Energy policy for the European Union. White paper

1995/2325(COS) - 14/11/1996 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting the report by Mr W.G. VAN VELZEN (PPE, NL) on the Commission's White Paper on an energy policy for the European Union, Parliament called on the Commission to develop a financial programme to stimulate renewable energy. It was necessary to increase the proportion of renewable energies in the primary energy mix by the year 2010 to at least 15%. To this end, it called on the Commission to draw up a study into best practice instances of decentralized/local energy generation and distribution. The Commission was also called upon to investigate with the Member States the possibility of improving access for energy produced from renewable sources to the electricity grid. The EP also drew attention to the importance of establishing a minimum excise rate such that a significant contribution is made to the Community's international obligations with regard to CO2, as well as to the target of stabilizing CO2 emissions in 2005 at the latest at 1990 levels. The EP also wished to see more funds devoted to R&D in the gas sector and to combined heat and power production. It advocated that more attention should be given to the possibilities of using water in the various European river basins, including hydroelectric energy, and it urged the Commission to organize a conference with the Member States on sustainable building and to create a 'Task Force on Eco-building'. At international level, Parliament considered that the lowering of the EU's dependency on imports should be encouraged. It suggested the organization of regional energy conferences in the central and eastern European countries with a view to establishing clearly for each of those countries how the energy policy can best be supported. It hoped that all nuclear powers will be encouraged to become active members of the International Safety Convention and that in future financial aid would be made dependent on this. It hoped that PHARE and TACIS project criteria would be changed so that less emphasis is placed on the carrying out of studies and advice and more on the cofinancing of the findings of the regional energy conferences. Finally, it urged once more the conclusion of an Energy Charter with the countries of the Mediterranean region. With regard to research, the Commission was called upon to submit a coherent programme and to increase considerably demonstration activities for renewable and energy efficiency projects for the Fifth Framework Programme. At regional level, Parliament called for the coordination of better structural measures and energy policy priorities. Finally, it called on the Commission to instigate a much more significant legislative programme to improve quickly energy efficiency of road transport.