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**The Visions of the European Commission for a new European Research**  
Special Interest Session, B 3

Kevin McCarthy, European Commission, introduced the contents of the Commission's proposal of an European Research Area (ERA), which constitutes a joint effort by EU and the Member States to address structural deficits in European research, like fragmentation, under-resourcing, and unfavourable environment for research and innovation. The new Research Framework Programme (FP), that was designed to help to realise ERA, is characterised by concentration on a limited number of thematical priorities, which should be of strategic importance to the EU and where EU action can add greatest value. Among its objectives are the establishment of more effective instruments and of a more simplified implementation including larger long-term projects with more flexibility and autonomy for contractors. Its designated activities will comprise 3 areas:

- (1) Integrating European research;
- (2) Structuring the ERA;
- (3) Strengthening the foundations of the ERA.

Among the 7 thematic priority areas that will be set up for integrating European research, two will focus directly on health issues:

- (1) Genomics and biotechnology;
- (2) Food safety and health risks.

The so to say 8<sup>th</sup> priority of the FP will comprise the anticipation of scientific and technological needs, that is, research for policy responsiveness, frontier research covering unexpected developments, specific SME activities, and joint research centre activities.

In the subsequent discussion Kevin McCarthy faced several pleas for more democratic participation during the development process of such proposals as for the FP and ERA.