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2009

Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

2008/2213(INI)

3.12.2008

OPINION

of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

for the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

on Better careers and more mobility: a European partnership for researchers
(2008/2213(INI))

Rapporteur (*): Bilyana Ilieva Raeva

(*) Associated committee - Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs calls on the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas the Lisbon Strategy aims to make the European Union the most competitive and dynamic economy in the world by 2010 and to enhance scientific research activities, so that innovation contributes to economic growth and to improving the quality of jobs,
- B. whereas there is a need for the EU to combat negative economic trends by focusing on education and research and to do everything possible to ensure employment, security and mobility for researchers, so that they stay in the EU,
- C. bearing in mind that research is strengthened and put to good use in the EU when it is combined with researcher mobility and close cooperation with organisations applying such research, in particular small and medium-sized undertakings,
 - 1. Welcomes and supports the Commission's initiative for a European Partnership for Researchers and considers that the measures proposed should be effective in removing the main obstacles to the creation of a European Research Area (ERA);
 - 2. Calls on the Member States to apply the measures already adopted at EU level concerning the ERA¹, which constitute an essential step towards its realisation;
 - 3. Calls for researcher mobility to be accompanied by appropriate integration measures;
 - 4. Emphasises the need to make a commitment to the proposed programme by adopting concrete proposals, as well as to ensure the rapid continuation of the objectives associated with the specific programme 'People' under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research, Technological Development and Demonstration (2007-2013)²;
 - 5. Takes the view that reciprocal recognition by Member States and research institutes of researchers' qualifications within the EU qualifications framework will increase mobility and ensure maximum integrity in the composition of research teams;
 - 6. Calls on the Commission and Member States to launch a new policy aimed at ensuring that social protection and social insurance is provided in researchers' contracts, in particular short-term contracts or contracts of variable duration;
 - 7. Considers that every effort should be made to accelerate the mutual recognition of qualifications acquired in third countries;

¹ European Charter for Researchers, Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, 'Scientific visa' package.

² Decision No 1982/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013) (OJ L 412, 30.12.2006, p. 1).

8. Expresses its concern at the lack of flexible contracts for experienced researchers and researchers at the end of their careers, a circumstance which obstructs their mobility and inhibits the proper exchange of knowledge and experience; regrets that the private sector sometimes lacks arrangements similar to those in the public sector for the treatment and management of personnel;
9. Recommends that advancement in the research sector, in particular for young researchers, be based on ability and excellence and not solely on seniority, and that due respect be paid to the principle of non-discrimination, in accordance with Community law;
10. Calls on the Commission and Member States to develop policies designed to promote a better work-life balance for researchers;
11. Calls on the Commission and Member States to adopt measures facilitating the reconciliation of work and family life and supporting women researchers;
12. Strongly recommends better training for researchers throughout their careers so as to improve their employability and chances of promotion;
13. Emphasises the need for better links between academia and industry in order to improve the employment prospects of academics and the ability to make practical use of research results;
14. Emphasises the need to identify best practices in academia and industry so that appropriate common guidelines can be developed;
15. Takes the view that an intensification of exchanges within the framework of the relevant EU higher education programmes, with the focus on research, will prepare generations of future European researchers and make the research sector more dynamic;
16. Considers that more research projects should be entrusted to young researchers and that there is a need to facilitate autonomy in research and the inter generational transfer of know how; also believes it necessary to promote cooperation actions with third countries with a view to the training of researchers at the beginning of their careers, and to provide assistance with the promotion of publications, studies and books by researchers, with the aim of diffusing knowledge and supporting the theoretical and scientific training of young researchers;
17. Considers that the Member States must continue to increase the budgetary resources allocated to research, as a means of creating quality jobs that comply with basic ethical principles and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union;
18. Stresses that the foundations for outstanding research in a knowledge-based society are laid at school; calls on Member States therefore to honour their budgetary promises in the field of education;
19. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the Member States to raise the profile of scientific research in the general budget, in accordance with the undertaking given to achieve 3% growth and to train 600 000 more researchers, on average, by 2010;

20. Invites the Council, the Commission and the Member States to support the creation of a genuine EU labour market for researchers, to implement a coherent package of back-up measures, with a view to eliminating obstacles to professional mobility, notably with regard to social security and tax issues affecting researchers, since these often deter people from becoming researchers, and to promote researchers' career prospects in Europe, especially by ensuring appropriate financial conditions and pay levels; also believes that account should be taken of the quality aspects of research training, the sharing of knowledge between sectors and research bodies via the researchers themselves, encouraging two-way mobility between academia and business, and the enhanced participation of women researchers and young researchers in R & D;
21. Calls on the Council, the Commission and the Member States to take account of the mobility and partnership programmes with third countries, such as Erasmus Mundus, in the context of the career interaction and mobility requirements of all participating researchers;
22. Calls on the Commission, in the context of the European partnership for researchers, to ensure that there is room for incentives for researchers from Member States working outside the EU to return, as well as for outstanding researchers in third countries to establish themselves in the EU.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	2.12.2008
Result of final vote	+: 38 -: 1 0: 1
Members present for the final vote	Jan Andersson, Edit Bauer, Iles Braghetto, Philip Bushill-Matthews, Alejandro Cercas, Ole Christensen, Derek Roland Clark, Luigi Cocilovo, Jean Louis Cottigny, Jan Cremers, Proinsias De Rossa, Harald Ettl, Carlo Fatuzzo, Ilda Figueiredo, Stephen Hughes, Ona Juknevičienė, Elizabeth Lynne, Thomas Mann, Jan Tadeusz Masiel, Maria Matsouka, Juan Andrés Naranjo Escobar, Csaba Öry, Siiri Oviir, Marie Panayotopoulos-Cassiotou, Pier Antonio Panzeri, Rovana Plumb, Bilyana Ilieva Raeva, José Albino Silva Peneda, Jean Spautz, Gabriele Stauner, Ewa Tomaszewska, Anne Van Lancker
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Petru Filip, Donata Gottardi, Marian Harkin, Magda Kósáné Kovács, Sepp Kusstatscher, Jamila Madeira, Viktória Mohácsi, Anja Weisgerber