Action to combat drugs: action plan 2000-2004

1999/2095(COS) - 19/11/1999 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted its report drafted by Mrs. Marietta GIANNAKOU-KOUTSIKOU (EPP, Greece) on the Commission's communication. It congratulates the Commission on its honesty in acknowledging shortcomings, but it considers, however, that it paints an overly optimistic picture of the commitment and performance of the Union and its Member States in combating drugs. It welcomes the long-term and cross-sector strategy in the Commission's Action Plan which takes account of the need for further treatment and evaluation; at the same time, it stresses, however, that the strategy must be flexible in order to cope with new trends in drug abuse, particularly amongst young people, and that is must also include approaches geared to the local and regional levels. It notes that, at present, the overall budgetary resources implemented by the EU appear woefully inadequate and the monitoring of action weak; it considers that the EU should be allocated further resources to strengthen its measures to prevent drug addiction. The EP calls on the Member States and the Union to show greater political resolve and, if the need for more effective measures to combat drug abuse and drug trafficking cannot be met with existing resources, to commit higher resources, on the one hand, for internal action, notably in the educational, social, health and medical scientific field, particularly as regards the effects of drugs on health and life expectancy, and, on the other, for international action. While it welcomes the Commission's objectives of reducing drug abuse among young people and the number of deaths among addicts, it regrets the lack of clarification regarding the measures, timetables and follow-up strategies needed to achieve those objectives. It also calls on the Commission to involve NGOs in implementing the action plan in order to maintain an integrated and balanced anti-drug strategy in which reductions of supply and demand are regarded as mutually reinforcing factors. Member States which, according to UN statistics, are transit countries for drug trafficking are called upon to clamp down on such activity as soon as possible. The Parliament calls upon the forthcoming Portuguese Presidency to convene an extraordinary 'inter-pillar' Council meeting devoted to combating drugs and to invite the applicant countries to attend. It calls on this Council to meet yearly and to signal clearly its refusal to consider the drug problem as inevitable by adopting an ambitious political anti-drugs project subject to a precise timetable. It calls on the inter-pillar Council to examine each year, on the basis of an EMCDDA report, the progress in implementation by the Monitoring Cente of a global information system on drugs and to develop the methodological tools needed for implementation. The Commission is called upon to evaluate the various approaches to treatment and to introduce a range of different treatment programmes with individualised criteria for admission and the objective of non-dependence on drugs. Member States are called upon to implement programmes to protect public and individual health, and measures to teat drug addicts in prison. It demands that the Commission begin the systematic and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of all action pursued inthe fight against drugs, including action taken at international level, drawing in particular on the expertise of the EMCDDA. It urges the Member States to present an exhaustive annual appraisal of their policies. It also calls on the Commission to fund programmes to evaluate the practices used in the fields of prevention, treatment and reintegration, as well as social and health implications and, on the basis of its conclusions, to help the Member States frame their national policies. Lastly, it calls on the EMCDDA to contribute fully towards the systematic monitoring of the above-mentioned anti-drug actions, to expand its assistance to the Member States in evaluating their activities to reduce demand, to implement the five harmonised epidemiological indicators, to strengthen its system for evaluating the risks posed by the new synthetic drugs and broaden its scope to cover the risks linked to performance-enhancing drugs.