

The future of the TMR programme under the Fifth RTD Framework Programme

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The Commission has proposed a programme entitled "Improving human potential", with a budget of ECU 1,402 million. This would combine and continue the work of both the TMR programme and the Targeted-Socio-Economic Research (TSER) programme. The IHP programme will focus on five areas:

- Reinforcing the Community's human research capital: This will develop the two principal actions of TMR, the research training networks and the Marie Curie training fellowships. In comparison to the Fourth Framework Programme, greater emphasis will be placed on encouraging industry-academia interaction;
- Improving the utilization of major research facilities: This will build on the "Access to large-scale facilities" action of TMR, with the aim of ensuring European scientists have access to state-of-the-art infrastructure, and that best use is made of these facilities;
- Promoting scientific and technological excellence and the public image of research: This will support events to promote exchange of scientific knowledge, such as those currently supported by the Euroconferences action, as well as measures to ensure public recognition and acceptance of scientific achievements. Included among these will be the successful European Contest for Young Scientists, now in its tenth year, and a new Descartes Prize which will give publicity to the highest achievements of

European scientists;

- Harnessing socio-economic research to the needs of European society;
 - Support for the development of science and technology policies in Europe:
- These two sectors will continue and develop the research work done within the TSER programme. Research will be aimed at helping Europe to address the trends in society and structural changes which now confront it. In particular, it will involve the development of new models to encourage growth and employment.

The Commission's proposal for the Fifth Framework Programme is currently being discussed by the European Parliament and Council. The Commission hopes that the legislative procedure will be completed during 1998, allowing the first calls for proposals to be launched this year.

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