Biotechnology and the White paper on growth, competitiveness and employment: preparing the new stage

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The Committee on Research, Technological Development and Energy adopted the report by Mrs Hiltrud BREYER. Many amendments were incorporated in the initial draft report. This was not a legislative text but a resolution on a Commission communication. The report stressed that, as a key area of Community research, innovation and production, the European Union's policy on biotechnology could make an important contribution to sustainable development, competitiveness and employment. However, at the same time it must be in line with other policy objectives of the Union, particularly in the fields of agriculture, the environment, health, technological development and competitiveness. The Committee on Research also highlighted that genetic engineering was only one aspect of biotechnology and called for the development of appropriate research programmes and support for other areas of biotechnology. The report also called on the European Commission and the Member States to actively "encourage public dialogue by providing comprehensive, accurate and readily understandable information on genetic engineering research and production, its prospects and risks, rather than merely trying to secure public acceptance". Finally, the committee was in favour of increasing the responsibility of research institutions.