The competitiveness of the European information and communication technologies industries ICT

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The Committee feels that the communication paints a detailed and accurate picture of the situation. The Committee would add that the EU is unlikely to become competitive if t is unable to adopt policies and structures geared to market globalization. Hence purely "European" solutions and approaches could condemn the EU to weakness. The Committee adds a note of caution regarding the employment position. In the absence of precise figures on relocation, it is difficult to say whether the employment balance is positive or negative. A more detailed analysis is needed in order to ascertain whether any new or expanding industries (e.g. telecommunications) show a positive balance that offsets the negative balances of other industries. The Committee feels it extremely positive that the Commission has pinpointed concrete areas for action. Efforts should focus in particular on measures that will create new jobs; this means incentives for SMEs, and especially for the creation of new SMEs in the most promising sectors (software, multimedia content, etc.), support for training for young people and workers, and incentives for schools to use new technologies and join networks. The Committee thinks that a European R&D plan, conducted jointly by industry and the public authorities, should be a top priority.