European Commission

Support for the Integration of "Newly Associated States" (NAS) in the European Research Area

QUALITY OF LIFE AND MANAGEMENT OF LIVING RESOURCES

Catalogue of contracts
under the Fifth Framework Programme

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Unit F.1

Directorate-General for Research
Directorate Health

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Foreword

In January 2000 Commissioner Philippe Busquin proposed the creation of a European Research Area[1] (ERA) with the objective of making best use of the European scientific potential. The initiative aims at generating better structural conditions for research in Europe and is oriented towards achieving the transition to a knowledge-based economy. With the forthcoming enlargement of the European Union, the geographic scope of ERA is being extended: the Candidate Countries now have an important opportunity to broaden the scientific scope and to contribute significantly to the overall success of the initiative.

With this goal in mind, Accompanying Measures under the Fifth Framework Programme were seen as important tools for helping the Candidate Countries to improve their existing research structures, to boost their scientific and technological research potential, and to develop links between their scientific communities and those of Member States.

Following a dedicated call, twenty-nine centres of excellence in the Candidate Countries have received financial support under the "Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources" programme. They are presented in this brochure. This activity is complementary to the support provided to Candidate Countries as partners in projects in the Programme.

This specific measure will hopefully set the basis for a better integration of the Candidate Countries in the European Research Area and for their full participation in the Sixth Framework Programme.

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[1] COM (2000)6

Table of Contents

Introduction

Candidate Countries' participation in EU research programmes began in 1992 under the Third Framework Programme. Since then, the number of projects involving partners from the Candidate Countries has increased steadily for the benefit of the entire European research community. The Commission has continuously supported the integration of the Candidate Countries in the European Research Area (ERA) and the Fifth Framework Programme (FP5) opened the possibility for these countries to participate in the programme under the same conditions as the Member States. The level of scientific expertise and know-how in the Candidate Countries is high and their contribution to creating the European Research Area is expected to be substantial. However, despite these positive aspects, the participation of Candidate Countries in FP5 did not come up to expectations. Therefore, the Commission launched an initiative to provide support for centres of excellence in these countries.

A specific call

A Joint Call for Proposals for RTD actions under the specific programmes for research, technological development and demonstration on "Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources" (1998-2002), "Growth" (1998-2002) and "Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development" (1998-2002), was published in the Official Journal of the European Communities (OJ 2001/C264/05). The indicative budget available for "Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources" (QoL) was 10 M€. The call aimed at supporting the integration of Candidate Countries, referred to at the time as Newly Associated States (NAS), in the ERA by means of accompanying measures[*]. The objective was to improve the links between research centres in the NAS and other research centres in Europe, through networking, exchanges, training and twinning arrangements. The call was opened to outstanding research centres defined as existing working units. These centres were expected to bring together theoretical and applied research using, where possible, a multidisciplinary approach.

Results

The QoL programme received 107 proposals coming from all Candidate Countries with one exception. It should be noted that one country accounted for around three quarters of the proposals received. The topics addressed covered all priorities of the programme.

[*] Accompanying Measures have been renamed **Specific Support Actions** under the Sixth Framework Programme

Twenty-nine independent Centres of Excellence received financial support from the European Commission. The 29 Centres of Excellence are located in Bulgaria (1), Estonia (2), Hungary (3), Poland (19), Lithuania (1), Latvia (1) and Slovakia (2). The success rate per country is approximately proportional to the number of the proposals received. It appears that most of the Centres of Excellence selected for funding in the QoL programme are related to at least one of the three following topics: biotechnology, biomedicine and agriculture. Half of the centres selected in biomedicine are in relation to genomics but none is associated to infectious diseases. All the Centres of Excellence are educational/research institutions.

Conclusion

The number of proposals submitted in the QoL programme confirms the research potential of the Candidate Countries and their willingness to be fully involved in the ERA.

The Community support should contribute to strengthening the selected Centres of Excellence and help them to lead other research centres in their countries to participate in the Sixth Framework Programme.

ANNEX 1

Annex II to the Work Programme 2002 of the Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources FP5 Programme

Joint "Quality of life and Management of Living Resources"; "Competitive and Sustainable Growth", "Energy Environment and Sustainable Development" call for proposals on accompanying measures for the integration of Newly Associated States (NAS) in the European Research Area [2]

In order to support the full integration of the NAS into the European Research Area, the specific programmes " Quality of life and management of living resources (1998-2002)", "Competitive and sustainable growth (1998-2002)", "Energy, environment and sustainable development (1998-2002)" will implement a joint call on Accompanying Measures. The objective will be to support a number of outstanding research centres, in the first place to enable them to improve links between centres in Member States and in NAS.

Centres to be supported should bring together theoretical and applied research in one or several of the fields covered by the specific programmes participating in the joint call, where possible using a multi-disciplinary approach. Support will be provided for a package of accompanying measures aimed at opening opportunities which would not be available with the budget the centre would normally receive. The package may comprise different types of activity, such as: workshops, conferences, co-ordination of a research network including member and associated countries, visiting fellows (teacher and/or researchers), training for Ph.D. students and/or post-doctoral researchers, twinning with a fellow centre in Europe and study visits of the researchers from the centre to other institutions. It should have a well-defined target and envisaged impact.
A centre is defined here as an existing working unit (a single proposer), either independent or functioning within a locally established research organisation, having its own specific research agenda and preferably distinct organisational and administrative boundaries.

The specific programme "Quality of life and management of living resources" will contribute an amount of 10 Mio Euro to the budget of the joint call. Publication of the call is foreseen for September 20, 2001, with a deadline for submission of proposals on January 31, 2002.

For the evaluation of proposals, the normal peer review procedure described in the FP5 Evaluation Manual (Annex O) will be applied, with the following specific criteria:

– Scientific/technological excellence of Centre:

- scientific/technological reputation of permanent staff
- quality and volume of scientific/technological output and activities (number of publications, patents, licences etc.)
- attraction to visitors
- experience with networking activities (participation in European or bilateral co-operation projects, number of researchers on visits abroad organisation of national or international conferences, workshops etc.)

– Structure of the Centre:

- quality of management and of supervisory board
- distribution of staff age and qualifications
- infrastructure and working environment (incl. safety regulations and equal opportunities)
- links with economic and social environment of NAS

[2] O.J. C 264, 20.09.2001, p. 5-8 – *Call identifier : QoL/Growth/EESD-2001-INTEGR*

– *Scientific/technological potential and impact of the package:*

- clear definition of target
- contribution to linkages with other European Centres
- coherence with the themes of the thematic programmes
- contribution to supra-regional relevance and international attractiveness
- contribution to economic and social relevance of the Centre to NAS

– *Diversity of funding*: proportion of existing funding coming from external sources and the origin of this funding. The contribution of the Community to the proposed package should correspond to no more than one third of the total normal activity level of the Centre.

ANNEX 2

Support for the Integration of "Newly Associated States" (NAS) in the European Research Area

List of Accompanying Measures

funded under the Fifth Framework Programme

Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources

Title :	**Stem cell Therapeutics-Excellence Centre**
Acronym :	STEC
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK3-CT-2002-30307
EC Contribution :	€ 243 635
Keywords :	Stem cells, cell therapy, transplantology

The main objective of STEC (Stem Cell Excellence Centre) is to exchange knowledge and experience on stem cell-oriented research between EU researchers and clinicians and their colleagues in newly associated states (NAS).

The goals of STEC are:

1) Improving knowledge and experience in the field of

   a) stem cell technology,
   b) molecular mechanisms controlling stem cell renewal, differentiation and plasticity, and
   c) stem cell expansion and banking.

2) Organisation of international meetings which will allow for creating a forum for mutual discussions on new possibilities of therapeutic applications of stem cells.

3) The final goal of STEC is the submission of a new strongly research-oriented project on therapeutic applications of stem cells for the 6th Framework Programme.

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Title :	**Protection of forest resources in Central Europe**
Acronym :	PROFOREST
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK1-CT-2002-30315
EC Contribution :	€ 360 087
Keywords :	Forest, resources, protection

The PROFOREST Centre is led by the Forest Research Institute in Warsaw (FRIW), Poland. It aims to develop integration between forest scientists from CEEC and EU experts in protection of forest resources in Central Europe. Establishing of the Centre results from our 70-year-lasting experience and knowledge on problems of forest protection against insect pests, fungal pathogens, fires, emissions, wildlife, protection of forest soils and waters, biodiversity, gene resources, and nature conservation. The FRIW Section of Natural Forests located in Bialowieza, with its worldwide famous Primeval Forest, will serve as a basis for joint research efforts of scientists from West and East of Europe. The FRIW has also Sections of Mountain Forests and of Forest Management in Industrial Regions, covering in this way the whole spectrum of problems that the modern forestry in Central Europe may face to.

The work of the Centre has been divided into 9 workpackages, covering (1) visits of experienced scientists to the Centre and transferring their knowledge to younger ones invited from NAS countries, and from the Eastern Europe countries in some well-grounded cases; (2) visits of young scientists to the Centre for acquiring high-level knowledge, (3) visits of Ph.D. fellows from NAS countries for improving their professional research skills, (4) visits of our researchers to other EU centres for personal capacity building, (5) nine workshops covering roughly the whole Centre interest area, (6) organisation of three international conferences where barriers between scientists of our continent can be broken down and new fruitful linkages can be settled, (7) networking of European databases on forest pests, (8) three winter and summer schools for transferring our knowledge in forest genetics, and forest soil and water conservation, and (9) administrative workpackage connected with co-ordination of the whole work during 3 years of the Centre activity. A scientific Supervisory Board (4 national and 8 foreign members) takes care of the work quality.

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Title :	**Centre of Excellence in Molecular Medicine - Co-operation and Integration of Research and Postgraduate Training**
Acronym :	MolMed
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK3-CT-2002-30326
EC Contribution :	€ 603 625
Keywords :	Molecular medicine, functional biomolecules, therapeutic substances

The Centre of Excellence is established to integrate research and education on different aspects of molecular medicine (angiogenesis, mechanisms of drug hypersensivity, genetic aspects of cancer development, diseases resulting from defected protein folding (prions), apoptosis of cancer cells in haematological malignancies, dendric cells in SM of pituitary gland tumors). The long-term aim is to develop new therapies to fight civilisation diseases. Main priority will be to attract young researchers and intensify the exchange programme involving experts from leading EU institutes. The Centre of Excellence will provide a consulting activity and undertake measures to improve social image of science. New fields of research such as proteomics of endothelial and nervous cells, pharmaco-proteomics and genomic research will be developed.

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Title :	**Research Centre for Molecular Medicine: Improvement of Quality of Life Through Research and Education**
Acronym :	CE-MolMed
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLG2-CT-2002-90329
EC Contribution :	€ 300 000
Keywords :	Networking, clinical research, doctoral training

RCMM (Research Centre for Molecular Medicine) is a research and training establishment of the Medical and Health Science Centre of the University of Debrecen. The Centre is dedicated to clinically-oriented cutting-edge research and education of doctoral students. RCMM operates as a network of collaborating research labs aiming at facilitating joint research projects and mutual use of core facilities (Genomics Centre, Advanced Microscopy Unit, Flow Cytometry Centre, etc.). In terms of scientometric output, RCMM is the No.1 medical research centre in Hungary. The main research topics investigated by RCMM scientists cover, among others, membrane dynamics, nanobiotechnology, cell death, electrophysiology, hemostasis, protein phosphorylation, nuclear receptor signaling and oxidative stress. The research groups of RCMM work in close collaboration with European and International partner institutions and are determined to further strengthen networking activities with leading foreign and Hungarian institutions and embedding RCMM into the European Research Area.

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Title :	**Center of Excellence in Development of New Therapeutics from Sugars**
Acronym :	CEDNETS
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK2-CT-2002-90351
EC Contribution :	€ 270 000
Keywords :	Therapeutics

The main topic of CEDNETS consists of development of synthetic methodology leading to optically pure therapeutics (which must be prepared in diastereo - and enantiomerically pure form) from simple sugars. The most convenient way of their preparation requires application of cheap, natural sources of chirality such as simple sugars. CEDNETS is directed to exchange knowledge and experience between researchers on such synthesis using sugars chirons. CEDNETS will improve links of Polish scientists with the outstanding centers in Europe and increase networking with those centers by direct exchange of researchers between the EU and CEDNETS. CEDNETS also organizes international conferences on stereocontrolled organic synthesis. Special attention is focused on training of young researchers. Senior scientists invited to CEDNETS take part in training our Ph.D. students in modern chemistry, biochemistry and computational chemistry. The researchers from CEDNETS have also the opportunity to gain experience in the leading laboratories of the EU. Moreover, he Institute offers training in high pressure chemistry for the researchers from the EU.

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Title :	**Centre of Excellence in Genomics and Biotechnology Improving Functional Traits of Farm Animals and Quality of their Products**
Acronym :	ANIMBIOGEN
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK3-CT-2002-30354
EC Contribution :	€ 195 959
Keywords :	Genetics, biotechnology, farm animals

The Centre was created at Institute of Genetics and Animal Breeding, Polish Academy of Sciences. Mission of the project is: to ensure the Centre's position as a Centre of Excellence in genomics and biotechnology research aimed at the improvement of farm animal functional traits, animal product quality and nutritional value and use of animal models in biomedical research; to establish regional network integrating institutions of CC performing research in the areas of molecular genetics and biotechnology of farm animals; integrating the Centre with ERA. The project's objectives will be achieved through the performance of the following activities: training of young Centre staff through a series of specialist lectures, organisation of joint workshops with the participation of Advisory Board members and exchange of research personnel, scientific co-operation with EU laboratories resulting in the joint performance of FP6 research projects. The actions will result in significant increase of scientific level of the Centre.

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Title :	**Paediatric Research Centre - Focusing on Effective Child Treatment**
Acronym :	PERFECT
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLG1-CT-2002-90358
EC Contribution :	€ 300 000
Keywords :	Paediatrics, genetic diseases, rare diseases

Centre of Excellence PERFECT (www.czd.waw.pl/~perfect) is affiliated to the greatest Polish paediatric hospital. Six departments and divisions take part in its activities: Medical Genetics, Metabolic Diseases, Immunology, Gastroenterology Hepatology and Nutrition, Cardiology and Cardiosurgery, and Oncology. Main research interests are: dysmorphology, early identification of inborn errors of metabolism, immuno-deficiencies, nutritional treatment, interventional cardiology and solid tumors. Activities include: visits of nearly 100 leading authorities in paediatrics, series of seminars, workshops, and symposia, visiting of about 30 centres in EU by our staff members. Objectives are the following: opening of new research fields, increased networking with European paediatric centres, preparation of standards and recommendations, strengthened links with ERA, creation of Marie Curie Training Site, establishment of centres in dysmorphology and in mitochondrial disorders.

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Title :	**Integration of the Latvian State Institute of Wood Chemistry in the European Research Area**
Acronym :	WOODPRO
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK5-CT-2002-30360
EC Contribution :	€ 452 770
Keywords :	Wood science, wood chemistry, biomass processing

Latvian State Institute of Wood Chemistry (IWC) - is a state scientific body founded in 1946, staff – 116 workers, incl. 36 Dr. of Science. The main projects of the IWC are developed for the beneficial and ecologically balanced processing systems aimed at maximum usage of the plant biomass potential:

- Characterization of the structure, composition, physical properties and chemical reactivity of the plant biomass and its components - *in situ* and isolated.
- Innovative technologies, products, materials from wood, including low-value one, mechanical and chemical processing waste for industrial, agricultural and medical needs (pulp, recycled paper, furfural, charcoal, polysaccharide, cellulose and lignin derivatives, modification and protection of wood, biodegradable polymers etc.).
- Investigation of the behaviour of wood, wood-based materials and wood-derived products under conditions of their application and improvement of their properties.

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Title :	**Centre of Excellence in Molecular Bio-Medicine**
Acronym :	CEMBM
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK6-CT-2002-90363
EC Contribution :	€ 350 000
Keywords :	Ageing, biomedicine, protein structure

Main objective: to establish the role and the position of the International Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology as a regional Centre of Excellence in Molecular Bio-Medicine through improved research and extension of education and training. The specific objectives are: (i) to reinforce the quality of research, (ii) to improve the International Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology (IIMCB) position as a recognised professional training centre (iii), to respond to social and medical needs of the society, (iv) to foster preparation for participation in the 6th FP. Outputs: (a) performing joint research, (b) networking and twinning, (c) products for end-users in health system, (d) trained young researchers from Poland and EU in molecular and cellular medicine, (e) new networks for co-operation in the 6th Framework programme. Activities: conferences, workshops, student and staff exchanges, delivery of professional training to students and researchers, and of research results to end-users, popularisation.

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Title :	**Bringing Research Advances in Neurobiology to Society**
Acronym :	BRAINS
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLG3-CT-2002-90368
EC Contribution :	€ 349 990
Keywords :	Molecular biology, neurophysiology, neuropsychology

Main objective: to integrate the Nencki Institute into the European Research Area as a valuable partner in basic and applied research in neurobiology based on interdisciplinary approach. Specific objectives: (1) develop better co-operation with leading European centres; (2) strengthen capacity as a national and regional research centre in neurobiology; (3) become a recognised national and regional centre for advanced education; (4) strengthen the capacity to perform applied research; (5) increase participation in the 6 FP. Main innovative features: introduction of new methods (neuroinformatics), sharing of research facilities for development of in-vitro systems and cell cultures, orientation toward applications in health sector for improved quality of life. Results: twinning and networking, joint European research projects, development of advanced training for young researchers in the region, transfer of knowledge to practice.

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Title :	**Centre of Excellence in Bio-safety and Molecular Biomedicine (BioMoBil) - Integration in Education and Research Towards the Knowledge & Technology Transfer Level**
Acronym :	BioMoBil
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK2-CT-2002-90371
EC Contribution :	€ 434 200
Keywords :	Biomedicine, biosafety, biotechnology

The main objective of the BioMoBiL proposal is to create a regional Centre, which will provide expertise in biosafety and molecular biomedicine.The final effect will be the implementation of novel methods in molecular diagnostics with the genomics approach. The project will promote awareness of safe biotechnologies oriented for diagnosis and treatment of humans, animals, plants and environment through higher education and dissemination of knowledge to the society. The Centre will aim also at creating infrastructure for commercialisation of scientific results by implementation of technology, which will be supported by creating structural links of the Centre and the Pomeranian Science and Technology Park.

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Title :	**Crop Improvement Centre for Sustainable Agriculture**
Acronym :	CICSA
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK4-CT-2002-30377
EC Contribution :	€ 251 730
Keywords :	Genetics, physiology, biotechnology

Plant Breeding and Acclimatization Institute plans to establish a Crop Improvement Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CICSA). The Centre aims to stimulate crop improvement for sustainable agriculture through an enhancement of the Institute capacity in education and high quality research on genetic crop improvement, biotechnology and germplasm conservation. It will be integrated with the European Research Area, foreign and domestic research institutes and Universities, plant breeding companies and commercial enterprises through conferences, workshops, short/long term visits and networking on genetic resources. The scientific information will be disseminated through presentations at fairs, meetings, workshops and mass media. Centre of Excellence will build up networking activities between Polish scientists and leading research centres in EU countries and will enhance involvement of the Plant Breeding and Acclimatization Institute in joint European research programs.

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Title :	**Centre of Excellence in Plant Agrobiology and Molecular Genetics**
Acronym :	PAGEN
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK5-CT-2002-30379
EC Contribution :	€ 379 616
Keywords :	Plant genetics, molecular biology, genomics

The Centre of Excellence in Plant Agrobiology and Molecular Genetics – PAGEN is located in the Institute of Plant Genetics Polish Academy of Sciences (IPG PAS) in Poznan (Poland). The main goals of the Centre are concentrated on:

- integration of the IPG PAS scientific staff with the European Research Area (ERA) through networking, wide cooperation, and twinning with other research and academic institutions,
- providing scientists and plant breeders with the modern methods of creation and analysis of plant genotypes for sustainable agriculture,
- establishing the leading training centre at the IPG PAS for plant geneticists and breeders from the Central and Eastern Europe in plant genomics and agrobiology.

The objectives of the project will be achieved by organization of international and national conferences, workshops, series of lectures, practical courses as well as networking with leading EU scientific institutions by exchange of short visits for senior researchers and longer study visits for young scientists.

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Title :	**Centre of Excellence for Multi-scale Biomolecular Modelling, Bioinformatics and Applications**
Acronym :	MAMBA
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLRI-CT-2002-90383
EC Contribution :	€ 300 000
Keywords :	Biomolecular processes, genomics, proteomics, phosphorylation

Complex biomolecular processes occur in different spatial and temporal scales - ranging from microscopic (subatomic and atomic), trough mesoscopic (macromolecular), up to macroscopic (subcellular and cellular). Our interdisciplinary research groups have been developing a number of computational, multi-scale molecular modelling models and computational tools. Novel methodologies will also be adapted from other research areas. The developed models, along with the bioinformatics approach (genomics and proteomics), should be able to describe a larger class of key biomolecular systems and processes, including molecular recognition processes, enzymatic phosphorylation and/or ATP-dependent structure formation, as well as the kinetics of metabolic pathways. Collaborative work, theoretical and experimental, should lead to much more reliable knowledge and practical applications. A program for international interdisciplinary conferences, workshops and educational mini-symposia is proposed. The novel, user-friendly modelling tools will be provided on our server within the European grids (see, http://biogrid.icm.edu.pl/).

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Title :	**Integration of Estonian Medical Science into the European Research Area: towards a healthier society**
Acronym :	MEDERA
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLG1-CT-2002-90390
EC Contribution :	€ 350 000
Keywords :	Mental disorders, neurodegeneration, postgenomics

The Centre of Molecular and Clinical Medicine is a centre of excellence that brings together the most efficient Estonian medical research groups already working in co-operation with European research institutions. Over the past five years they have received more than 10 European grants. The current proposal is aimed at further strengthening the linkage of our centre with the European Research Area. This will be achieved through improved capacity building (attraction of young researchers, introducing new knowledge through PhD-programmes, courses etc.), enhanced international attractiveness (networking support in different research areas) and improved relationships with the economic, medical and social environment in Estonia. To fulfil this task, we shall concentrate our scientific and innovative efforts in the field of neurological and mental disorders, associated with the social and economic burden.

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Title :	**National and International Networking of Novel Approaches for Studies on Atherosclerosis**
Acronym :	ATHERNET
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLG1-CT-2002-90397
EC Contribution :	€ 225 000
Keywords :	Atherosclerosis, networking, genomics

The Centre consists of different units: a) Research Laboratory, 3rd Department of Medicine, Semmelweis University b) Research Group of Metabolism and Atherosclerosis, Hungarian Academy of Sciences c) National Reference Complement Laboratory d) Outpatient Department of Allergy and Angioedema. Main objective of the centre is the study of the immunological and genetic factors that contribute to the development and progression of atherosclerosis. Main activities: 1) Study of predictive factors of the progression of atherosclerotic vascular diseases 2) Role of antibodies against heat shock proteins (Hsp) in chronic diseases, study of the properties of Hsp and anti-Hsp antibodies, regulation of anti-Hsp formation 3) Changes of specific antibodies and autoantibodies in HIV infection and chronic hepatitis C 4) Studies on hereditary and acquired angioneurotic oedema 5) Role of complement activation in allergy 6) Disease associations of gene variants encoded in the MHCIII region (C4A, C4B, Bf, TNFa,) and other genes of complement proteins (MBL, C3).

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Title :	**Warmia and Mazury Dairy Excellence Center**
Acronym :	WAMADAIREC
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK1-CT-2002-30401
EC Contribution :	€ 395 220
Keywords :	Dairy technology, quality management, food safety & health

The proposal will intensify and extend ongoing educational training and research activities through the development of closer co-operation with leading European centres in the area of milk and its products, optimise the effectiveness of scientific interchange of young and senior scientists between the Center and academic and industrial centres within Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and EU, and contribute to the training of the next generation of CEE university and industrial specialists in dairy science and practice. In these ways and through the actions of the selected International Board, it will contribute significantly to the development of the national and regional economy, greatly facilitate exchange of information between interdisciplinary researches, between university and industrial and assist in the dissemination of clear message on dairy safety and healthy products. The project will enhance the scientific and teaching capabilities and activities of the Centre.

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Title :	**Research Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Pomology**
Acronym :	PomoCentre
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK1-CT-2002-30402
EC Contribution :	€ 393 748
Keywords :	sustainable pomology, integration, networking

Research Institute of Pomology and Floriculture in Skierniewice, Poland is a leading centre of pomological science in Eastern Europe and one of the most regarded in the World. It carries research in various fields related to sustainable pomology, from basic studies on plant molecular biology, physiology, biochemistry and biotechnology to applied research on orchard agriculture, plant protection, agricultural engineering and fruit production economics. The Research Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Pomology was established on the basis of Institute's resources. Its main objectives are:

- To integrate Polish pomological science into European Research Area.
- To promote participation of Polish researchers in EU Research programmes.
- To unify Polish safety and quality standards for fruit and fruit products with those of EU.
- To prepare a cadre of extension workers for implementing EU legal regulations concerning food safety and quality and techniques of sustainable fruit production.

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Title :	**Polish Marine Fishery Science Centre**
Acronym :	POLMARF
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK5-CT-2002-30413
EC Contribution :	€ 310 315
Keywords :	Marine ecosystem, stock assessment, fish food products.

The aim of POLMARF (Polish Marine Fishery Science Centre) is:

1. To increase the Centre's ability in:
- providing scientific advice on stock management, including ecosystem and socio-economic factors;
- advising how to provide consumers with safe fish products of the highest possible quality

2. To strengthen connections and co-operation with the European network of marine and fishery research centres.

Realizing these objectives will allow management to be provided with comprehensive scientific advice; it will also fill in at least some of the gaps in fishery science which exist between the EU and remaining Baltic Sea countries while improving the co-ordination of research between relevant institutes in the Baltic area.

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Title :	**Centre of Research on the Biology of Plants Subjected to Environmental Stress in Sustainable Agricultural Production**
Acronym :	CropStress
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK5-CT-2002-30424
EC Contribution :	€ 410 347
Keywords :	Environmental stress, plant physiology, plant breeding

The CropStress project builds on the past experience of the Department of Plant Physiology PAS, using extensive support offered by the EU Commission to expand the potential of the Department (now elevated to the status of Research Institute within the Polish Academy of Science) for further development and integration into European Research Area. CropStress will raise the Institute's international profile and place it in a strong competitive position for gaining further support under the European Commission's 6th Framework Programme. All CropStress activities are organized as separate Work Packages (WP) covering a wide spectrum of research interests. The development of our expertise in molecular biology and the application of new skills in studies of stress predominate in all the packages. Our goals will be achieved through twinning arrangements with five leading EU laboratories and involve staff training, visits of experts to co-ordinate research, preparation of EU proposals and thematic workshops. The new laboratory of molecular biology will be equipped using Polish funds. CropStress aims to develop generic methods for producing new stress resistant cultivars of economically important crops. Such cultivars are an essential part of any sustainable agricultural system. The Institute has much experience in physiological studies, is ranked highly by the Polish authorities and has a network of international contacts in EU and NAS countries. The Institute will contribute to student education at universities and higher schools of Kraków. Under this scheme we train diploma students and PhD students. The Institute also disseminates newly acquired knowledge at scientific conferences and publications in the scientific press.

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Title :	**Center of Excellence for Applied Physics in Sustainable Agriculture**
Acronym :	AGROPHYSICS
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK5-CT-2002-30428
EC Contribution :	€ 387 178
Keywords :	Applied physics, agriculture, environment

The Centre is located in the Institute of Agrophysics of Polish Academy of Sciences. Acitivity of the Centre cover wide range of topics connected with applying of physical methods to agricultural matrials i.e. soil, plant, grains, fruits etc. Both theortical models, experimental research and demonstration projects have been caried out in the Centre, which main fields of scientific activity are: investigation of physical and physical-chemical processes of mass and energy exchange in the soil - plant - atmosphere system, physical properties of agricultural materials and processes affecting plant production as well as processes related to gathering, transport and storage of agricultural materials. These tasks are performed by multidisciplinary staff including: physicists, chemists, agronomists, pedologists, mathematicians, engineers, micro-biologists, geographers, and horticulturists. The excellent skills of the staff focused on contemporary topics, wide international cooperation as well as modern equipment assure high level of research work and make the Centre open for further cooperation within FP of EU.

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Title :	**Center for Biomolecular Chemistry**
Acronym :	CBCH
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK2-CT-2002-90436
EC Contribution :	€ 428 325
Keywords :	Pharmacophores, neurochemistry, heterocycles

The goal of the project is to restructure the scientific activity within the Centre by establishing new links with European research centres in the field of biomolecular chemistry, particularly on synthesis of new bioactive heterocyclic compounds, free radical generation and cell attachment, mass spectrometry-based analysis and diagnostic methods, development of neuroprotective strategies. These researches are co-ordinated by experts with outstanding scientific experience.

The project is based on organizing workshops and conferences as well as PhD courses with participants from Hungary, the EU and other candidate countries, so that to establish networks and links with academic centres of the European Union. The PhD programs are planned to imply a wide area of the main topic: starting from stereochemically defined compounds followed by functional tests on tissue or animal models (*in vitro* and *in vivo*) and finished by pharmacokinetic and toxicity investigation.

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Title :	**Orientation of Animal Agricultural Research towards Sustainable Rural Development and the Integration of Research within Europe**
Acronym :	ANIMAGRES-INTEGR
Duration :	24 months
Project number :	QLK5-CT-2002-30444
EC Contribution :	€ 300 000
Keywords :	Sustainability, animal agriculture, integration

The Research Institute of Animal Production in Nitra (RIAP) is the only complex scientific and research institution in Slovakia that deals with research in the field of animal production. Research is focused on the biological, environmental and socio-economic optimisation of animal production in order to provide products of healthy nutrition, stable structures in the individual regions of Slovakia. The scientific and research activities of the Institute are focused on all animal species bred in Slovakia (cattle, swine, sheep, goats, rabbits, fur animals, farm-bred game, poultry, fish and bees).

The institute is structured into relatively independent but co-operating sections focusing on the following areas of science and research: Animal Products Quality, Animal Nutrition, Genetics and Reproduction, Animal Breeding and Selection, Livestock Systems, Animal Welfare and Ecology, Small Farm Animals and Apiculture.

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Title :	**Improving Environmental Health Research and Management in Newly Associated States (NAS)**
Acronym :	HEAR NAS
Duration :	60 months
Project number :	QLK6-CT-2002-90445
EC Contribution :	€ 300 000
Keywords :	Environment, public health, risk assessment

EU Centre of Excellence in Environmental Health Research at Institute of Preventive and Clinical Medicine, Bratislava, Slovakia brings together, without respect to national boundaries, research in the various fields covered by specific EU programmes: human toxicology of POPs, molecular epidemiology, genetic susceptibility and new biomarkers, immunomodulatory effects and biological monitoring of exposed populations, mineral fibres, toxicology of prenatal exposure, nutritional and environmental factors of ageing and allergy, newly appearing infectious diseases. The ultimate objectives are to promote integration of the Slovak national medical scientific programs into EU coordinated research, twinning with research centres in EU and NAS, and support of training for Slovak and NAS PhD-students and post-doctoral researchers. Objectives will be achieved by research and managerial work on priority environmental and public health issues in close cooperation with units from EU members states and NAS. The Centre equipped with contemporary research technologies and methods.

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Title :	**Applied Biomedical Modelling and Diagnostics**
Acronym :	ABIOMED
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK6-CT-2002-90449
EC Contribution :	€ 199 980
Keywords :	Biomechanics of bone including remodelling, soft tissue biomechanics, biofluids, ultrasounds in medical diagnostics

The aim of ABIOMED (Applied Biomedical Modelling and Diagnostics) is:

- to contribute to further development in biomechanical engineering, including biomedical acoustics as an internationally recognised research centre,
- to contribute to sustainable development in three complementary areas: basic research, education and training as well as multidisciplinary research (technology + physics + informatics + medicine),
- to build up networking activites with leading European centres and contribute to development of Network of Centres of Excellence,
- to enhance involvement in joint European research programmes, mostly within 6FP,
- to build up capacity as a potent research partner for Polish industry oriented to medical equipment and biomaterials.

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Title :	**Genetics for the European Research Area**
Acronym :	GENERA
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLG2-CT-2002-90455
EC Contribution :	€ 299 143
Keywords :	Genetics, molecular medicine, biotechnology

Estonian Biocentre is a FP5 INCO 2 centre of excellence, actively participating in a number of EC FP5 projects and in many other international R&D activities. The main objective of this proposal is building of an efficient platform for a successful entering of the Estonian Biocentre into the European Research Area, including participation in novel instruments of the next Framework Program. Among the measures, the first is a twinning with well-recognised centres of excellence. Second is a full opening of research projects to researchers from other countries. Opening of research positions for international competition and internationalisation of our graduate school is an additional important set of measures. Four work packages are drawn to facilitate fulfilment of the objectives. Sustainability of the project after its lifetime is largely foreseen by instruments, additional to and independent of this project.

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Title :	**Integration of Central and East European Centre for Cognitive Science into the European Cognitive Science Research Area**
Acronym :	EUROCOG
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLG4-CT-2002-90459
EC Contribution :	€ 225 000
Keywords :	Cognitive science, neuroscience, psychology

The Central and East European Center for Cognitive Science, New Bulgarian University (http://www.nbu.bg/cogs) does basic research on cognitive architectures (emergent computation, connectionist and hybrid architectures), thinking and memory (analogy-making, decision-making, constructive memory, concepts), language (cross-linguistic studies, sentence comprehension, lexical access), perception (visual motion perception, spatio-temporal characteristics of vision), methodology (philosophy, chaos theory), as well as applied research in cognitive economics, education, and human-computer interaction. It offers M.Sc. and Ph.D. programs in cognitive science with emphasis on interdisciplinary studies including modeling, psychology, linguistics, neurosciences, philosophy. The international summer school endorsed by the Cognitive Science Society is run annually since 1994. The Center prepares researchers and supports the emerging groups in Central and East Europe. It participates in many joint research and educational projects and networks with universities in Europe and USA.

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Title :	**Biotechnology Centre of Excellence of Lithuania**
Acronym :	BIOCEL
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK3-CT-2002-30575
EC Contribution :	€ 600 000
Keywords :	Biotechnology, genetics, biochemistry

The proposal's overall objective is to achieve research and development excellence through further integration of the Institute of Biotechnology into European research area and establishment of its role as a regional Centre of Excellence in biotechnology. Part of the work packages is aimed at strengthening international collaboration in basic and applied research pursued by the Centre. It is expected that particular projects will yield new data on mechanisms of protein-DNA interaction, lead to discovery of new drug targets and gene delivery systems. Other work packages cover measures directed at promoting the Centre's ability to serve the economic and social need of the region and country through research internationalisation, the educational and training activities and developing biotech information dissemination capacity of the Centre.

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Title :	**Protection of Land and Water Quality and Sustainable Development of Rural Areas**
Acronym :	PROLAND
Duration :	36 months
Project number :	QLK4-CT-2002-30663
EC Contribution :	€ 356 435
Keywords :	Agriculture, land protection, water protection

The Institute of Soil Science and Plant Cultivation (IUNG) in Pulawy - working under the supervision of the Polish Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development - is the second oldest centre of agricultural sciences in Europe. It employs 110 researchers, including 23 professors and 15 Ph.D. students. It's primary tasks are scientific research related to plants cultivation and quality of plant products, soil fertility, protection of agri-ecosystems, soil remediation, collection of geo-referenced soil data and implementation of agri-environmental schemes for rural development and sustainable land use. The aim of the EC Centre of Excellence PROLAND, created in the Institute on the 1 April 2003, is to serve better the needs related to restructuring of agriculture, development of rural areas and protection of agri-ecosystems to increase cooperation with European Research Area (ERA) and to enhance successful transition of agriculture and integration with the EU. Research activities within PROLAND will include two levels: information and implementation. The first component concentrates on using state-of-the art. technologies for agri-environmental data collection and modelling as well as on the researches supplementing databases. The extension-implementation component aimed at introducing standards and management practices required to meet EU environmental regulation for agriculture areas. The field of PROLAND activities covers exchange of scientists, organisation of workshops and conferences as well as the engagement of young foreign scientists in realisation of the IUNG research projects. (www.proland.iung.pulawy.pl).

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INDEX by PROJECT ACRONYM