Tobacco: manufacture, presentation and sale of products (recast of Directives 89/622/EEC, 92/41 /EEC, 90/239/EEC)

1999/0244(COD) - 16/11/1999 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE : Proposal for a Directive on the approximation of Member States' legislation concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco products. CONTENT : This proposal : - Recasts three existing directives regarding tar content in cigarettes, oral tobacco and labelling of tobacco products. The tar yield of cigarettes in the Member States must not exceed 10mg per cigarette as from 31 December 2003 (or three years from date of adoption). A continuing derogation is provided in respect of Greece which must apply the 10mg ceiling by 31 December 2006 (or 6 years from the date of adoption). Compulsory labelling provisions will include the new yield of carbon monoxide. There are new provisions on warning labels regarding size and type. The strong warning on oral tobacco will be changed to a more general one, but this does not apply to legitimate aids to stopping smoking. - Includes provisions to harmonise Member States legislation as regards nicotine and carbon monoxide levels in cigarettes. The nicotine yield of cigarettes in the Member States must not exceed 1mg per cigarette from 31 December 2003, or three years from the date of adoption. In line with the approach taken for tar and nicotine, the Commission proposes a ceiling on carbon monoxide yield of not more than 10mg per cigarette with similar time limits. - Includes provisions for the non-tobacco ingredients. The Commission notes that Member States' legislation regarding additives that may be incorporated into tobacco products differs. The control of additives in the Internal Market is subject to great uncertainty. The proposal envisages that manufacturers and importers submit a list of non-tobacco ingredients, together with a statement giving reasons for the ingredients. Member States should obtain toxicological data on them and require evidence that they are safe for public consumption. Commercial confidentiality will be respected. - Makes provision for the description of tobacco products. The proposal envisages that terms such as ·low tar, 'light' and 'mild' be prohibited, since they give a mistaken impression of the health risks involved. The Member States may expressly authorise these terms, but shall inform the Commission of the conditions of the authorisation. The Commission will inform the European Parliament and the Council in this regard. - Provides for a review mechanism through a reporting procedure to take account in particular of new scientific developments in so far as they affect the establishment and operation of the single market.