European health card

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The rapporteur, Mr LEOPARDI (UPE, I), thought that a European health card issued to every EU citizen would facilitate the free movement of persons within the Union. Such a card would contain medical data and other information on social insurance cover and reimbursement for treatment. Pointing out that current technology and IT capabilities were well up to producing such a card system, Mr Leopardi called on the Commission to present a draft decision by 1/1/97 at the latest, so that the Council and Parliament could approve the proposal before the end of 1998. Commissioner Flynn said that such a system had been under review for many years, but that the results had not been particularly encouraging. While recognising that such a card would have its advantages, he presented a list of problems linked to the introduction of such a scheme: confidentiality and the protection of medical data in the event that the card were to be lost, stolen or used for non-authorised purposes, compatibility of hardware and software and the burden of responsibility for doctors.