



Research Council (Brussels, 11 March 2002 - 10h00)

The Research Council, to be chaired by the Spanish Minister for Science and Technology, Anna Birulés, will focus on the 6th EU framework programme of research. Research receives the third largest share of the EU budget, after the CAP and the Structural Funds.

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The framework programme proper, the rules for participation and the specific programmes form a legislative package known as the framework programme. The framework programme and the rules for participation have to be approved by codecision of the Council and the European Parliament. The specific programmes are approved by decision of the Council.

The Ministers will only be able to hold preliminary discussions on the rules for participation and the specific programmes, as the Parliament is still at the first reading stage and has yet to deliver its opinion. The framework decision proper is currently at the second reading stage in the European Parliament, following reception of the Council's common position on 4 February.

The Commission will present a communication proposing a negotiating mandate for an agreement specifying the relationship between the Community and the European Space Agency, in what will be a step forward in European space policy. The Commission will also request an amendment of the negotiating mandate to initiate a new phase in the ITER Agreement between the Community, Russia and Japan, the purpose of which is the construction of a new thermonuclear reactor. The Council will be examining the costs, the future legal identity and the headquarters.

With a view to the Barcelona European Council, the Commission will be presenting its science and technology strategy in all areas relating to the life sciences and biotechnology (agriculture, development, internal market, etc.).

Lastly, the Commission will report the results of the two meetings of the expert group on biological and chemical terrorism set up following 11 September.

- Draft Agenda of the Research Council (Brussels, 11 March 2002 - 10h00)

