

Statement regarding the Government Programme

The Austrian Council welcomes the high priority given to research, innovation, technology and science in the Government Programme for the XXIII legislative period.

The Austrian Council regards the measures pertaining to research, innovation and technology announced in the Government Programme as an important contribution to the further development of Austria as a centre of business and science, and wishes to underscore the following objectives and measures by making the following statement:

- The need for multi-year planning and long-term financing certainty
- Ten percent annual increase in federal expenditure on R&D
- Topping up of the technology billion by 2010, with an additional EUR 345 million to be made available in 2007 (Basis 2006: 295 + 50). These funds must be used solely for R&D relevant measures and form the basis for achieving the Government's target of raising R&D spending to three percent of GDP.
- The establishment of the energy fund with an emphasis on R&D. The strategies drawn up within the framework of FORNE such as Energy 2050, and instruments must feature prominently.
- Adherence to the goal of a three percent R&D quota by 2010 with the aim of triggering as much private investment in research as possible in order to establish a long-term funding ratio of one third public sector, two thirds private sector.

These goals are important signals and an invitation from the public sector to businesses to be equally consistent in pursuing the goal of a three percent R&D quota. The structural reform called for in the

Government Programme is a prerequisite for the qualitative and quantitative progress of the Austrian innovation system and of R&D activities. Improving the efficiency and increasing the effectiveness with which funds are used for R&D is an element of this process.

The Consequence from the Austrian Council's Point of View

The purpose of the action funding is to achieve the three percent research quota in 2010. The proportion of action funds as a percentage of total federal expenditure for R&D varies from year to year. Against this background, the Austrian Council considers it impossible to hold to the previous fixed quotas allocated to the ministries. The Austrian Council will base its recommendations on the total budget for R&D.

Summary

The Austrian Council supports the strong commitment of Austrian policymakers to R&D and points out that only the consistent implementation of the planned measures and targeted use of the necessary funds will contribute to furthering the development of an efficient Austrian innovation system. Effective cooperation between all levels of RTD policy and the funding system is regarded as particularly important by the Austrian Council.

The Austrian Council is pleased to accept the assignment formulated in the Government Programme to continue to advise the Government during this legislative period and to support its efforts to position Austria as an international leader in the field of research and technology development in order to help safeguard Austria's status as an industrial location and knowledge hub.