

**Commission Services' response to the recommendations
of the 5-Year Assessment Panel for the**

**PROMOTION OF INNOVATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT
OF SME'S PARTICIPATION PROGRAMME**

<p>These comments have been prepared by officials of DG ENTR and RTD and represent their personal views on the conclusions of the 5-year assessment. These views have not been adopted or in any way approved by the Commission and should not be relied upon as a statement of the views of the Commission or DG ENTR or DG RTD.</p>

The Panel's recommendations are constructive and sound, and the Commission services take them into account in the implementation of the Fifth Framework Programme, in agreement with the current Council Decision and procedures.

Furthermore the recommendations are in line with the priorities set by ERA in particular concerning SMEs and co-ordination of innovation activities at the regional, national and European level. The recommendations will also be taken into account in the preparation of the next Framework Programme.

The Commission agrees that the training and self-evaluation process of Commission staff is an important issue. Currently the Commission services are finalising appropriate plans which will fulfil the Institution's needs.

Every effort will be made so that the budget for INNOVATION-SME actions remains of an appropriate level.

