Dangerous substances and preparations: azocolourants in textiles and leather (19th amend. Directive 76/769/EEC)

1999/0269(COD) - 29/11/2000 - Modified legislative proposal

The aim of this amended proposal is to clarify the original proposal, without modifying its general structure and objectives. Of the five amendments adopted by the Parliament one has been accepted and parts of another amendment in principle. The Commision recognises that the technical progress in testing methods should be taken into account and has therefore accepted to introduce, when available, an even more reliable testing method. Furthermore, the Commission can accept in principle parts on Parliament's amendment which relates in particular to hand-made oriental carpets. The Commission shares the view that the risk posed by these carpets is likely to be low and has accepted to exempt such carpets from the example list of product categories covered by the provisions. However, the Commission cannot accept that the exemption be only temporary as the low level of risk is not foreseen to change with time. On the other hand, the Commission has not accepted amendments which would extend the scope of the proposed ban. The basis of the Commission's proposal is that risks to health have been identified from azo-dyes in textiles and leather that come into close and prolonged contact with the skin. Such risks have been confirmed by the Scientific Committee in Toxicity, Ecotoxicity and the Environment. Therefore, the Commission cannot accept the Parliament's amendments which relate to banning azo-dyes in articles other than those made of textiles and leather to include other amines. Finally, for reasons of clarity and transparency, especially for suppliers in the Third World, the Commission has proposed the most widely used and accepted testing method to show compliance. The inclusion of other testing has not been accepted.