The first action plan for innovation in Europe

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The Committee adopted a report by Christian ROVSING (EPP, DK) on the Commission's First Action Plan for Innovation in Europe. According to Christian ROVSING, the scope of the Action Plan needs to be crystallized before it can be used as a practical tool.The Commission should give its actions an order of priority. The Committee recalled that education and enhancement of skills through vocational training and retraining are prerequisites for investment in the field of innovation, especially in the area of information technology. It emphasized that there is no standard model for innovation policy. However, measures should be taken to ensure that new innovative organizations are given maximum assistance, e.g. tax incentives. The Committee called for concrete suggestions for the financing of innovative projects. As for SMEs, their heterogenity should be kept in mind when formulating innovation funding systems. It welcomed the Commission's strive to improve the business environment for business start-ups and pointed out the role the European Investment Bank and the European Investment Fund might have in financing them. At the community level, the Commission should encourage EU research to be more innovative in orientation. In addition, it should focus its efforts on the legal environment, patent systems, improving and simplifying the management of research framework programmes and coordinating exchange of information.