Public health: Community action programme 1997-2001 on health monitoring

1995/0238(COD) - 16/04/1996

The rapporteur, Mr Poggiolini (EPP, I), said that while the Community action programme on health monitoring could appear somewhat technical, it was nonetheless of paramount importance for promoting health awareness, for assessing the current situation and probable developments in the health sector and for taking stock of the health systems in place throughout the Community. Better information on health indicators and the introduction of harmonised definitions and data acquisition procedures would be beneficial for establishing a European Health Observatory, which, according to the rapporteur, would constitute a more appropriate allocation than that being proposed. Even so, Mr Poggiolini pointed out, the monitoring system in question would not lead to the harmonisation of Europe’s health systems, as this would not be permitted under the terms of Article129 of the Maastricht Treaty; what should in fact be standardised, he added, was the scientific language on which the monitoring system was to be based. Commissioner Flynn thought that this proposal aimed to introduce a very high level of health protection monitoring. The Commissioner pointed out that he would accept 28 of the 47 amendments tabled. Of the amendments that the Commission was not prepared to take over, he mentioned those relating to databases, as in his opinion these ran contrary to the principle of subsidiarity; he also rejected a number of other amendments for legal reasons, or because they were incompatible with other health programmes, or again in order to avoid repetition, ambiguity or restrictions. Furthermore, as regards the budget allocation, he expressed the hope that this might be increased during the course of the conciliation procedure.