Training, education: teaching and learning, towards the learning society, implementation of the White Paper

2000/2088(COS) - 11/10/2000

The committee adopted the report by Roy PERRY (EPP-ED, UK) on the Commission report. While expressing its support for the ambitious goals set out in the White Paper, the committee pointed out that no genuinely additional funding had been provided to help attain them. It also regretted the failure to devote sufficient attention to training in information technology and underlined the need for greater investment in such skills. It welcomed the initiatives aimed at bringing schools and the business sector closer together and called for further efforts in this area. The committee also acknowledged the importance of another of the White Paper's goals, namely, treating capital investment and investment in training on an equal basis. However, it felt that hardly anything concrete appeared to have been done and called for businesses to be given the necessary support to enable them to pursue this objective. The committee highlighted the shortcomings of the Commission's report, which had failed to provide a clear overall picture of whether any practical results had been achieved. There was a distinct lack of information on the money actually spent, and the report amounted largely to a description rather than an assessment of the action taken. Any future report on the implementation of a White Paper should provide an evaluation of the success or failure of the measures taken and an assessment of whether these had been good value for money. The committee also wanted all future White Papers of this kind to contain clearly-defined and realistic objectives, a demonstration of the 'European added-value' of the actions being proposed, an estimate of the full cost of such actions (by means of activity-based budgeting), an opportunity-cost analysis, performance indicators to measure progress towards attainment of objectives and a procedure for assessing pilot projects and for modifying proposed actions in the light of such assessments. There should also be clear timetables for reporting to the budgetary authority on the implementation of White Papers.