Research and technological innovation in Europe RTD: support and investment, action plan

2003/2148(INI) - 18/11/2003 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution based on the own-initiative report drafted by Rolf LINKOHR (PES, Germany) on investment in research, calling on Member States to increase expenditure. (Please see the summary of 04/11/03.) In the context of the 6th Research Framework Programme, Parliament also called for the ideas of 'networks of excellence' and 'integrated projects' to be geared more closely to the guiding notion of the European Research Area, and therefore for adjustments to be made, particularly in relation to the size of projects, in terms both of the number of project partners and of the financial volumes involved. The following points were also made: - considerable efforts are still needed to ensure an adequate supply of scientists, engineers and skilled technicians in future; Member States must pay greater attention to scientific and technical education and on the EU to make a further contribution to mobility for scientists, engineers and skilled technicians, so that the end result is indeed a European Research Area; - in addition to the fact that fully-trained researchers are continuing to emigrate, demographic trends and lower numbers of students starting courses in the natural sciences will mean that a continuing supply of researchers will be increasingly difficult to find. Conditions should be made easier for researchers to take up residence and exercise their profession in the EU; - application-oriented research provides a major stimulus for Europe's economies and targeted cooperation between research and enterprises must be supported; - the importance of intellectual property rights in State institutes and public-private partnerships; - the key role of SMEs as a motor for growth, but the difficulty they have in terms of access to funding; - Member States should envisage tax incentives for private research activities as well as direct support for research, targeted principally at SMEs; - Member States and the Commission should make greater use of the Structural Funds for R&D.