Human blood and blood components: quality and safety for the collection, testing, processing, storage and distribution

2000/0323(COD) - 11/07/2001

The committee adopted the report by Giuseppe NISTICO (EPP-ED, I) broadly approving the proposal under the codecision procedure (1st reading), subject to a large number of mainly technical amendments. MEPs welcomed the proposal but called for blood establishments to ensure that all blood donations were voluntary and non-remunerated, as a means of guaranteeing the safety of blood supplies. They argued that scientific data had shown that blood products from voluntary unpaid donors were far less likely to transmit infectious diseases than blood from paid donors. Member States were also urged to ensure that blood and blood products imported into the EU from third countries met the requirements laid down in the directive. The report made a number of practical recommendations, such as ensuring that a medical examination, consisting of at least an interview and a blood pressure check by a doctor, was carried out before any donation of blood or blood components in order to assess the eligibility of donors. It also emphasised the need to ensure prompt care and full insurance cover for injury to donors when giving blood. Other points raised in the report included the need for the directive to cover the quality and safety of blood derivatives (in addition to blood and blood components) and the need to provide for penalties, such as withdrawal or temporary suspension of accreditation, where accredited blood establishments failed to comply with the prescribed standards.