Public health: Programme of Community action 1999-2003 on pollution-related diseases

1997/0153(COD) - 29/04/1999 - Final act

PURPOSE: to establish a programme of Community action on pollution-related diseases in the context of the framework for action in the field of public health (1999-2001). COMMUNITY MEASURE: decision 1296/1999/EC of the European Parliament and the Council. CONTENT: the programme, which has a financial framework of EURO 3.9 million for the period 1999-2001 aims, in the area of health and the environment, to contribute to the establishment of strategies and policies to prevent pollution-related diseases by: 1) improving information on pollution-related diseases (establishing priorities for the identification of those diseases in which specific pollutants are thought to play a role, examining the quality of epidemiological data for these diseases and identifying where data are lacking, reviewing data currently available on the toxicology of pollutants involved in these diseases and identifying gaps in knowledge which need addressing); 2) improving knowledge and understanding of the assessment and management of pollution-related diseases (improving the comparability of data used in preventive actions against pollution-related diseases, supporting the exchange of information aimed at achieving better public understanding of pollution-related health risks, promoting actions and exchanges of information on the methods of increasing the level of knowledge of the general public and opinion-formers about pollution-related risks to health, their assessment and management and promoting knowledge of behaviour patterns, ways of life and eating habits that could reduce pollution-related health risks). The Commission will ensure the implementation of the programme in close cooperation with the Member States and will also cooperate with institutions and organisations active in the field. The Commission will also be assisted by a committee composed of representatives of the Member States and chaired by a representative of the Commission. The programme will be carried out in consistency and complementarity with other Community actions in the field of public health, particularly the Community action programme on health monitoring (1997-2001) and actions in the environmental and research fields. The programme will be open to participation by the associated countries of Central Europe in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Association Agreements or Additional Protocols relating thereto concerning participation in Community programmes. The programme will also be open to Cyprus and Malta, in accordance with procedures to be agreed. Subject to Article 228 of the Treaty (conclusion of international agreements), the programme will also be implemented in cooperation with third countries and international organisations competent in the sphere of public health. The Commission will ensure continuous monitoring and assessment of the programme. In the final year of the programme's operation, it will submit a full evaluation report to the European Parliament and to the Council, together with its conclusions on the need for future actions. The repot should contain information on Community financing in the various fields of action and should also address developments within the framework for Communityaction in the field of public health in respect of pollution-related diseases. ENTRY INTO FORCE: 29/04/1999. It should be noted that the decision is accompanied by 3 declarations: 1) the first (interinstitutional) declares that the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission will pay particular attention, among the priority issues to be addressed within the framework of the future programme on public health, to rare diseases and pollution-related diseases and will duly take account of the budgetary implications; 2) the second provides an undertaking from the Commission that, in implementing the aspects concerning the provision of information on the programme on pollution-related diseases, the Commission will endeavour to give priority support to initiatives embracing the competent authorities of the Member States and the professionals concerned; 3) the third declaration provides an undertaking from the Commission to inform the European Parliament annually on the decisions taken to implement the programme.