Public health: Community action programme 2003-2008

2000/0119(COD) - 23/01/2002 - Commission opinion on Parliament's position at 2nd reading

As the second reading report of the European Parliament is based on the Common Position, the Commission amends its proposal also on the basis of the Common Position. The Commission is in favour of 33 amendments (9 in part) to the Common Position, out of the 50 voted by the European Parliament. With regard to the amendments accepted fully by the Commission, these relate to the following: - underlining the importance of education, training and networking. - underlining the need for effective public health monitoring at Community level and thus reinforces the need to set up a health monitoring system. - the need to co-ordinate actions taken by the Community and the Member States and to promote co-operation between Member States. - the necessity to ensure the effectiveness and cohesion of measures and actions through 'appropriate structural arrangements'. - the link to be established with "all Community policies having an impact on health", and co-operation with other Community bodies, especially those responsible for food and feed safety, environmental protection and product safety. - the impact of transnational factors on health systems and adds environmental pollution and food contamination to examples of threats of a cross-border nature. - the comparability and compatibility of data as well as to the interoperability of systems. - the need to develop gender-specific statistics. - a fair allocation of the budget between the three objectives of the programme. - underlining the importance of "practical measures" in order to attain the objectives of the programme. - the programme must build upon the work of the network for epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases in the Community. This network will continue to pursue its activities on the basis of Decision 2119/98/EC which will continue in force. - putting an emphasis on health determinants and mentioning activities of non-profit, non-governmental European organisations deletes the provision in the Common Position for the Programme Committee to be consulted on 'the arrangements for the preparation of any structural arrangements'. - adding the W.T.O. and FAO to the list of international organisations with which co-operation shall be encouraged. - calling for a joint action to improve information on medicines available on the Internet and for considering possibilities for a system of Community seals of approval for Internet sites. Developing these activities at Community level is a useful way to contribute to the co-operation between Member States for the provision of sound information for the Community population, as underlined in the Common Position. - refers to developing a vaccination and immunisation strategy. - covering health threats caused by unforeseen events, including terrorist acts. - adding physical activity to the list of life-style determinants of health. - strengthening activities on social and economic health determinants by focussing on inequalities in access to health andon the assessment of the impact of social and economic factors. - developing strategies for reducing antibiotic resistance. With regard to the amendments partly accepted by the Commission, these relate in particular to: - health as a priority - not a "marketable" commodity - and to the role of the Community. - establishing quality standards in the field of public health and patients' rights, such as data protection and non-discrimination. - putting emphasis on experiences acquired in the field of public health and from applicable charters - promoting education and training activities in the field of public health. - the promotion of an integrated health strategy by creating links between the public health framework and other policies and establishing criteria and methodologies for health impact assessment. - focusing on environmental pollution. With regard to the 17 amendments rejected by the Council, these relate in particular to: - the preparatory measures to put in place structural measures with a view to setting up a co-ordinating centre; - the consultation of NGOs through health fora and referring to the need to break down data by gender, age, geographical location and income bracket. The Commission also rejects certain amendments which duplicate parts of recitals, on the protection of personal data, the development of an integrated and intersectoral health strategy, the implementation of health promotion and disease prevention in all Community policies involving NGOs, national organisations, institutions and activities. The Commission also rejects an amendment which refers to informing the public in Member States and accession countries on communicable diseases, in particular resistant pathogens and another which would

introduce activities to assist applicant countries. Lastly, the Commission refuses the amendment which sets the financial framework for the implementation of the programme at EUR 380 million, with each specific objective receiving a minimum of 25% of the budget. With regard to the total budget, the Commission maintains its proposal of EUR 300 million. However, in view of the need to ensure adequate resources for the appropriate structural arrangements, requested by the Council and the European Parliament, the Commission is presenting a revised financial sheet, with an increase in expenditure for technical and administrative assistance.