

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

1999/0269(COD) - 21/06/2000

The committee adopted the report (codecision procedure, first reading) by Emmanouil BAKOPOULOS (EUL/NGL, GR) supporting the Commission proposal for a directive on restrictions on the marketing and use of soluble azocolourants (azodyes) in textiles and leather, subject to a few amendments. The committee wanted to ensure that handmade oriental carpets could be temporarily exempted (up until January 2006) from the provisions on testing fabrics, as individual tests would destroy them. It proposed that, in the meantime, carpet importers should develop a voluntary quality mark for labelling carpets produced without azocolourants. The report also amended the annex to the proposal listing the carcinogenic amines (the dangerous substances contained in azodyes) banned by the directive, so as to add two more amines which had been newly classified as carcinogenic in the German 'MAK' list, which is used as a benchmark list by the Commission. The committee also amended the annex so that it set out a specific, binding list of products covered by the ban on azocolourants, rather than just giving examples, arguing that a specific list would ensure legal certainty for producers and consumers. Among the articles which it proposed should be covered by the ban, on the grounds that they come into prolonged contact with the skin or oral cavity, were sleeping bags, toys in general (not just textile or leather toys) and purses worn round the neck.