTIVE AND OPEN METHOD OF CO-ORDINATION (OMC)

(i) Presentation, discussion and adoption of first topics and work modules for the second OMC cycle

Mr GOENAGA (Commission services) gave a brief introduction on the progress achieved so far concerning the topics and the preparation of work modules for the 2nd cycle and in particular the intentions of delegations to act as lead or co-lead country for the respective topics.

Mr ZEEUWTS (IWT Vlaanderen, Belgian delegation) presented the outline of the work module for the topic "Design measures to promote the growth of young research-intensive small and medium-sized enterprises." The topic would be led by Belgium in cooperation with the Netherlands.

Mr MANRIQUE REOL (Spanish delegation) presented the work module for the topic "Promote the reform of public research centres and universities, in particular to promote the transfer of knowledge to society and industry". The topic would be led by Spain in cooperation with Italy.

Mr ROELANDT (Ministry of Economic Affairs, Dutch delegation) presented an outline of the work module for the topic "Improve the design and implementation of national policy-mixes". The topic would be led by the Netherlands in cooperation with the United Kingdom.

A number of CREST delegations expressed their interest to participate in the topics presented and agreed to the respective outline of work modules:

1. Design measures to promote the growth of young research-intensive small and medium-sized enterprises: CH, IE, PT, SK, AT, SI, IS, ES, BG
2. Promote the reform of public research centres and universities, in particular to promote the transfer of knowledge to society and industry: IE, DE, PT, DK, SK, LT, IS, BG
3. Improve the design and implementation of national policy-mixes: IE, SK, LT, IS, BG.

The Chair indicated that a final decision on the lead country for the topic "Promote sound evaluation methods of fiscal measures for research" had not yet been taken, but contacts, especially between the Norwegian and Polish delegation, would continue.

Concerning the two remaining topics "Promote more effective industry-PRO links, including the implementation of guidelines developed by European associations" and "Improve the coherence and effectiveness of 'Intellectual Property Rights ownership'- regimes for publicly funded research", several delegations have indicated their interest in participating, but no lead country has yet emerged.

Mr SARAGOSSI (Commission services) suggested that the common template to report on national strategies towards the 3% objective, which had been raised on earlier occasions, should be dealt with in the group covering "policy-mixes". All lead countries and groups working on the topics could count on the support of the Commission services.

Mr GOENAGA (Commission services) suggested that the Knowledge Sharing Platform envisaged in the modus operandi may be developed in the context of ERAWATCH with the assistance of the ERAWATCH Advisory Group. Two CREST delegates (FI, UK) are members of the ERAWATCH Advisory Group and the French CREST delegate (Mr. M. Gaillard) has expressed his willingness to contribute to the development of this platform.

The Chair concluded that the three topics and the outline of the work modules presented by the lead countries were adopted by CREST. Other topics could be adopted at the 18 March CREST meeting.

The Chair pointed out that those countries, which had decided on participation in the various topics, should nominate their representatives before 28 January 2005 by informing the Commission (Xabier Goenaga) and the respective lead country. On the three topics where the lead and co-lead countries are already known and the work modules agreed, work could start immediately.

Reports on work done on these three topics could be made at a forthcoming CREST meeting in accordance with the work modules presented to CREST.

(ii) Presentation by the Irish delegation on the Irish action plan for Promoting Investment in R&D to 2010.

Mr BRANDON and Mr HUGHES (Irish delegation) gave a presentation on the Irish action plan for promoting investment in R&D to 2010 "Building Ireland's Knowledge Economy".

(iii) Presentation by the Finnish delegation on the final report on the "Finland in the Global Economy" project

Mr KEKKONEN (Finnish Ministry of Trade and Industry) presented an overview on the final report on the "Finland in the Global Economy" project.

After welcoming both presentations, CREST was given further explanations and clarifications by the two delegations concerned.

5. BASIC RESEARCH

The Committee took note of three further presentations on national basic research systems, given by:

- Mrs EGGIMANN (Acting Director, Swiss National Science Foundation);
- Mr CRESPO (Vice-President, Science and Technology Foundation FCT - Portugal);
- Mr GIERLINSKI (Ministry of Scientific Research and Information Technology - Poland).

The Chair announced that other presentations by delegations (probably Sweden, Belgium) on basic research would be given at the next CREST meeting. Given that these were likely to be the last in the series of presentations, it was decided that the nomination and appointment of a rapporteur to summarize the various presentations would be made on that occasion.

6. AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled to take place in Brussels on 18th March 2005. The agenda would include the following items:

- 3 % and OMC (Second Cycle)
 - = Further decisions on topics, participation and work modules
- National Basic Research Systems
 - = Further presentations by delegations
- Five Year Assessment of the Framework Programme (1999-2003)

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- a) Mr PICHLER (Austrian delegation) informed the Committee on a Workshop on the participation of Western Balkan countries in the forthcoming framework programme.

 - b) The Luxembourg Presidency announced a social event to take place on the evening of the 17th March to celebrate the 300th meeting of CREST.
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