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Management of the European Security Research Programme

38. Considers that, in order to guarantee effective management of the ESRP, experience acquired with regard to funding mechanisms, methods and institutional settings during the preparatory action should play a key role;
39. Insists that the management of the ESRP should emphasise the added value of interoperability and connectivity so as to improve cross-border cooperation, avoid unnecessary duplication and improve the coherence of the Union's efforts;
40. Vehemently advocates the development of strong common research and development infrastructures, the promotion of collaboration between laboratories on a Union-wide scale and the development of human resources in research and technology, making Europe a more attractive area for skilled researchers in this field;
41. Insists on the need to foster systematic collaboration and to explore the combined strengths of industry and the research community, with a view to increasing the European innovation ratio to the highest level in the world;
42. Considers that the ESRP should be compatible with the establishment of an open, integrated and competitive European defence market and the introduction of innovative mechanisms creating opportunities for European industry to gain a comparative advantage in world markets; points out that transparency in the allocation of contracts is of the utmost importance;
43. Stresses the benefits that a more competitive European security industry, based on the existing capacity of the defence industry and other specialised areas relating to new technology infrastructures, could provide in strengthening the economic growth and overall competitiveness of the European economy, and also stresses its positive results within society in the European Union;
44. Emphasises that EU initiatives on security research must not result in a weakening of the Union's principles and values on human rights, democratic rights, political freedoms, civil liberties and ethics;

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45. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

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The information society

European Parliament resolution on the information society (2004/2204(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission Communication 'Towards a Global Partnership in the Information Society: Follow-up of the Geneva Summit (WSIS)' (COM(2004)0111),
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 9 and 10 December 2004 (15472/04),
- having regard to the Commission Communication 'Towards a Global Partnership in the Information Society: Translating the Geneva principles into actions' (COM(2004)0480),
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 8 and 9 March 2004 (6606/04),
- having regard to the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) adopted in Geneva on 12 December 2003,

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- having regard to Unesco Resolution 32C/34 of 17 October 2003 on the desirability of drawing up an international standard-setting instrument on cultural diversity,
 - having regard to the Unesco Executive Board's Preliminary Study of 12 March 2003 on the technical and legal aspects relating to the desirability of a standard-setting instrument on cultural diversity,
 - having regard to the opinion in the form of a letter sent by the President of Parliament to the Presidents of the Commission and the Council on 26 November 2003,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions of 5 June 2003 (9686/03),
 - having regard to the Commission Communication 'Towards a Global Partnership in the Information Society: EU Perspective in the context of the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)' (COM(2003)0271),
 - having regard to the Unesco Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of 2 November 2001,
 - having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy and the opinion of the Committee on Culture and Education (A6-0172/2005),
- A. whereas the WSIS meeting in Tunis ('the Tunis Summit') to be held on 16 to 18 November 2005 constitutes an essential second phase for the promotion of information and communication technologies (ICTs) as a factor for sustainable development and shared growth, since poverty means being deprived not only of goods but also of social inclusion,
- B. whereas ICTs constitute a strategic tool for State policies and a prime vector for mutually beneficial cooperation and research, through the Plan of Action, between developed, emerging and less-developed countries,
- C. whereas ICTs can contribute to global balance as well as to individual progress by helping to achieve the Millennium Development Goals,
- D. whereas the decision by Unesco to adopt a Convention on cultural diversity represents a crucial initiative for developing a more inclusive information society, based on the protection of the diversity of cultural expression, on international cultural exchanges and on the promotion of pluralism,
- E. whereas the information society should be open to all, since education and training, health, research and commerce are priority ICT applications which are close to the public,
- F. whereas the rapid growth of ICTs should serve to strengthen democracy and participation by citizens, making them active participants rather than simply consumers,
- G. whereas the development of ICTs should take place within a framework of independent regulatory authorities, guaranteeing access, freedom of expression and information, cultural diversity and multilingualism,
- H. whereas effectiveness on the part of the European Union derives from coordination of the Member States and the positive involvement of the Commission, in a manner consistent with its political objectives and its commitment to the less-developed countries,
- I. whereas ICTs are an integral part of the knowledge and information-based society sought by the Union's Lisbon Strategy and the Barcelona Declaration,
- J. whereas the Union has a major role to play in narrowing the digital divide in geographical and social terms, through successful internal policies and the development of a partnership associating public authorities, enterprises and civil society,

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- K. whereas the Union has instruments at its disposal with which to address the digital divide: development aid policy, international economic and scientific cooperation and financing institutions (such as the European Investment Bank (EIB)),
- L. whereas the EU has demonstrated, by adoption of a common legislative framework for electronic communications, the crucial importance of an open and competitive market for the generation of investment in new services and the delivery of high-speed connections at affordable prices,
- M. whereas the rights to education and to access to vocational and continuing training are included as basic rights in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
1. Welcomes the Council's renewed commitment to working towards the success of the second phase of the WSIS;
 2. Broadly endorses the proposals made by the Commission, particularly as regards the decisive role of an investment-friendly regulatory framework, ICT applications in priority areas including on-line government, the importance of research and innovation and the contribution of ICTs to development, and expects the Commission to develop a strategy that complies with the WSIS global action plan to be decided at the Tunis Summit;
 3. Points out that:
 - the good coordination of the Member States facilitated the involvement of the Commission in the WSIS Process, and especially in the Working Group on Internet Governance;
 - the Union's experience enables it to make a positive contribution to a regulatory environment conducive to implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action;
 4. Emphasises that:
 - since the development of ICTs might widen the digital divide by favouring those who have access to ICTs and know how to use them, this risk must be taken into consideration in all the actions recommended, by tailoring these to the regional, national or local circumstances;
 - since ICTs contribute to competitiveness and to raising the level of knowledge and skills, equal importance should be accorded to the economic and the cultural effects of the development of ICTs, so that this benefits employment, enterprises and social cohesion;
 - special attention should be paid to possible problems arising from the concentration of mobile and internet services and their content; urges the Commission to monitor the consequences of such concentration;
 - individual access should therefore be developed to the same extent as collective access;
 - *e*-Inclusion should centre on accessibility, on the supplying of on-line services (government services, education and continuing training, health and commerce) and on teaching and learning how to use these, with the possibility of the most essential basic services being free of charge on the agreement of all partners, and Free/Libre and Open Source Software (FLOSS) being one way of gaining access to these services;
 5. Stresses:
 - the strategic role of R&D at every stage and at every level of the process: development and rolling-out of new technologies, and procedures for comparison and evaluation of the Plan of Action, with the establishing of observatories;
 - the need to factor into priority research socio-economic studies enabling an assessment of the human and social impact of access to ICTs;
 - the opportunity presented by the current drawing-up of the seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development and the increase in the research budget;

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- the importance of developing local skills and competences by supporting computer science education and research;
 - the need to develop entrepreneurial and innovative capacities to enable countries to use ICTs to develop services and systems that directly address their societal needs;
6. Welcomes:
- the emphasis placed by the Commission on the need for all countries to establish independent regulatory bodies and the need for a clear competition law framework within which investors can participate securely;
 - the importance given to stepping up international communications, regulatory co-operation and exchanges of best practice;
7. Recommends:
- that the Union and its Member States fast-track the setting-up of ICT research networks, by means of infrastructure instruments such as GEANT, based on centres of excellence or technological platforms and networks of experts and education and continuing training practitioners;
 - an active policy of support for the use of common information-based schemes which benefit from public funding to disseminate research results in the fields for which they prove useful
 - that public decision-makers and representatives of civil society and the private sector have an input in these areas where appropriate;
8. Calls on the Union and Member States:
- to view the WSIS as a spur for cooperation in traditional areas of geographical or historical proximity (Mediterranean, ACP, etc.) and for new cooperation with developing countries;
 - to take into account, as a priority, the infrastructure and training requirements of less-developed countries;
 - to take into consideration local and regional knowledge and know-how in cooperation centring on practices and contents;
 - to make sure that the EU's efforts help ensure the balance between economic growth, competitiveness and employment on the one hand and social and environmental sustainability on the other;
 - to make use of flexible forms of open public-private partnership (regions, States, local authorities, enterprises, associations and NGOs), involving institutional sources of financing, such as the EIB, or private sources;
 - to establish a working group with Member States' regulatory authorities to promote effective integrated and independent regulatory models, and to share experience of successful market opening measures that have encouraged investment and lowered consumer prices;
 - to take due account of the need to safeguard cultural diversity when planning governance arrangements;
9. Notes with interest the establishing of a voluntary financing fund while also pointing out that it is not a substitute for the necessary harnessing of existing or future financing;
10. Suggests that a process of reflection on new measures be launched in order to optimise the resources contributed by cooperation programmes and the European Development Fund, such as the re-use of unspent appropriations to supplement the Plan of Action;
11. Considers that the development of internet governance is a key to the success of the WSIS and should be pursued to a timetable compatible with the Declaration of Principles and the Plan of Action;
12. Emphasises, however, that an international and independent internet governance system should be maintained;

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13. Emphasises that accessibility and investment in ICTs depends on the stability and reliability of the internet;
 14. Recalls that the challenge involved in developing the information society is to use information and communication technology to enhance the effective implementation of human rights standards at international, regional and national levels;
 15. Stresses that digital literacy programmes are essential to building up a global area of freedom and security where citizens, who are potential consumers of information, enjoy full rights of citizenship; notes that education, including education in human rights, is central to an inclusive information society;
 16. Expects the Tunis Summit:
 - to facilitate progress towards a common definition of internet governance and a more representative method of organisation of the partner countries;
 - to deal collectively with subjects of general interest connected with management of the internet (domain names, address allocation), and to strengthen international cooperation in the fields of internet security and abuse (including spamming) and in the combating of cyber-crime (including child pornography), and attempts to restrict pluralism, freedom of expression and respect for human rights;
 - to clarify public responsibilities, in particular:
 - to take account of intellectual property and cultural diversity in the framing of the new governance structure;
 - to ensure the neutrality and interoperability of digital technologies and platforms;
 - to foster technological, economic and cultural exchanges within a framework of fairly-regulated competition;
 17. Calls on the Council and the Commission to take account of its recommendations and to continue to involve it in the follow-up to the WSIS, so as to ensure close concordance between the ambitions expressed by the EU and their implementation, in particular in budgetary terms, in Union policies;
 18. Welcomes the initiative for the W2i Digital Cities Convention to be held in Bilbao in November 2005, promoted by the Digital Cities, but points out that an initiative should also be taken to create digital regions;
 19. Wishes to strengthen the involvement of European civil society in the build-up to the Tunis Summit;
 20. Emphasises the importance of private-sector involvement in the WSIS process;
 21. Stresses that innovation in educational systems, lifelong learning programmes and e-learning initiatives (for both teachers and students) should be fostered and recommends an explicit focus on education, training and tools for the creation of content that reflects cultural diversity;
 22. Calls upon Member States to act in accordance with the 'Education for All by 2015' Unesco goal and to respond to Unicef appeals for a greater budget allocation to education in a Pact with Future Generations;
 23. Points out that globalisation brings in its wake risks in relation to respect for cultural diversity in terms of languages and identities, and that the information society can also represent an opportunity for the promotion of intercultural dialogue via global networks;
 24. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.
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