

Dear Chair,

Dear colleagues,

Let me begin by thanking all the colleagues with whom I have worked in close collaboration on Horizon 2020. I should like to thank, in particular, Cristian Ehler for his commitment and openness to discuss the three reports (framework, rules and specific programme) in close cooperation. I should also like to thank the colleagues that contributed for this report with their amendments and the EPP Horizon 2020 working group and advisers for their invaluable assistance.

Today, I should like to give you an overview of the progress that has been made to date on the draft report for the Specific Programme Implementing Horizon 2020.

Consultation

To begin with the immediate background: before the summer recess, 988 amendments were tabled with regard to the Specific programme proposal. I am happy to say that the vast majority of these amendments favourably reflected the original spirit of the report. In the middle of July, the first draft of the Compromise Amendments had been prepared.

Last week, in Strasbourg, the shadow rapporteurs gave me their initial reactions with regard to the Compromise Amendments. This means that I will now be – after today's meeting and having listened to you all – in a position to work on a new version of the compromise amendments based on the comments that I have received.

Converging Points

The process that I have described has allowed us to identify four main areas of convergence. These are

~ Firstly, in general terms, excellence remains fundamental to the principles around which Horizon 2020 will be constructed. Considerable attention has also been devoted to striking the right balance between bottom up and top down research projects.

~ Secondly, an effort has also been made to widen participation. With regard to participation, more attention to a more balanced involvement of the different member states and the regions is no doubt desirable. Similarly, an effort should be made to integrate an active awareness of the gender dimension in so far as participants, boards and so on are concerned.

As for improved synergy, there is a general consensus that more bridges should be built with the Cohesion Policy and particularly with regard to questions of the co-funding of projects. There is also support for greater synergies with EIT and with the KICs. Synergies between the three pillars and the different initiatives at European, National and Regional level should also be fully exploited. These goals can be brought about, in

concrete terms, by setting up a multi-disciplinary, scientific led approach that will coordinate health research across Horizon 2020 .

~ Thirdly, there has been a suggestion that the industrial leadership pillar should be further developed, specially the spheres of ICT, nanotechnologies, quantum, raw material, chemical industry, biotechnologies, space, etc...

~ Similarly, changes that should be made to the societal challenges pillar might be summed up in terms of:

- n°1 - deepening the health dimension
- n°2 - reinforcing food safety, forestry and maritime research
- n°3 - reinforcing energy efficiency and renewables as well as tackling the storage and decentralized production, CCS and CCU

- n°4 - introducing a mobility dimension to the transport, smart logistics
- n°5 - reinforcing climate changes, water management, biodiversity
- n°6 - reinforcing "science with and for society" and cultural heritage

There is also general agreement to the effect that the Societal Challenge 6 should be split into two different parts: "Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies" and "Secure societies: protecting freedom and the security of Europe and its citizens". Finally, there has been a demand for a further reinforcement of the Social Science and Humanities dimension.

Points That Require Further Development

Turning now to the points that require further development, let me sketch in the five main points briefly:

~ There is the question of open access to research publications and open access to research data.

~ Secondly, there is the question of whether the “widening of participation” should belong to pillar 1 or whether it is better understood in terms of a horizontal toolbox.

~ There has also been some debate about whether “Science with and for society” should be placed in pillar 1 or pillar 3.

~ Fourthly, among the pillars, within the societal challenges, there is the question of earmarking (i.e x% for renewable energy). This involves notions of type of participants, type of research and so on.

~ Finally, there is the matter of Stem Cells research.

Downward Revision of the Budget

Before finishing, let me briefly share my concerns about the budget with you. As you know the MFF negotiations are progressing. In this context, the Cypriot Presidency of the Council recently stated in a working paper that the *“level of expenditure proposed by the Commission, including all elements inside and outside the MFF, will have to be adjusted downwards”*.

The content of this report and all Horizon 2020 package will largely depend on level of these “adjustments”.

It is to be hoped that the Governments will support an adequate budget for Horizon 2020, especially those with a reputation for academic excellence. In research, as in other domains in life, you only get out what you put in!

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, let me say that I now look forward to receiving your comments regarding the Compromise Amendments and it is with pleasure that I anticipate continuing along the path that we have already travelled along so productively together.