Science and technology: cooperation between the Union and the Central and Eastern Europe and CIS countries

1994/2203(COS) - 16/05/1995 - Non-legislative basic document

In a working document addressed to the Council and the European Parliament, the Commission specifically defined the prospects for scientific and technological cooperation with the New Independent States (NIS). In that document, the Commission announced that the Union would intensify its international cooperation efforts with those countries with a view to mutual benefit, including the objectives stemming from the spirit of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements concluded with those countries. The aim of that cooperation would be: - to redirect scientists to research linked to needs, both private and public, - to overcome outdated structures and promote a process of rationalisation, - to exploit industrial prospects and ensure sustainable development, - to identify cooperation partners for new emerging markets, - to support a smooth demilitarisation of science. The immediate measures in the first phase had sought to lend financial support to a wide range of researchers in relatively small projects. These measures remained at academic level. The funds reserved for cooperation with the East under the Fourth Framework Programme had been reduced by half. The resources that were still available would therefore have to be more and better targeted. For that reason, priority would be given to research projects yielding results in the industrial sector or providing solutions to societal problems in the near future. In order to increase the level of applications and the quality of projects, effective support would be provided for fewer, but more important projects with a view to creating renewed centres of RDT culture. At the same time, the pilot phase of INTAS (International Association for the Promotion of Cooperation with Scientists from the Independent States of the former Soviet Union) would have to be adapted and redirected towards a new approach (integration of INTAS). In order to improve the quality of projects, different measures were proposed which would in future make it possible to give a larger financial share to the projects: - improvement of general information on partners' research systems: setting-up of a database on research institutions, their scientific profile, current projects etc., financing of a decentralised supervisory network in the NIS, meetings to place the partners in contact with the industries concerned, - consolidation of the preparatory phase for projects, - more precise definition of criteria for project selection, - measures to help to stabilise legal, economic and political conditions. The future activities and the definition of priorities would be based on dialogue with those countries and a technological evaluation and control network. In addition, coherence and active cooperation would be sought with TACIS, the EBRD, the World Bank, other Community programmes and the Member States.