



Brussels,
April 15, 2005

NOTES for PRESS¹
The Competitiveness Council
Luxembourg, April 18, 2005

Agenda Information

The Council will address the points in the field of research in the following order: the Commission will present the Outline of Seventh Programme of the European Community for the activities of research, technological development and demonstration (2007 – 2013) followed of a first exchange of views of the Council on the basis of note prepared by the Presidency. During the lunch, the Ministers will have an exchange of views with the Commission Research Head Mr. Janez Potocnik, on the state of the international negotiations of the ITER project as well as the schedule for implementation of the result of these negotiations. In the afternoon, the Council will consider the topic of human resources in the field of the research and the development in particular by an exchange of views followed of the adoption of conclusions of the Council.

Background Information (only section on ITER)

ITER

The Council will be informed by Mr. Janez Potocnik, Commissioner in charge of research, on the state of the international negotiations aiming at the construction and exploitation of an experimental thermonuclear reactor (ITER) and envisaged calendar for implementation. In particular, Mr. Potocnik will inform the Ministers on his April 11 –12 meeting in Japan with Mr. Nariaki Nakayama, Japanese Minister for Sciences and Technologies. Concerning the schedule, it should be recalled that the last European Council (March 22– 23, 2005), in its conclusions insisted "on the need for beginning the construction of ITER on the European site before the end of 2005 and invited the Commission to put all works about it in order to achieve this goal, in particular the finalization of the international agreement before July 2005." The costs related to this project are estimated at 10 billion euro 4,5 euro will be intended for the construction of the experimental reactor. It is hoped that this reactor will contribute to make fusion an economically viable source of energy by about 2050. The reactor could be operational in 2016 if its construction starts before the end 2005.