Public health: Community action programme 1996-2000 on the prevention of drug dependence

1994/0135(COD) - 09/12/1996

While recalling that at first reading Parliament had been somewhat over-ambitious, the rapporteur, Mr Burtone (EPP, I), underlined the importance of the agreement that had been reached within the Conciliation Committee, both from a moral and a social point of view. He went on to say that Europe had rejected moves to legalise drugs, which would have led to the creation of a ‘state drug’. He therefore recommended a policy of prevention, while calling for better education and information and greater participation by families, schools and NGOs so that young drug addicts were helped to re-integrate themselves back into society. The rapporteur welcomed the fact that the programme would provide support for combating drugs at street level in order to help high-risk groups; emphasis had also been put on the role of the addict’s family and immediate social circle, parties who could benefit from the programme and from the exchange of information it provided. Commissioner Monti declared that rather than imposing one single policy the Commission was keen to listen to a range of debates on this issue in order to compare the different methods and solutions being proposed. As far as the programme was concerned, the Commissioner promised that both public and private bodies as well as NGOs offering care and treatment and providing social welfare services would be involved in implementing the scheme.