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Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

2006/2004(INI)

30.5.2006

OPINION

of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

for the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

on Nanosciences and nanotechnologies: An action plan for Europe 2005-2009
(2006/2004(INI))

Draftsman: Philippe Busquin

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Emphasises the advances which the development of nanosciences and nanotechnologies (N&N) has the potential to help bring about in a significant number of policy areas directly affecting citizens (public health, energy, transport, sustainable development, etc);
2. Supports the Commission's readiness to very substantially increase the resources devoted to research in the field of N&N, which is of fundamental importance to Europe's future development;
3. Emphasises the importance of creating the conditions for a genuine dialogue between all of the stakeholders associated with N&N and between the latter and the public in general;
4. Stresses the need for ambitious and balanced information campaigns aimed at improving the public's level of knowledge, in order to enable the challenges and implications associated with N&N to be better understood;
5. Supports the setting up of ethical committees which, by providing independent scientific advice, will help ensure that the public is properly informed and help create a climate of trust based on awareness of the possible risks and the benefits associated with the use of discoveries in the field of nanotechnologies;
6. Stresses that corporate social responsibility must be shown by businesses, which must help disseminate objective information about scientific discoveries in the N&N field, their intended uses, and their risks and benefits for society;
7. Emphasises that all applications and uses of N&N must comply with the high level of protection for human health, consumers, workers and the environment laid down by the European Union and insists on the need for the codification of nanomaterials, which will lead to the drawing up of standards, which will in turn boost efforts to identify any risks; calls on the Commission to take the necessary initiatives to this effect;
8. Emphasises that understanding of the potential damage to health and the environment of new, synthetic nanoparticles is still limited and, consequently, the effects of nanoparticles that are not readily soluble or biodegradable should be investigated, in accordance with the precautionary principle, before such particles go into production and are put on the market;
9. Stresses that assessment of the technological risks posed (from conception to disposal or recycling) to human health, consumers, workers and the environment must be carried out throughout the life cycle of N&N products;
10. Considers that, within the framework of the new European legislation concerning the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals (REACH), nanoforms

of existing materials should be treated as new substances, because of their unique properties; in particular, the question of whether the threshold levels for production and import laid down within that framework are also adequate for nanoparticles should be investigated;

11. Emphasises the importance of miniaturisation of products with regard to helping reduce waste and ensure better use of energy;
12. Supports the Commission's intention to address problems at an early stage with a view to the development of these promising future technologies;
13. Supports the efforts made by the Commission to take part, and speak with one voice, in the debate at the international level, to ensure a balanced discussion of N&N.

PROCEDURE

Title	Nanosciences and nanotechnologies: An action plan for Europe 2005-2009	
Procedure number	2006/2004(INI)	
Committee responsible	ITRE	
Opinion by Date announced in plenary	ENVI 19.1.2006	
Enhanced cooperation – date announced in plenary		
Drafts(wo)man Date appointed	Philippe Busquin 7.2.2006	
Previous drafts(wo)man		
Discussed in committee	3.5.2006	30.5.2006
Date adopted	30.5.2006	
Result of final vote	+: 41 -: 5 0: 2	
Members present for the final vote	Adamos Adamou, Georgs Andrejevs, Johannes Blokland, John Bowis, Frieda Brepoels, Dorette Corbey, Chris Davies, Avril Doyle, Mojca Drčar Murko, Matthias Groote, Françoise Grossetête, Satu Hassi, Gyula Hegyi, Marie Anne Isler Béguin, Caroline Jackson, Dan Jørgensen, Christa Kläß, Eija-Riitta Korhola, Holger Kraemer, Urszula Krupa, Aldis Kušķis, Marie-Noëlle Lienemann, Caroline Lucas, Jules Maaten, Linda McAvan, Roberto Musacchio, Riitta Myller, Péter Olajos, Miroslav Ouzký, Vittorio Prodi, Frédérique Ries, Guido Sacconi, Karin Scheele, Carl Schlyter, Horst Schnellhardt, Richard Seeber, Jonas Sjöstedt, Antonios Trakatellis, Evangelia Tzampazi, Thomas Ulmer, Anja Weisgerber, Åsa Westlund	
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Dariusz Maciej Grabowski, Jiří Maštálka, Miroslav Mikolášik, Ria Oomen-Ruijten, Alojz Peterle, Bart Staes	
Substitute(s) under Rule 178(2) present for the final vote		
Comments (available in one language only)	...	