



SME and the 7th Framework Research Programme

Position Paper of the SME Circle workshop
on the 7th Framework Programme on Research

Strasbourg, 6 June 2005

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The SME Circle

1. welcomes the view of the Commission on SME as the backbone of the European economy;
2. requests that the increase of the estimated financial means for the framework programme is reflected more strongly than up to now in the SME-specific measures;
3. requests that the implementation of the goal - 15 percent of the financial means in the thematic priorities for SME - is secured by an efficient monitoring mechanism;
4. considers it necessary, in order to make the measures of the 7th Framework Programme more attractive to SME, that especially in the SME-specific measures over-subscription will be counteracted (success quota in the 6th FRP: 8-10%);
5. considers it necessary, that intellectual property rights continue to be transferred to SME to 100%; the contractual autonomy after completion of a project shall not be restricted by determining senior contracting parties for SME;
6. considers it necessary that within the thematic priorities the terms of admission for SME are created in a way to make them more attractive to SME, by furthering small projects with a limited number of partners and a flexible use of instruments according to the needs of the SME; requests SME funding adjustments to overcome disadvantages and a lack of support for infrastructure and project management results compared to large firms.
7. calls for a substantive reduction of effort concerning time and personnel for the SME during the application procedure and for the needs for coordination during the implementation of projects;



8. demands for a substantive limitation of the hitherto rather long handling time and processing time for the applications as the high requirements concerning time and flexibility often cannot be fulfilled by those firms in "innovative and fast markets";
9. requests a clear connection between the planned Framework Programme for Competitiveness and Innovation of the DG Enterprise and the 7th Framework Programme;
10. calls for a better access of SME to public private partnership projects within the 7th Framework Programme;
11. requests that for the new thematic priority "Security" the definition of SME should be broadened because the distinction between SME and large scale industry is made in another way in this sector and it is to be feared that otherwise only a few large scale firms will participate in the programme
12. requests that SME should be integrated in the governance and the monitoring of the 7th Framework Programme; wishes a specific role for the SME Envoy as an interface considering the specific needs of SME in the programme.
13. demands for an evaluation report pointing out the research areas in which a European SME funding has proved to be reasonable; recommends, that more flexibility should be given to the Member States in such areas, in which European SME funding is less effective.