

Dangerous preparations: classification, packaging and labelling

1996/0200(COD) - 24/09/1998 - Council position

The tenor of the common position of the Council was similar to that of the initial proposal by the Commission, and it incorporated many amendments adopted by the European Parliament at first reading. The Council particularly accepted the amendments seeking to: -require the Commission to submit a report, accompanied, if appropriate, by the necessary proposals concerning labelling requirements applicable to dangerous preparations (the Commission undertook to initiate without delay research into how well users understood labelling); -clarify the objectives of the Directive and specify that its scope includes non-dangerous preparations which may present a specific danger; -clarify the general principles of classification and labelling; -impose restrictions on animal testing where alternatives exist; -confirm the practice already in force with regard to packaging for transport and supply; -formulate the principles which apply to labelling requirements for preparations classified as dangerous for the environment when supplied in small packagings; -ban the inclusion in labelling of such indications as 'ecological' which might cause the dangers to be underestimated; -make it clear that safety data sheets are principally intended for professional users; -in the case of unclassified preparations, extend the requirement to draw up safety data sheets to preparations containing substances dangerous to the environment. As regards the annexes, the Council accepted the amendments seeking to: -insert in Annex III a lower concentration limit (0.1% instead of 0.5%) for classification of preparations containing ozone-depleting substances; -remove the requirement for a tactile danger warning on aerosols classified and labelled as extremely flammable or highly flammable. The Council also made changes with regard to the following points: -evaluation of health hazards and environmental hazards: this provision would make it possible to introduce into Annexes II and III other conventional methods, which might be necessary for alloys; -labelling of plant protection products: the principle underlying labelling of such products was developed further. The message on labels concerning risks would be complemented by a special phrase. Labels on plant protection products would moreover include the normal information about risks, particularly danger symbols and indications; -confidentiality of names of dangerous substances: the provisions concerning confidentiality of chemical names now covered safety data sheets as well. Requests for confidentiality would be authorised not only for dangerous substances but also for irritants. A less bureaucratic notification procedure was also introduced; -arrangements under the accession treaty: the new Member States (Austria, Sweden and Finland) would not be required to transpose the existing Community acquis at the beginning of 1999. The Council opted for a type IIIb committee for measures to implement the Directive.