

Public health: network for epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases in the European Community EWRS

1996/0052(COD) - 13/01/1998

The rapporteur was keen to stress that setting up a European surveillance centre was central to ensuring effective action at European level. In reply, Commissioner Flynn rejected Amendment No 5 on a surveillance centre as there were already national centres which had acquired considerable experience in this field. The Commissioner then explained that it was clearly preferable to build upon what already existed and had proven to be working well instead of starting again from scratch. In addition, the Community had invested heavily in linking the national administrations in numerous areas, including the surveillance and control of communicable diseases. Citing the case of Asian bird flu, Mr Flynn argued that the European Union must have a network of links allowing Member State authorities to monitor new cases and, in particular in order to prevent chicken flu, to define and coordinate control measures for travellers coming from the Hong Kong region. The Commissioner informed Parliament, however, that he could accept Amendments Nos 2, 4, 6, 7-13, 15, 19, 20 and 22. As regards Amendments Nos 14, 18 and 21, the Commission was prepared to follow Parliament's suggestions provided that the wording was improved. On the other hand, Amendments Nos 1, 3, 16 and 17 had to be wholly rejected together with Amendment No 5.