



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR RESEARCH
DIVISION FOR INTERNATIONAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

FACTSHEET

BULGARIA

Chapter 17 – Science and research

1. The *acquis*¹

The *acquis* in this chapter consists of a large number of Council and Commission Decisions concerning framework programmes of EC activities and those of the European Atomic Energy Community, as well as science and technology cooperation agreements with third countries.

The framework programme consists of the EC Framework Programme, covering research, technological development and demonstration activities, and the Euratom Framework Programme, covering research and training activities in the nuclear field. The Fifth Framework Programme covered the period 1998-2002. The Sixth covers 2002-2006 and goes beyond the simple funding of programmes, aiming as it does at scientific excellence, improved competitiveness and innovation. All 13 candidate countries have expressed interest in joining the 6th EC Framework Programme and seven of them (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Romania Slovakia and Slovenia) also in joining the 6th Euratom Framework Programme. Relevant Memoranda of Understanding have been signed on 29.10.2002.

The *acquis* in the field of science and research does not require any transposition in the national legal order. Implementation capacity relates not to the application of legal provisions but rather to the existence of the necessary conditions for effective participation in activities under the framework programmes. These conditions depend on factors such as the existence of necessary infrastructure, effective functioning of the institutions involved and links between them, the quality of researchers and their ability to cooperate etc. The state and private institutions concerned need to be able to provide the necessary matching funds.

A network of National Contact Points exists in each country and cooperation in the field of science and technology is well established. All candidate countries need to reinforce their administrative

¹ Information largely drawn from the European Commission, DG Enlargement, <http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/negotiations/chapters/index.htm>

capacity as well as strengthening their research infrastructure to ensure successful participation in the framework programmes.

2. The Negotiations

Chapter opened: first half of 2000

Status: provisionally closed in May 2000

Transitional arrangements: none

3. Latest Assessment of the European Commission¹

Bulgaria has made good progress in enhancing its participation in the relevant Framework Programmes. Through its relatively successful association to these Programmes, Bulgaria has achieved a good level of implementation of the *acquis*. Bulgaria should now focus efforts on further reinforcement of research-related administrative capacity and infrastructure, *inter alia* to maintain and further enhance success concerning its association with the relevant Framework Programmes. An overall strategy for scientific research and technological development should also be elaborated. Bulgaria is generally meeting the commitments and requirements arising from the accession negotiations in the field of science and research.

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¹ European Commission, 2003 Regular Report on Bulgaria's progress towards accession
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report_2003/pdf/rr_bg_final.pdf