

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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Communication from the Commission to the Council
on the improvement of the general system for collecting
epidemiological data on HIV infection in the
European Community

**COMMUNICATION OF THE COMMISSION
TO THE COUNCIL ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE
GENERAL SYSTEM FOR COLLECTING EPIDEMIOLOGICAL
DATA ON HIV INFECTION IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY**

The Council and Ministers for Health of the Member States meeting within the Council of 16 May 1989 asked in its conclusions the Commission, in cooperation with the European Centre on AIDS Prevention and Control (WHO collaborating centre in Paris), " to propose to the Council the measures and methods necessary to:

- improve both the comparability of data on AIDS cases and, where appropriate, the system for recording AIDS morbidity and death rates at national and Community level,
- exchange data available in the Member States on HIV infection, while respecting in full the confidentiality of such data" (1)

In addition to the Community data base on AIDS cases which provides valuable information, the Commission considers that, on the basis of the above Council conclusions, an improvement in the collection of epidemiological data on HIV infection (sero-epidemiological) is a priority providing a common data base for the further development of epidemiological and scientific research as well as preventive actions in the Community.

The European Centre on AIDS Prevention and Control, in collaboration with the Commission, is developing a procedure to facilitate this exchange of data based on the transmission of available studies in a standardized format (annex). This procedure allows the setting up of a Community data base will be available by 1990. The working format of the data base contains at present 627 studies, of which 447 come from the

(1) O.J. C 125, P.7, 22.07.89

Member States. It ensures absolute confidentiality of individual data, as such data are not contained in the data base itself.

The collation and analysis of such data, from the scientific and public health points of view, for the development of appropriate methodologies together with relevant concerted actions, require significant additional efforts, in particular from the European Centre on AIDS Prevention and Control.

On the basis of the above, the Commission considers that the Council should:

- consider the approach proposed in the annex for the transmission to the European Center on AIDS Prevention and Control of available epidemiological data on HIV infection in the Community;

- encourage systematic and coordinated epidemiological studies on HIV infection at Community level;

- consider the need for the Community to provide adequate support for these additional tasks.

ANNEX

HIV SEROPREVALENCE STUDIES

In order to ensure that the maximum of information, in an as comparable form as possible, is provided on the various HIV seroprevalence studies carried out in Member States, the following information is requested for the establishment of the data base :

- country;
- date of study;
- group tested;
- geographic site and extent of study;
- age group and sex;
- study method;
- results (number positive, number tested);
- comments on study;
- institution conducting study;
- if published, reference and abstract;
- person or institution submitting the information.