The competitiveness of the European information and communication technologies industries ICT

1997/2062(COS) - 30/04/1998 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr Norbert GLANTE (PSE, D), the European Parliament stressed the importance of information technologies for the development of the European economy and called on the Commission to draw up an action plan to promote this sector. It considered that the public sector should play a key role in increasing the competitiveness of ICT (information and communication technologies) industries, particularly by means of its capacity to create demand and also by means of education and training measures. To this end, it was important for the public authorities to be represented on electronic networks. Parliament called for European guidelines for skills vital to the industry's competitiveness to be drawn up and published. This should ensure that enough specialists in information and communication technologies were trained. Among other recommendations, Parliament called for: - better legislative coordination in order to avoid fragmentation of markets within the European Union; - Europe to play a leading role in the formulation of international standards; - encouragement of research in the field of multilingual software; - promotion of cooperation with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, using the European Training Foundation; - support for cooperation between business and higher education in the field of ICT and their use; - the adoption of measures to improve access to venture capital for small innovative companies; - an increase in the funds adopted for the 1998 budget on the Technology facility for SMEs; - the Fifth Framework Programme to assign greater priority to ICT-related R&D. Parliament called on the Commission to provide a detailed assessment of the number of people engaged in teleworking, with a breakdown according to sectors, level of educational attainment, age group and gender, and to consider the practical implications for social legislation, health and safety and training requirements.