European year of lifelong learning, 1996 (dec. 2493/95/EC). Report

1999/2163(COS) - 08/09/2000 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

In adopting a Resolution on the Commission's Report on the implementation, results and overall assessment of the European Year of Lifelong Learning (1996), the European Parliament stresses that Lifelong Learning is crucial in order to secure personal fulfilment, social integration and participation in democratic decision-making processes and can, therefore, not be seen merely in terms of demand and supply. Furthermore, it stresses that the impact which the year had on businesses and social forces in terms of awareness-raising was positive. However, the Parliament regrets the slow start of the activities under the European Year and calls upon the Commission to speed up preparatory work and internal procedures in order to allow for a timely launch of Community actions in future. The Parliament also stresses the importance of the necessary attention being paid to the lifelong learning factor in the implementation of the new generation of programmes such as Socrates II and Leonardo. With regard to the budgetary aspect however, the Parliament regrets the fact that the budget for the European Year of Lifelong Learning 1996 was only ECU 8.4 m for the fifteen Member States and their three EEA partners. The Parliament also beleives that the fact that the ECU 8.4 m budget was trebled by the cofinancing provided by the participant countries, thus bringing the total budget to ECU 34 m, proves how much interest there is in initiatives of this kind in Europe. With regard to the Commission's report, the Parliament believes that requests for projects to be submitted was ambiguous and that the report lacked qualitative data. In addition, it believes that the report lacked sufficient information about examples of good practice and that it also lacked an evaluation of the involvement of democratically elected local and regional bodies. Against this background, the Parliament calls on the Commission to, amongst others, address the following: - define various concepts and aspects of vocational training and lifelong learning more precisely in future programmes; - provide clearer terms of reference in the submission of projects seeking funding; - that the Commission and Member States devise specific measures to encourage relations between formal education, vocational training and lifelong learning; - that the Commission create European networks of vocational training centres and enterprises; - that the Commission ensure that the priority projects include vocational training in the sectors where innvoation are change are most urgently needed. In conclusion, the Parliament calls on the Member States to cooperate with the Commission in the collection of data concerning lifelong learning, with a view to ensuring the future comparability of data at European level. Also, the Parliament calls on the Member States to extend the information networks so as to ensure wide public access to targeted information on the existing programmes in this field. The Parliament instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council and the governments and parliaments of the member States, the Republic of Iceland, the Kingdom of Norway and the Principality of Liechtenstein.