



***A new instrument for tackling the fragmentation
of European research
(as of November 2002)***

europa.eu.int/comm/research/fp6/networks-ip.html



What is their purpose?

- ❁ **Designed to strengthen Europe's excellence on a particular research topic**
 - ☞ **by integrating the critical mass of expertise needed to provide European leadership and be a world force**
 - ☞ **through a joint programme of activities**
 - *aimed primarily at creating a durable integration of the research capacities of the network partners*
 - *while at the same time advancing knowledge on the topic*
- ❁ **Essentially therefore an instrument for tackling the fragmentation of European research**
 - ☞ **where the main deliverable is a durable structuring and shaping of how research is carried out in Europe**
- ❁ **Each NoE also has a mission to spread excellence**



What is a joint programme of activities?

The JPA consists of a range of “additional” activities

integrating activities

- *coordinated programming of the partners’ activities*
- *sharing of research platforms/tools/facilities/infrastructure*
- *joint management of the knowledge portfolio*
- *staff exchanges, possibly relocation of staff and equipment*
- *reinforced electronic communications*

joint research activities

- *a programme of joint research to support the network’s goals*

activities to spread excellence

- *training programme of researchers and other key staff*
- *dissemination and communication*

all within a unified management structure



What is the scale of critical mass?

- ❁ **Concerning expertise:** the network must assemble the critical mass needed to achieve its ambitious goals
 - ☞ will vary from topic to topic
 - ☞ larger networks may involve several hundreds of researchers
 - *but networks may be much smaller, provided necessary ambition and critical mass is achieved*
- ❁ **Concerning its partnership:** in general at least six
 - ☞ legal minimum of three from three different countries
- ❁ **Concerning duration of Community support:** typically five years
 - ☞ but up to seven years, if justified to create a durable integration








What type of financial regime?

 **Community support targeted at overcoming the barriers to a durable integration**

-  **barriers are mainly organisational, cultural and human**
 -  *cannot be quantified in normal accounting terms*

 **Has led to the concept of providing an incentive for integration**

-  **taking the form of a fixed grant**
-  **calculated mainly on basis of number of “researchers”**
 -  *that make up the research capacities of the partners on the topic of the network*
 -  *where a “researcher” has a PhD or at least four years research experience*
-  **with a bonus for registered doctoral students**



Illustrative grant calculation

- ❁ The average annual grant to a network could vary with the number of “researchers” as follows:

50 researchers	€ 1 million/year
100 researchers	€ 2 million/year
150 researchers	€ 3 million/year
250 researchers	€ 4 million/year
500 researchers	€ 5 million/year
1000 researchers and above	€ 6 million/year

(for intermediate numbers, the grant would be calculated by linear interpolation)

- ❁ In this illustration, a network of 200 “researchers” supported over 5 years would be granted €17.5 million *(plus any bonus for doctoral students)*



What is the payments regime?

- 🌀 **Annual advances**
- 🌀 **Annual settlements paid on the basis of results**
 - 👉 i.e. will depend on a progressive advance towards a durable integration
 - 👉 with an additional check that costs greater than the value of the grant are incurred in implementing the JPA
- 🌀 **A results-based payments regime necessitates a robust system of output monitoring**
 - 👉 with annual reviews, involving external experts
 - *triggering a yellow flag/red flag, if a review is failed*



Flexibility and autonomy

- 🌀 **For the JPA, each year, the network**
 - 👉 proposes a detailed JPA for the coming 18 months
 - 👉 and may propose to update the overall JPA
 - *both need approval of the Commission to enter into force*
- 🌀 **For the allocation of the Community grant**
 - 👉 the partnership will have freedom to distribute it between partners and between activities
- 🌀 **For changes in the network partnership**
 - 👉 the partnership may itself decide to take in new partners (*though without additional financing*)
 - 👉 the Commission may decide to launch calls to add partners (*with additional financing*)



Evaluation process

- 🌀 **Simplified proposal-making**
 - 👉 reflecting evolutionary nature of the network
- 🌀 **Evaluation by a strengthened peer review system**
 - 👉 possible two-stage submission, hearings of applicants...
- 🌀 **Key evaluation criteria include**
 - 👉 **potential impact on strengthening Europe's excellence**
 - *extent, depth and lasting nature of the expected integration*
 - *ability of the JPA to deliver this integration*
 - 👉 **collective excellence of the network partners**
 - 👉 **contribution to spreading excellence**
 - 👉 **management and governance of the network**



Governance of the network

- ✿ **A network's governance must ensure institutional engagement by the partner organisations**
 - ☞ **through e.g. a “governing council” of senior representatives from the partners**
 - *to facilitate the integration of the partners' activities*