Public health: Community action programme 2003-2008

2000/0119(COD) - 31/07/2001 - Council position

Political unanimity on the proposed programme of Community action in the field of public health for the years 2001 · 2006 was found within the Council in June and later endorsed unanimously by the adoption of the common position in July. Whilst the broad thrust of the Commission's amended proposal was taken on board by the Council there were nevertheless certain changes made to the Commission's amended text which are reflected in the final wording of the common position. Specifically, the Council decided to change large parts of the text itself. The substance of the text is now more concise but less precise. In addition, the council decided not to accept a number of key amendments referring to work on developments in the health systems. This concerns in particular the following: - the role of the programme in contributing towards the definition of minimum quality standards; - the promotion of patients' rights; - the role of the programme in defining and determining best practice and on sound guidelines for health intervention. Moreover the Council common position rejects proposals for work on a Community vaccination strategy. Concerning the "management" strategy incorporated into the proposed Decision, the Council has devised a wider range of tasks for the Programme Committee than was originally envisioned. Changes include new provisions for the preparation of any structural arrangements for the co-ordination of health monitoring, rapid reaction to health threats and the arrangements for transmitting and dissemination information. There are instances where the Council's common position and the Commission's amended text converge. These include: - agreement on the three main action lines foreseen in the Commission's proposal and the need for concentrating on areas where the Community can provide clear added value; - support of the general policy orientation of the programme; - calls for the Commission to implement the programme through "appropriate structural arrangements". Lastly, the common position follows the amended proposal in strengthening the programme's contribution to the development of the Community's overall health strategy.