



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR RESEARCH
DIRECTORATE A
DIVISION FOR INTERNATIONAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

FACTSHEET

MALTA

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. Thirteen candidate countries have recently signed memoranda of understanding which will allow them to participate on an equal footing with existing Member States. Seven countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Romania, Slovak Republic and Slovenia) have also expressed an interest in being associated with the Sixth Euratom Framework Programme.

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

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

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

2. The negotiations

The chapter has been closed with ten countries and provisionally closed with Bulgaria and Romania. No transitional arrangements have been requested.

Chapter opened: first half of 2000

Status: closed in December 2002 (provisionally closed in May 2000)

Transitional arrangements: none

3. Latest Assessment by the European Commission ¹

In the 1999 update of its Opinion, the Commission noted the substantial effort undertaken by the MCST to foster Malta's integration into the framework programme through a network of local correspondents.

Since the 1999 update of the Opinion, Malta has continued to progress by ensuring its full participation in the Fifth Framework Programme, strengthening the structures needed for this participation and fostering public-private partnerships in research as well as the interest of the stakeholders in the research programmes.

Negotiations on this chapter have been provisionally closed. Malta has not requested any transitional arrangements. Malta is generally meeting the commitments it has made in the accession negotiations in this field.

In order to complete preparations for membership, Malta's efforts should now focus on finalising its national research strategy, reinforcing its efforts to ensure public-private partnership and fostering the participation of both universities and the business community in the relevant Communities' Framework Programmes.

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¹ European Commission, Regular Report on Malta 2002, p.77:
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/report2002/ml_en.pdf