

RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION ON RESEARCH THEMES IN FP7

DG Research, European Commission, 16 March 2005

1. INTRODUCTION

An open consultation was undertaken by the Commission during November and December 2004 to allow interested individuals and organisations to submit contributions regarding thematic domains for transnational collaborative research to be supported in the 7th Framework Programme for research and technological development. This consultation followed a more general consultation on the Commission's guidelines for future EU policy to support research¹ and complemented a number of more specific consultations on thematic domains in fields such as Information and Communication Technologies, Social Science and Humanities, Foresight and Nanotechnology.²

Over 1800 contributions were received and this note provides some information about the types and level of response. The contents of the contributions are being used to help prepare the Commission's proposals for the 7th Framework Programme. In many cases the detailed nature of the contributions means that they will be considered in the preparation of the proposals for the Specific Programmes under the 7th Framework Programme.

2. TYPES OF RESPONSES

A total of 1824 contributions were received³ of which approximately half came from individuals and half from organisations. The highest number of organisational responses came from associations, closely followed by universities/higher education and then research institutes. The highest number of individual responses came from universities/higher education. Around 10 percent of organisational responses came from commercial bodies and from government bodies.

Type of organisation:	All responses		Of which organisational responses	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Governmental body	163	8,9%	98	10,6%
University/higher education	618	33,9%	234	25,4%
Commercial (more than 250 employees)	65	3,6%	51	5,5%
Commercial (less than 250 employees)	49	2,7%	43	4,7%
Research institute	403	22,1%	182	19,7%
Association	311	17,1%	246	26,7%
Other	215	11,8%	68	7,4%
<i>Total</i>	<i>1824</i>	<i>100,0%</i>	<i>922</i>	<i>100,0%</i>

¹ A report on the results is available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/future/index_en.cfm

² Links to these consultations are available at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/future/themes/index_en.cfm

³ This total excludes duplicate responses.

Contributions came from a wide spread of countries, including all EU Member States except Luxembourg. The highest numbers came from the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, France and Spain. Collectively, over 100 responses (6.4 % of the total) came from the 10 new Member States.

Country of response	Number	Percentage	Country of response	Number	Percentage
AT – Austria	41	2,2%	MT – Malta	10	0,5%
BE – Belgium	85	4,7%	NL – Netherlands	209	11,5%
CY – Cyprus	4	0,2%	PL – Poland	35	1,9%
CZ - Czech Republic	6	0,3%	PT – Portugal	44	2,4%
DE – Germany	239	13,1%	SK - Slovak Republic	4	0,2%
DK – Denmark	33	1,8%	SL – Slovenia	8	0,4%
EE – Estonia	15	0,8%	SV – Sweden	72	3,9%
EL – Greece	33	1,8%	UK - United Kingdom	276	15,1%
ES – Spain	151	8,3%	BG – Bulgaria	6	0,3%
FI – Finland	65	3,6%	CH – Switzerland	28	1,5%
FR – France	154	8,4%	IL – Israel	13	0,7%
HU – Hungary	9	0,5%	IS – Iceland	0	0,0%
IE – Ireland	22	1,2%	NO – Norway	37	2,0%
IT – Italy	97	5,3%	RO – Romania	3	0,2%
LT – Lithuania	22	1,2%	TR – Turkey	11	0,6%
LU - Luxembourg	0	0,0%	Other country	22	1,2%
LV – Látvia	4	0,2%	International organisation	66	3,6%
			TOTAL	1824	100,0%

3. RESEARCH AREAS WHICH CONTRIBUTIONS RELATE TO.

Participants were asked to indicate which area(s) of research in the 6th Framework Programme their contribution related to. A significant number of contributions related to each of the areas under the 6th Framework Programme as well as to security research. The highest number related to global change and ecosystems and to combating major diseases, and a large number to food quality and safety, to advanced genomics and its applications to health and to sustainable energy systems. It should be pointed out that the number of contributions received is not considered to be an indicator of the relevant importance of the thematic priorities, given that this depends on the justification of topics proposed against the three defined criteria and also that respondents to the consultation were “self selecting”.

Most of the topics suggested by participants fit within the scope of the thematic priorities of the 6th Framework Programme, although in some cases they relate to specific topics which are not covered by the work programmes. Many of the contributions therefore contained topics which were indicated to be “not covered in the 6th Framework Programme”. In addition, for a significant number of such responses the topics of “marine research” or “complementary and alternative medicine” were proposed, and some of these responses may have been the result of a coordinated campaign.

Area(s) of research under the 6th Framework Programme to which contributions relate to:	Number	% of responses indicating the area
Advanced genomics and its applications to health	256	14,0%
Combating major diseases	590	32,3%
Information society technologies	187	10,3%
Nanotechnologies and nanosciences, knowledge based multifunctional materials and new production	138	7,6%
Aeronautics	63	3,5%
Space	66	3,6%
Food quality and safety	272	14,9%
Sustainable energy systems	216	11,8%
Nuclear fusion and/or fission	54	3,0%
Sustainable surface transport	134	7,3%
Global change and ecosystems	755	41,4%
Citizens and governance in a knowledge based society	130	7,1%
Research to support policy	338	18,5%
Security (not covered in the 6 th Framework Programme)	102	5,6%
Other areas not covered in the 6 th Framework Programme	843	46,2%

4. CONCLUSIONS

The Commission is using the results of this consultation in the preparation of its proposal for the 7th Framework Programme. For this exercise, the contributions from this consultation are considered along side the views expressed by European Institutions, other written contributions and position papers submitted to the Commission, as well as the outcomes of other relevant consultations, workshops and events relating to specific fields of research.

The results suggest that the thematic priorities of the 6th Framework Programme, together with the new areas of Space and Security, cover the vast majority of the topics which stakeholders would like to see supported in the 7th Framework Programme, although in many cases a wider range of topics would need to be supported under each priority. In addition, many of the contributions relate to topics which are of a too detailed nature for the Framework Programme proposal, and so will be considered in the context of preparing the proposals for the Specific Programmes.

ANNEX: TEXT FROM WEBSITE AND COMMENTS FORM.

Introduction

The European Commission is undertaking a process to identify thematic domains for future European support under the 7th Framework Programme. It is essential to identify those domains where support at European level is most needed and will have the greatest impact, as set out in the Communication [Science and Technology, the key to Europe's future – Guidelines for future European Union policy to support research](#). This concerns support where thematic domains will be predetermined at the start of the Framework Programmes. This is particularly important for future support to transnational collaborative research.

The thematic domains to be identified will cover an area of research in which a range of research projects and networks should be supported in the medium term and allow sufficient flexibility to take into account scientific, industrial and policy developments during the period of the 7th Framework Programme. The Commission wishes to identify thematic domains which should continue from the Sixth Framework Programme as well as new and emerging ones (including those in the two new areas of space and security which are described in the Commission Communication). A full list of thematic domains under the current priorities can be found in the Annex I to the [Decisions on the Sixth Framework of the European Commission](#) and of [Euratom](#).

The Commission will present a list of thematic domains for future European Union support to research when it presents the proposal for the 7th Framework Programme, due in 2005.

Criteria to identify thematic domains

The Commission is using the following three criteria in order to identify which thematic domains will be included in the proposal for the 7th Framework Programme.

1. Contribution to EU policy objectives

The research in the thematic domain must generate new knowledge to meet societal needs and catalyse the delivery of a European policy objective(s), including the objective to transform Europe into a dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy, capable of sustainable economic growth. Relevant policy objectives include those in the areas of health, consumer protection, energy, the environment, development aid, agriculture and fisheries, biotechnology, information and communication technologies, transport, education and training, employment, social affairs, economic cohesion, justice and home affairs. The thematic domain may be one of current importance or likely to become important in the medium to long term.

To be assessed through: research needs stemming from EU Treaties and policy commitments; analysis of market prospects and competitive position of EU industries; future needs identified in Foresight and similar exercises; views from the research community and industry.

2. European research potential

The thematic domain must be one where there is a strong potential for excellent research and technological development and for disseminating and converting the results into social and economic benefits. For example future support should, wherever possible, build on past and current investments and successes in relevant areas of research and its application.

To be assessed through: analysis of past investments, experience and successes in the Framework Programme; international comparisons of European research performance; views from the research community and industry.

3. European added value

There must be a strong need for additional public funding and for such intervention to be at a European level.

- Additional public funding to be justified by the externalities and wider benefits from the research and by the need to attract increased public and private investments.

- European level intervention to be justified by the need for European centres of excellence through collaborative research: to create the necessary multi-disciplinarity and critical mass of scale and scope; to overcome fragmentation and unnecessary duplication, lack of connections and of interoperability; to complement other intergovernmental, national and private actions; to address shared or European level problems; or to enhance visibility of European research excellence.

To be assessed through: analysis of levels and impact of current public support available in the Europe Union and its Member States and in comparison with other countries; views from the research community and industry.

How to contribute to the debate

The Commission welcomes contributions to the debate on identifying future thematic domains from the research community and users of research, including: research organisations and associations; industrial and sector associations; individual universities, enterprises and research institutes; and all individuals and groups with an interest in research.

Contributions can be made in two ways:

- A range of activities, fora, and documents are available which relate to the identification of future European research priorities in defined thematic areas of research. Interested parties are invited to make their contributions through these fora. (See sidebar for links to relevant fora.) These thematic activities follow on from the [general consultation](#) on the guidelines for future European Union policy to support research which was undertaken from July to October 2004.
- For organisations and individuals who wish to make a contribution in addition to any contribution to the general consultation or which does not relate to the existing thematic fora or is a consolidated contribution across a number of thematic areas, the [comments form](#) can be used to send contributions.

Please note that the Commission is not seeking views on detailed research topics for calls for proposals. Consolidated contributions that represent the views of a number of institutions and/or individuals would be particularly welcome.

The Commission will ensure that all contributions received are transmitted to the competent persons within the Commission to inform the analysis of thematic domains to be included in the 7th Framework Programme proposal.

To ensure that they can be properly included in the analysis, the Commission would welcome contributions as early as possible and by no later than the end of the 2004.

A report on the contributions received will be made available in due course at:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/future/index_en.html

Comments Form

What will happen to the data you submit? Read our Specific Privacy Statement
[http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/sps-eform_en.html]

*Are you responding on a personal basis or on behalf of your organisation

*Name of your organisation (write "none" if you have no affiliation)

Department:

Position:

*Type of organisation: [governmental body; university/higher education; commercial organisation (more than 250 employees); commercial organisation (less than 250 employees); association (e.g. trade association, research association, civil society organisation); other]

*Contact name:

*Contact email:

*Country (EU countries listed first): [AT – Austria; BE – Belgium; CY – Cyprus; CZ - Czech Republic; DE – Germany; DK – Denmark; EE – Estonia; EL – Greece; ES – Spain; FI – Finland; FR – France; HU – Hungary; E – Ireland; IT – Italy; LT – Lithuania; LU - Luxembourg ;LV – Látvia; MT – Malta; NL – Netherlands; PL – Poland; PT – Portugal; SK - Slovak Republic; SL – Slovenia; SV – Sweden; UK - United Kingdom; BG – Bulgaria; CH – Switzerland; IL – Israel ;IS – Iceland; NO – Norway; RO – Romania; TR – Turkey; Other country; International organisation]

*Area(s) of research from the 6th Framework Programme that your contribution relates to:

Advanced genomics and its applications to health

Combating major diseases

Information society technologies

Nanotechnologies and nanosciences, knowledge based multifunctional materials, new production

Aeronautics

Space

Food quality and safety

Sustainable energy systems

Nuclear fusion, nuclear fission and radiation protection

Sustainable surface transport

Global change and ecosystems

Citizens and governance in a knowledge based society

Research to support policy

Science and society

Security (not covered in the 6th Framework Programme)

Other areas not covered in the 6th Framework Programme Please specify

*Please attach your contribution here (plain text, MS-WORD, RTF, WordPerfect PDF formats; only one attachment):

Documents should be no longer than 5 pages and should provide a short description of the thematic domain and relevant information to support the thematic domain using the three criteria. Longer documents are appropriate for consolidated contributions that cover a number of different thematic domains.

Any additional comments: