Basic information

2003/2222(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	Procedure completed
Environment and health: integrated strategy, SCALE initiative, first cycle 2004-2010 **Subject** 3.70 Environmental policy 4.20 Public health	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ENVI Environment, Public Health, Consumer Policy	PAULSEN Marit (ELDR)	09/09/2003

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
ITRE Industry, External Trade, Research, Energy	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Environment	2536	2003-10-27

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
11/06/2003	Non-legislative basic document published	COM(2003)0338	Summary
27/10/2003	Resolution/conclusions adopted by Council		
18/12/2003	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
16/03/2004	Vote in committee		
16/03/2004	Committee report tabled for plenary	A5-0193/2004	
30/03/2004	Debate in Parliament		
31/03/2004	Decision by Parliament	T5-0246/2004	Summary
31/03/2004	Results of vote in Parliament		
31/03/2004	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2003/2222(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/5/20349

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A5-0193/2004	16/03/2004	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T5-0246/2004 OJ C 103 29.04.2004, p. 0453-0670 E	31/03/2004	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Non-legislative basic document	COM(2003)0338	11/06/2003	Summary

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES1602/2003 OJ C 080 30.03.2004, p. 0051-0056	10/11/2003	

Environment and health: integrated strategy, SCALE initiative, first cycle 2004-2010

2003/2222(INI) - 31/03/2004 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Parliament has adopted an own initiative report on the European environment strategy presented by Marit PAULSEN (ELDR, S). Parliament welcomes the intention to improve understanding of the links between environmental factors and certain diseases, but considers it illusory to believe that the strategy could "fill the knowledge gap on the link between environment and health", let alone "generate the necessary information for establishing the cause-effect link", given the enormous complexity of the links between environment and health. A ministerial Conference on Environment and Health is to be held in Budapest in June 2004, and it is important that the Commission's contribution, namely the Action Plan 2004-2010, should set a good example of addressing the disease burden caused by environmental factors in concrete terms, I. whereas the connections between the EU's own actions. The Parliament stresses the importance of considering the socio-economic impact in the work on environment and health. The Commission is called upon to always keep in mind the gender perspective during the implementation of the European environment and health strategy. Parliament underlines that an immediate priority for the action plan must be a more comprehensive survey and evaluation in the short-term of the levels of evidence already available which explore the links between exposure to environmental factors and disease from the various studies already available, studies collected during the first phase, as well as available toxicological data, with a view to proposing concrete measures to protect human health and the environment as soon as possible. Equally, the Commission is called upon to establish an inventory of known damage to health caused by

environmental factors, including the costs of such damage. The House calls for the link between traffic, transport and air pollution, on the one hand, and asthma and respiratory diseases on the other, to be made stronger in the first cycle of the strategy, as asthma and respiratory diseases are closely connected with air pollution, and calls for an equal focus to be placed on the two problem areas. Moreover, Parliament recommends that the action plan should provide for more extensive measures to improve indoor air quality in the residential environment, public places (particularly nursery schools and schools) and work-places. The Parliament considers that protecting the health of the children against environment-related diseases is an essential investment with a view to ensuring adequate human and economic development. It recommends that the action plan include studies to detect hot spots of emissions and exposure that endanger health and that these studies focus on the risks in question in order to find rapid solutions that will prevent adverse effects on health; also recommends that the action plan provide for the drafting of standards, protection measures as well as information on risks associated with the home. It calls for the action plan to devote particular attention to people living close to sources of pollution and to step up the policy of prevention based, in particular, on identifying, quantifying and reducing emissions and on stepping up monitoring of the environment for carcinogens and substances which damage the reproductive and nervous systems.The importance of protecting water resources is highlighted and thus the need to limit industrial and urban emissions of pollutants, both diffuse and from point sources, and emissions from agriculture of fertilisers and phytopharmaceutical products, which will require changes to be made in agricultural policies and practices. It stresses that the action plan must take into account the problems linked to labelling, given that clear and user-friendly labelling is essential if consumers are to be informed and made aware of the impact on the environment of the products in question; believes, furthermore, that the action plan should establish other particular ways and means of ensuring appropriate information for children-consumers. The link between the strategy's integrated monitoring and response system should be stressed and the proposal for a regulation concerning the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals - REACH, which will provide toxicological and exposure data, needs to be clarified and strengthened in the strategy. Parliament considers that the anticipated biomonitoring should include certain pesticides as well as certain brominated flame retardants and phthalates so as to cover substances that are not yet adequately regulated. It recommends that the action plan include legislative proposals to reduce the dependency on pesticides in the context of the thematic strategy on the sustainable use of pesticides. Parliament stresses the importance of education about environmental health and calls for the methods and activities to be undertaken for raising awareness to be better defined in the strategy and it considers that the objective should be to inform each individual sufficiently so as to enable him or her to make the appropriate choices in relation to his or her own health. It emphasises the crucial role of public access to information in this context and calls on the Commission to ensure that all evidence about environmental degradation that could harm health, in particular children's health, be made publicly available. It calls for the precautionary principle to be included in the strategy and for the action plan to include a list of environmental contaminants, for which there is a sufficient level of scientific evidence at the effect level (e.g. molecular, cellular, or tissue-related) to show that potentially serious or irreversible health impacts are likely. The Commission is called upon to accelerate the pilot project 'Integrated monitoring of dioxins & PCBs in the Baltic region' and to start to use this integrated information as a basis for developing new policies without delay. Parliament recommends that the Action Plan take into specific consideration the problem of passive smoking, in particular at the work place and in public buildings, and include legislative proposals to restrict smoking to dedicated closed rooms at the work place, as well as conduct an awareness campaign to inform the public of the effects of tobacco pollution on children's health. The issue of putting in place a Community monitoring and response system is underlined and ensuring that it is truly successful and useful will require EU funding. It stresses that the financing of the strategy needs to clarified.

Environment and health: integrated strategy, SCALE initiative, first cycle 2004-2010

2003/2222(INI) - 11/06/2003 - Non-legislative basic document

PURPOSE : to put in place a strategy to reduce diseases linked to environmental factors. CONTENT : this report states that there is a strong link between poor health and environmental problems. Moreover, a report from the European Environmental Agency, EEA, shows that as many as 60 000 deaths per year in large European cities are caused by long-term exposure to air pollution. Children are more exposed to environmental risks than adults. One child in seven is affected by asthma. In order to reverse this alarming trend the European Commission is today launching A European Environment and Health Strategy. With this new strategy the Commission expects to achieve a better understanding of the complex relationship between environment and health and to identify and reduce diseases caused by environmental factors. The strategy is known as SCALE and relies on five key elements: - Science : it will be based on Science to broaden our perspective on the often very complex link between environment and health. Traditionally, environmental assessments and policy action have focused on single pollutants in single environmental compartments, such as air, water or soil. There is, however,a strong need to look into how different pollutant react together. There is a need to understand better how pollutants move in the environment and how we come in contact with them - through air, water, food, and consumer products. The Commission needs to understand how the human body reacts, over a period of time, to the continuous exposure to different pollutants, inter-acting between each others, often at a low level. - Children : focus shall be on Children since they are particularly vulnerable to environmental hazards. There are 157 million children in Europe. Most of them live in urban areas with particular environmental problems that must be addressed. The Commission will be launching pilot actions on pollutants with specific relevance to children, including dioxins, heavy metals and endocrine disrupters (chemicals that affect the hormone system). Together with the World Health Organization, WHO, and the EU Member States, the Commission will establish indicators and bio-monitoring systems that will help us better to understand where, how and why children are affected. - Awareness : awareness of environmental-health problems should be raised and solutions to how they can be solved. Citizens have the right to know about these problems, in particular those affecting children. Policy-makers and stakeholders from both the environmental and health sector must increase their efforts to communicate, both across the sectors and with the citizens. - Legal instrument : the EU Legislation will complement national and international initiatives. It will be reviewed to reflect the special situation and needs of children. - Evaluation : all actions taken under the strategy will be Evaluated continuously. There will be a need to verify how effective they are in reducing environmental-related health problems. A constant evaluation will also allow us to address new problems as they emerge. The European Environment and Health Strategy will be implemented in cycles. The first cycle, 2004 - 2010, will focus on four health effects: - Childhood respiratory diseases, asthma, allergies; - Neurodevelopment disorders; - Childhood cancer; - Endocrine disrupting effects. The detailed actions of the strategy will be prepared based on extensive consultations with experts and stakeholders from the environment, health and research fields in all parts of the enlarged Europe. A first stakeholder meeting will take place on 11 July in Brussels to launch the consultations. Working groups covering the priority

health effects and monitoring activities will be set up and participate in three regional conferences during Autumn 2003. The work will emanate in an Action Plan for the period 2004-2010, which the Commission will adopt in spring 2004. The Action Plan will be presented prior to the Inter-Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in Budapest in June 2004, focusing particularly on children's health and environment.