

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2907/03
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to the Commission

Subject: Expenditure on and structural indicators for research and innovation in the EU and Greece

One of the objectives set out in the conclusions to the European Council meeting in Barcelona in March 2002 was that overall spending on R&D and innovation in the Union should be increased with the aim of approaching 3% of GDP by 2010. It was made clear that two-thirds of this new investment should come from the private sector¹. At the present time, the average level of investment in research in the EU totals 1.9% of GDP and to reach the 3% target requires an annual increase of 8%.. Given that the gap between the Union and its more serious competitors is constantly widening, the Union should concentrate all its efforts on R&D and innovation, with particular emphasis on frontier technologies, to achieve the target of 3% of GDP by 2010.

1. What is the level of investment in research as a whole in the Union and separately for each Member State and what is the percentage increase or decrease in that figure for each Member State separately according to the latest available data?
2. What research funding is invested in Greece, broken down by source separately for the private sector, national public participation and Community initiatives and programmes in the field of research, and what measures will the Commission take to deliver statistics on a regular basis and within specified deadlines in accordance with Decision 1608/2003/EC²?
3. On how many, and which, of each of the 16 structural indicators under the Lisbon Strategy (e.g. percentage of GDP by source of funds spent on R&D, patents, etc.) relating to Innovation and Research (II) is Greece behind or ahead of the Community average?
4. Is there a need to revise the Commission's approach to the 'open coordinating method', which is not binding on the Member States and ineffective but was adopted by the European Council to achieve the target of 3% of GDP by 2010, and what measures will the Commission take to encourage links between research and new business opportunities?

¹ http://europa.eu.int/comm/barcelona_council/index_en.html

² OJ L 230, 16.09.2003, p. 1