

The First Framework Programme (1984-1987) & other related programmes

The ‘pre-competitive’ era

FP1 was established through a Council resolution on 25th July 1983 referring to Article 235 of the European Economic Community and Article 7 of EURATOM. The aim was very much about **promoting competitiveness** (especially Industrial) but also improving the **management of raw materials and energy resources**. Small parts of the FP budget also went to funding development aid, improving living and working conditions and the effectiveness of the Community’s scientific and technical potential.

The resolution establishing FP1 also laid the ground for further sector specific programmes such as ESPRIT, RACE and BRITE.

The **ESPRIT** programme was adopted by the Council on 28th February 1984. The decision did not lay down any general objectives other than that the programme ‘shall comprise pre-competitive research and development projects’. However, objectives were laid out for the six areas covered by the programme. The preamble refers to a declaration by Heads of State from 1979 declaring that ‘the dynamic complex of **information industries**, based on the new **electronic technologies**, offered a major source of economic growth and social development’.

The first definition phase of RACE was adopted on 25th July 1985. It refers to several statements by Heads of States emphasising the ‘importance of **telecommunications** as a major source for economic growth and social development’ and also referred to assessment of the European Parliament stressing the key role of telecommunications. The aim of the definition phase was to prepare a general European framework for the development of advanced systems of communications for the future and promote technical and industrial cooperation.

In the BRITE programme, the objectives were ‘pre-competitive basic technological research and development’ in **industrial areas** other than those covered by ESPRIT and RACE, plus pilot and demonstration projects.

ESPRIT, RACE and BRITE were later on included into the 2nd Framework Programme.

The Riesenhuber Criteria

The criteria used in FP1 were laid down during the German Presidency (first half of 1983) led by the former German Research minister Heinz Riesenhuber and are usually called ‘The Riesenhuber Criteria’. They expressed clearly and for the first time a systematic approach to the justification of European research activities according to their **European Added Value**.

Community involvement was justified by:

- Research conducted on so vast a scale that single Member States either could not provide the necessary financial means and personnel, or could only do so with difficulty;

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- Research which would obviously benefit financially from being carried out jointly, after taking account of the additional costs inherent in all actions involving international cooperation;
- Research which, owing to the complementary nature of work carried out at national level in a given sector, would achieve significant results in the whole of the Community for problems to which solutions call for research conducted on a vast scale, particularly in a geographic sense;
- Research which contributes to the cohesion of the common market, and which promotes the unification of European science, and technology; as well as research which leads where necessary to the establishment of uniform laws and standard.

The Single European Act

The Single Act from 1987 added Title VI to the Treaty on Research Activities for the first time and provided for the first time a **legal basis** for the Framework Programme and its objectives in Articles 130f-q. With some modifications, these articles are still the legal basis for the existing FP.

Article 130i ‘defines’ the FP:

‘The Community shall adopt a multi-annual framework programme setting out all its activities. The framework programme shall lay down the scientific and technical objectives, define their respective priorities, set out the main lines of envisaged activities and set the necessary amount, detailed rules of financial participation by the Community in the programme as a whole and the breakdown of this sum between the various activities envisaged’.

Further, the objectives are spelled out in Article 130i:

1. *The Community’s aim shall be to strengthen the scientific and technological basis of European industry and encourage it to become more competitive at international level.*
2. *In order to achieve this, it shall encourage enterprise including small and medium-sized enterprises, research centres and universities in their research and technological development activities; it shall support their efforts to cooperate with one another, notably aiming to enable enterprise to exploit the Community’s internal market potential to the full, especially through the opening up of national public contracts, the definition of common standards and the removal of legal and fiscal barriers to that cooperation.*
3. *In the achievement of these aims, special account shall be taken of the connection between the common research and technological development effort, the establishment of the internal market and the implementation of common policies, particularly regarding competition and trade.*

Ever since FP1, the following Framework programmes continuously increased in terms of budget and duration and continued the effort to coordinate and harmonise European research efforts in various different areas.

But only starting with FP6, this approach got an entirely new dimension by the invention of the idea of a European Research Area (ERA), including all research and development activities, programmes and policies in Europe which involve a transnational perspective.

Sources: http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/index_en.htm - accessed 12.07.12; “Priority-setting in the European Research Framework Programmes” by Dan Andrée, VinnoVA Analysis VA 2009:17