Development and application of new information technologies in the next decade

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The Committee draftsman, Elly PLOOY-VAN GORSEL (NL, ELDR), warned that the information technology (ICT)sector is developing faster in the US and in South-East Asia than in Europe. He also said that the lack of a uniform and homogenous internal European market threatens to put a break on the development of the European ICT industry. Mrs PLOOY saw her report concerning a better co-ordination of national ICT policies with a view to the establishment of a single European ICT Market. The Commission and the Member States should pursue a new policy geared not only to large firms, but also to SMEs. Europe's ICT position can be improved if European firms are, firstly, in a position to develop new ICT products, applications and services, and secondly, are in a position to market these products and services too. European ICT firms must make major marketing efforts in order to bring products on a not yet completed internal market. The European tax environment has an adverse impact on the introduction of ICT services and products. The draftsman expects that lower taxation will stimulate the take-up of ICT products. Finally, there is a number of homegrown reasons for the ICT ground lost by Europe to the US: the number of Pcs per household in the EU, the uneven degree of cable penetration and high Telecom prices. In the EU, there are 2,53 Internet services per 1000 inhabitants, in the USA 12,42.