

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(93) 18 final

Brussels, 26 January 1993

Communication from the Commission to the Council
on home and leisure accidents

Proposal for a
COUNCIL DECISION
introducing a Community system of information
on home and leisure accidents

(presented by the Commission)

Communication from the Commission to the Council
on home and leisure accidents

1. Decision 86/138/EEC introduced a Community system of information on domestic and leisure accidents⁽¹⁾ as a demonstration project.

The initial aim was to determine what preventive action was necessary in product safety.

The demonstration project comprised two phases and one transitional period which were completed in 1992.

This Communication is intended to assess the second phase of the project on the basis of reports provided by the Member States covering 1990 and 1991.

I. INFORMATION COLLECTED

A. At national level

2. In some Member States the results were used to define what was to be done. This was the case with the two Member States which had a similar system before the Community project was introduced and three other Member States. Moreover, considerable progress has been achieved in some of the Member States though results have been more mixed elsewhere.

(1) Council Decision of 22.4.1986 on a demonstration project with a view to introducing a Community system of information on accidents involving consumer products OJ No L 109 of 26.4.1986, p. 23.

3. All the main practical applications which follow are based on the Ehlass data.

Products for children

There were many domestic and leisure accidents involving children, prompting action by several Member States.

In Portugal the rate of domestic and leisure accidents involving children is particularly high. The Portuguese authorities alerted the public to this by means of a safety campaign for children. The figures show that child mortality has dropped thanks to this campaign. In Denmark a similar campaign produced the same results, i.e. a significant reduction in accidents involving children up to four. Moreover the authorities have ensured that bottles and containers of chemical products and medicines are fitted with childproof tops to prevent poisoning. Improvements in the design of electric stoves and ovens have also been negotiated with the manufacturers following tests on these products as they are frequently the causes of burns in children.

In the United Kingdom the authorities commissioned several studies on child safety. They also discovered a problem with the chemical composition of certain teething rings which will result in new standards being issued.

In France a study on toys resulted in standards and the 1991 Decree being issued. Hazards on playgrounds were also brought to light. Standards have been adopted and two draft decrees are being prepared.

Sports

In the Netherlands the results of the Ehlass decision formed the basis of an information campaign to prevent sports injuries.

The accident rate in France led the Commission for Consumer Safety to issue a statement on the development of high-risk sports, covering water sports (Decree of 1991), mountain sports, aerial sports and others. The danger involved in paragliding in particular was established on the strength of the criteria of a high rate of hospitalization, the average length of stay in hospital and the fact that injuries which occurred involved the spinal column. The authorities concerned had a standard drawn up and are now moving to lay down the conditions for obtaining an instructor's licence and obliging paragliders to be equipped with a safety parachute.

In Portugal an interministerial working party was proposed to draft legislation on the construction and operation of aquaparks.

In the United Kingdom a study on drowning accidents involving swimming pool covers assessed what covers are the safest and also included recommendations for improving their safety.

Fireworks

In the Netherlands there were many accidents involving fireworks; the need for regular information campaigns is now being emphasised.

In Denmark this was also true and led to information and legislative measures, bringing down the number of accidents caused by fireworks by 50%.

In Portugal the Decree-Law of 1988 is intended to limit the sales of carnival products, in particular for the under-18s.

Chemical products

In France information campaigns have been launched on poisoning by bleach which accounted for 50% of poisoning by domestic products, mainly because it has been transferred to ordinary bottles previously containing food or drink.

Ladders

In the Netherlands a law on portable ladders which entered into force in 1987 aimed at reducing the number of accidents involving step ladders, particularly those with less than four steps which cause a third of this type of accident.

In the United Kingdom the authorities have undertaken a study on the safety of ladders with a view to drawing up British and European standards.

Electrical products

In the Netherlands accidents involving circular saws have been analysed and recommendations drafted for the standardisation bodies.

In France a study on accidents involving lawn mowers has resulted in manufacturers designing modifications for start-up mechanisms.

In the United Kingdom awareness campaigns on electrical garden implements have been launched and the use of a circuit breaker recommended. Recommendations have also been issued to improve the design and safety instructions of electrical DIY tools.

B. At Community level

4. The Ehlass data can be used to show what hazards are involved in using a product (e.g. aerosol generators) and to identify safety problems common to several States (e.g. ladders, fireworks, etc.).
5. Guidelines have been culled from annual national reports and from studies such as: preparation of an observation model for various sources of information on domestic and leisure accidents, analysis of consumer behaviour vis-à-vis hazards, a study of all the hazards in private houses and research on falls.
6. National reports can also be analysed to enable the Commission to direct subsidies granted for national activities towards particularly sensitive sectors.

II. ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT'S EFFECTIVENESS

7. The project cannot be considered to be a statistical instrument at least not at Community level. It does not meet the basic statistical criteria of allowing for factors such as the differences between national health care systems, the geographical distribution of hospitals or their number within each Member State.

However, if certain specific conditions are met, the project may be used as a key indicator for planning safety measures.

A. At national level

Almost all the Member States drew attention to problems posed by the frequency of certain accidents in their national reports.

Belgium is concerned with accidents involving children (falls, poisoning and burns), accidents associated with sporting activities and fatal accidents.

Denmark is asking for coordinated studies, on riding accidents and accidents involving DIY tools.

In Germany building materials are the products most frequently involved in domestic and leisure accidents (particularly doors and stairs) followed by DIY equipment and floor covering material.

Greece would like to integrate the paediatric hospitals in Athens in the data collecting process.

In Spain games and leisure activities account for two-thirds of all accidents, the most frequent victims of which are young people.

France has published 34 safety instruction sheets and presented three proposals for action: an awareness campaign on accidents with ladders, another on the risks of children being burnt and the third on accidents occurring during gym.

Ireland draws attention to the variable "alcohol" as an important cause of accidents and has produced several publications such as: "play it safe", "First Aid Calendar".

Luxembourg would like to see a study on accidents caused by building design to provide a basis for recommendations and specifications.

The Netherlands favour programmes of prevention for elderly people and children and on sports and fires.

Portugal is worried about falls on stairs, animal bites, insect stings and suffocation due to foreign bodies.

The United Kingdom has drawn up a typology from data on hospitalised persons data and is undertaking cause-specific (sports, falls, DIY etc.) preventive action.

8. For the project to play the part of a significant indicator in future, thought should be given to strengthening the validity of the data collected in each Member State to enable it to be interpreted properly in other Member States.

B. At Community level

9. So far the data have been used at Community level on several occasions such as when Directive 75/324/EEC on aerosol generators was being amended and in the context of work carried out by the CEN on the surface temperatures of domestic apparatus.
10. How could better use be made of the data in future at Community level?

The following avenues could be pursued:

- the quality of the data supplied by the Member States could be improved by developing the methodological basis which would make the definitions and classifications more homogeneous. The need for clarification emerged clearly from an analysis of the national reports for 1990/91;
- the use of the data at Community level could be facilitated by modifying and clarifying the coding system. These improvements would be designed to make the information consistent by the use of new definitions and common coding principles and to make them more relevant by refining the coding variables. One of the benefits of this would be more precise identification of products;
- the time needed to obtain the data could be reduced by the use of computer-based media in all the Member States in order to permit permanent access to the updated data.

CONCLUSIONS

11. At a moment when the single market is coming into being, thus increasing the movement of products within the Community, it is important that the national systems for monitoring domestic accidents are both homogeneous and of high quality. Moreover, the entry into force of Council Directive 92/59/EEC of 29 June 1992 on general product safety makes it essential to have a system which gives the Commission and the Member States access to specific information on products involved in any accidents that may occur in the Single Market.
12. For this reason the Commission proposes to pursue the activities engendered by the Ehlass project by introducing a Community system of information on domestic and leisure accidents. The new system will take account of the experience gleaned from the demonstration project. The system will be established in principle for five years and will be re-assessed before the end of 1994. The Commission will by 31 December 1994 submit a report to the Council accompanied by possible proposals for modifying the system.
13. In line with the principle of subsidiarity, the Commission's contribution will mainly be to coordinate Member States' initiatives and provide logistic, methodological and financial back-up.
14. This option, which incorporates the solution to the problems encountered in the implementation of the demonstration project, is the subject of the proposal for a decision annexed to this Communication.

Explanatory Memorandum

Decision 86/138/EEC set up, for a period of five years, a demonstration project with a view to the introduction of a Community system of information on accidents involving consumer products.

The initial objective of this project was to identify areas in which preventive measures necessary to ensure product safety could be developed. The Decision provided for Community financial support for the collection of data from casualty departments of selected hospitals in the Member States. The Federal Republic of Germany's participation has taken the form of a household survey.

The second phase of the demonstration project, which came to an end on 30 November 1991, saw a consolidation of existing structures and an improvement in methodologies. It was possible to identify the underlying problems which prevented the project from achieving its initial objective and to make progress towards their solution. Firstly, in order to improve the quality of the data, the methodologies must be made more homogeneous and the possibilities of including additional sources of information should be examined; secondly, if the data collected are to be used for a particular purpose, a more pragmatic approach must be adopted to the codification of the products concerned; lastly, the time taken to obtain information will have to be reduced and the process of updating the information simplified by further computerisation of data collection in the Member States.

Despite a series of problems involving its implementation, Ehlass has proved to be a useful tool for enabling Member States to define their policies on consumer protection. Annual national reports show that the system, which contains a large number of products, makes it possible to identify products involved in home and leisure accidents on the basis of

criteria adopted in all the Member States, such as: rate of hospitalisation, average length of stay in hospital, localisation of injuries, age. In addition, the Ehllass data complement other national structures which either deal with emergencies or cover every type of accident (health insurance, for example) or are used for standardisation purposes. Action taken on the basis of Ehllass data varies but can be divided into three categories: prevention (information or awareness campaigns), negotiation with industry to modify products, introduction of standards or regulations.

Numerous measures in a variety of fields have been undertaken in the Member States on the basis of Ehllass results: child safety and products intended for children (toys, playing areas, child care articles); the elderly; sports (in particular paragliding, physical training equipment, aquaparks and swimming pool covers); fireworks; chemical poisoning; falls, including those involving ladders and step-ladders; electrical equipment, in particular garden implements (especially lawn-mowers and hedge-cutters), kitchen equipment and DIY tools (in particular circular saws).

Against this background, it is essential to continue to collect data for the following reasons:

- the safety of consumers in the Community must be ensured in view of the completion of the internal market on 1 January 1993 when more and more products will be circulating in the Community. As a result, the risks faced by consumers will increase, and it is desirable to have national monitoring systems which are sufficiently homogeneous to enable the conclusions drawn in one Member State to be used, where appropriate, in the other Member States and at Community level;

- the entry into force, on 29 June 1994, of Council Directive 92/59/EEC of 29 June 1992 on general product safety will increase the demand for specific information on the products involved in accidents, as well as on the circumstances and causes of these accidents. In particular, it must be possible for the national authorities responsible for monitoring the market to use this information in their work in order to detect hazardous products. In the same way, the results of this system of collecting data are needed at Community level so that the Commission can administer the procedure referred to in Article 7 of this Directive which provides for a general safeguard clause for products that do not conform to the Community or national rules applicable to them and that may harm the health and safety of consumers.

Furthermore, the Commission must have access to the specific information it needs in order to evaluate, where appropriate, the serious and immediate risk presented by certain products in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 8 of this Directive and, until then, in accordance with the provisions of Council Decision 89/45/EEC of 21 December 1988 on a Community system for the rapid exchange of information on dangers arising from the use of consumer products;

- Community involvement is required to enable the Member States to overcome the difficulties associated with the collection of data at national level. This is needed for methodological and budgetary reasons because if no Community assistance were forthcoming, in particular financial assistance, this would deal a blow to the collection of information on accidents in a number of Member States, a development which would seriously distort the monitoring of consumer safety in the Community.

Given this situation, the attached proposal for a Decision for five years is designed to meet the formal request from almost all the delegations in the Council and the consequent commitment entered into by the Commission. It takes account of the fact that it is above all the responsibility of Member States to manage consumer safety. It takes into account the preparation of specific Community action with regard to road accident data which are, therefore, not included. It also takes into account the need to evaluate the system as soon as the first conclusions have been drawn, i.e. before the end of 1994, particularly in view of the budgetary implications and the expected improvement in the system at Community level. The arrangements for Community financial support could, for example, be reexamined at this time, depending on how far Member States are in a position to assume greater responsibility for the data collection operation.

The Commission, for its part, coordinates and contributes to the smooth implementation of activities conducted at national level. This system therefore aims to give the Member States the appropriate means to take action by disseminating, where necessary, information on home and leisure accidents to the Community and national authorities concerned.

Proposal for a
COUNCIL DECISION
introducing a Community system of information
on home and leisure accidents

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community,
and in particular Article 235 thereof,,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission⁽¹⁾,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Parliament⁽²⁾,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee⁽³⁾,

Whereas the establishment of a Community system of information on home and leisure accidents forms a component part of a consumer protection policy; whereas its importance in this respect can be seen from the fact that the data collected in pursuance of the demonstration project set up by Council Decision 86/138/EEC⁽⁴⁾, as amended by Council Decision 90/534/EEC⁽⁵⁾, are being put to specific uses by several Member States for the adoption of measures in the area of product safety;

Whereas the completion of the internal market on 1 January 1993 is increasing the circulation of products within the Community; whereas, in order to identify the products involved in accidents and the combination of circumstances which might lead to these accidents, it is therefore desirable for the national authorities to have sufficiently homogeneous instruments so that the conclusions of one Member State can, where appropriate, be used in the other Member States as well as at Community level;

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4) OJ No L 109, 26.4.1986, p, 23.

(5) OJ No L 296, 27.10.1990, p. 64.

Whereas, although the management of consumer safety is primarily the responsibility of each Member State, Community financial involvement can help the Member States to overcome the problems of the actual collection of data at national level; whereas the Commission must therefore provide coordination and contribute to the homogeneous implementation of activities conducted at national level, by promoting the dissemination of information on home and leisure accidents to all the competent authorities;

Whereas a Community framework and Community financial assistance are necessary in order to avoid major distortions, since a number of Member States would not have the necessary resources to obtain by themselves the data on home and leisure accidents which help to establish a policy on consumer protection; whereas steps should be taken to ensure the overall quality of the data by the use of homogeneous basic methods and, in the context of the internal market and Council Directive 92/59/EEC of 29 June 1992 on general product safety⁽⁶⁾, to make it possible for all Member States to collect the information needed for the monitoring of the products involved in accidents;

Whereas the Community aspects of the collection of data oblige the Member States to use a homogeneous methodology for the collection and production of information for transmission to the Commission; whereas this constraint is not disproportionate to the objective pursued;

Whereas the provision of specific information by the Member States, at the Commission's request, on products or groups of products involved in accidents is necessary for the development of a Community policy on product safety;

Whereas the Member States must also be in a position to present to the Commission annual summary reports; whereas the conclusions drawn by the Member States in these reports should make it possible for the Commission, in concert with the Member States, to determine what action should be taken at Community level;

(6) OJ No L 228, 11.8.1992, p. 24.

Whereas, finally, the introduction of an information system on home and leisure accidents appears, under these conditions, to be necessary in this important area at Community level, to support and complement the policy carried out by the Member States, to achieve a high level of consumer protection; it does not exceed what is necessary to promote the prevention of such accidents; it is therefore in conformity with the principle of subsidiarity;

Whereas the Treaty provides no powers other than those in Article 235 for the adoption of this Decision,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1.

1. A Community system of information on home and leisure accidents, hereinafter referred to as "the system", is hereby set up for a period of five years. (The specifications of the system are described in Annex I).
2. The system's objectives are to collect data on home and leisure accidents with a view to promoting accident prevention, improving the safety of consumer products and informing and educating consumers so that they make better use of products.
3. This Decision shall not apply to industrial accidents, nor to road, rail, sea or air traffic accidents.

Article 2

Member States shall be responsible for implementing the system; they shall process directly the data collected and submit to the Commission an annual report containing a summary and an evaluation at national level of the results obtained.

They shall supply the Commission; at its request and by the dates set, with the data on the safety of certain products, or specific categories of products, involved in home and leisure accidents and the circumstances surrounding such accidents.

Article 3

The Commission shall promote compatibility of the methodologies applied in the Member States, in particular with regard to the data collection basis and the national reports on the processing of the data.

It shall help finance implementation of the system in the Member States, according to the procedures laid down in Annex II. The budgetary authority shall decide on the amounts available for each financial year.

After receiving the annual national reports, it shall ensure that the data are processed, summarized and disseminated at Community level in an appropriate manner.

Article 4

Each Member State shall designate and communicate to the Commission the name(s) and address(es) of the authority or authorities responsible for collecting and transmitting information pursuant to Article 2.

Article 5

The Commission and the Member States shall ensure that, during the process of collecting and forwarding information, any identifying details are removed so that the identity of victims remains confidential.

Article 6

The Commission shall draw up an assessment report on the system, together where appropriate with proposals for amendments, and in particular amendments of the arrangements for financial support, by 31 December 1994.

The Commission shall draw up a final report on the implementation and effectiveness of the system by 31 December 1997.

These reports shall be presented to the European Parliament, the Council, and the Economic and Social Committee.

Article 7

This Decision shall apply as from 1 January 1993.

Article 8

This Decision is addressed to the Member States.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council
The President

ANNEX I

SPECIFICATIONS OF THE SYSTEM

1. The system shall apply to home and leisure accidents which are followed by medical treatment and which occur in the home or its immediate surroundings, such as gardens, yards and garages, or during leisure, sports or school activities.
2. The basic information shall be obtained from the casualty departments of hospitals selected by the Member States in accordance with the limits specified at point 4.

Information from alternative sources of an equivalent value may be accepted.

3. When compiling their national reports, Member States shall, wherever possible, take into account additional information, including that obtained from poison-antidote centres, death certificates, family doctors, burns treatment centres, fire services and emergency systems.
4. The basic data collected must be as reliable as possible.

They shall at least include information on:

- the place where the accident occurred;
- the date of the accident;
- the place of treatment;
- the activity of the victim at the time of the accident;

- the type of accident;
- the type of product involved in the accident;
- the age of the victim;
- the sex of the victim;
- the type of injury;
- the parts of the body injured;
- the duration of treatment;
- a brief description of the accident and its causes (including, where possible, the main features and identifying details of the product involved).

This information shall be classified in accordance with a system based on homogeneous criteria at Community level.

5. The allocation of hospitals among the Member States shall be as follows:

<u>Member State</u>	<u>Number of hospitals</u>
Belgium	4
Denmark	5
Germany	2 (*)
Greece	4
Spain	8
France	8
Ireland	2
Italy	7
Luxembourg	1 (*)
Netherlands	7
Portugal	6
United Kingdom	<u>11</u>
	62

(*) The Federal Republic of Germany and Luxembourg's participation will take the form of household surveys.

ANNEX II

UTILIZATION OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Community financial support for the hospitals participating in the collection of data would be allocated at a standard rate which will represent 80% of the actual costs up to a ceiling of ECU 28.000 per hospital per annum.

In addition, Community financial support would be provided as a contribution to the strengthening of the least developed national infrastructures, notably by the development of appropriate computerized networks.

Lastly, Community financial support would be made available so that bilateral technical assistance can be provided by the Member States with an operational collection system to the other Member States.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

(cf. Manual of operational procedures, Annex 17)

SECTION 1: FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

1. Title of operation

Introduction of a Community information system on home and leisure accidents

2. Budget heading involved

B5-105

3. Legal basis

Article 235 of the Treaty

4. Description of operation

4.1 Specific objectives of operation

In developing Community consumer protection policy, there is a need to establish a system for collecting data on "consumer" accidents, so as to identify the categories of products that give rise to hazards. This will help to provide guidelines based on the data gathered as to what specific measures are required.

4.2 Duration

Specific operation

4.3 Target population

EC consumers

5. Type of expenditure or revenue

5.1 DO/DNO

DNO

5.2 CD/CND

CD

5.3 Type of revenue involved

None

6. Type of expenditure or revenue

Subsidy for joint financing with other sources in the public and/or private sector

6.1 100% subsidy

No (80%)

6.2 Subsidy for joint financing with other sources in the public and/or private sector

Yes

6.3 Interest subsidy

No

6.4 Other

No

6.5 Should the operation prove an economic success, is there provision for all or part of the Community contribution to be reimbursed?

No

6.6 Will the proposed operation cause any change in the level of revenue? If so, what sort of change and what type of revenue is involved?

Not relevant

7. Financial impact on appropriations for operations

Part B of the budget

1. Work done by the Commission : ECU 0.2 million

- methodology and data collection
- dissemination and exploitation at Community level of the national results and of specific analyses

2. Finances allocated to the Member States for collecting, processing and exploiting the data : ECU 2.3 million.

- support for the hospitals participating in data collection on the basis of 62 hospitals with the breakdown shown in Annex 1 of the proposal for a decision (80% of costs, with a maximum of ECU 28.000 per hospital and year), as well as contribution to German and Luxembourg household surveys.
- support for the least developed national infrastructures, notably by strengthening appropriate data networks.
- support for bilateral technical assistance provided to other Member States by the Member States that have an operating data collection system.

Total of part B : ECU 2.5 million.

The sum of ECU 2.5 million requested for 1993 is not expected to increase in the coming years.

From 1994 on the annual provision of appropriations for this line will be decided in the context of the annual budgetary procedure, depending on the results of the measures carried out with an eye to cost-effectiveness.

8. What anti-fraud measures are planned in the proposal for the operation?

Verification of the subsidies or of the acceptance of the preparatory, feasibility or evaluation services or studies is carried out by the Commission prior to payment, taking into account the contractual obligations and the principles of economy and good financial and overall management. Anti-fraud measures (monitoring, submission of reports, etc.) are included in all the agreements or contracts concluded between the Commission and the beneficiaries of the payments.

SECTION 2: ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURE

Part A of the budget

1. Personnel and management costs : ECU 0.25 million.

- Secretariat of meetings of national experts responsible for collecting and transmitting the data on home and leisure accidents (two or three per year)
- Logistic, methodological and financial coordination.
- Personnel: 1 A official (100%) + 1 B official (100%) + 1 C official (100%).

Note that these are not strictly speaking supplementary personnel in that, during the preceding phases, the following officials worked on the demonstration project: 1 national expert on secondment (75%) + 1 B grade (25%) + 1 C-grade auxiliary (50%).

The fact that these officials could only work on the demonstration project on a part-time basis explains why effective use of these data at Community level, which is one of the key objectives of the operation, has not been fully satisfactory up to now.

2. Studies : ECU 0.17 million

Complementary studies necessary for specific analysis of national and Community data are required.

3. Costs of meetings : ECU 0.08 million

- Meetings of the national experts at the initiative of the Commission, with two or three experts, from every Member State: two or three meetings per year.

Total of part A : ECU 0.05 million.

SECTION 3: COST-EFFECTIVENESS ANALYSIS

1. Objectives and coherence with financial programming

1.1 Specific objective(s) of proposed operation.

The system of collecting data on home and leisure accidents should be a key indicator for determining consumer protection policy. This objective is difficult to quantify in that an in-depth study would be needed in order to determine the precise socio-economic costs - which are certainly very steep - of home and leisure accidents; moreover the costs in human terms of these accidents are heavy but not quantifiable.

1.2 Is the operation incorporated in the financial programming of the DG for the years concerned?

Yes.

1.3 To which broader objective defined in the DG's financial programming does the objective correspond?

Policy on general product safety.

2. Justification of the measure

The collection of data from hospital emergency services selected in the Member States should provide direct information on the most important accidents, on the basis of similar structures in the different Member States. Moreover, the data will be collected on an ongoing basis. Its objective is in line with the future Directive on general product safety, for which the collection should provide important indicators on safety problems. Since the Directive on general product safety should take effect in 1994, it is important that the data be collected as of 1993, so that they will be globally available at the beginning of 1994. Thanks to these objective data the operational impact of this Directive, which will enter into force in 1994, will be significantly enhanced.

3. Monitoring and evaluation of the operation

The Member States should provide the Commission with two types of information:

- specific data on specific products, in line with the needs for a developing consumer protection policy;
- annual reports from the Member States on the implementation and results of the collection, on the basis of which the Commission will produce evaluation reports of the system at Community level.

Moreover the Commission will provide an annual report on the evaluation of the data collected and the conclusions to be drawn for the development of its consumer protection policy.

Imponderables which may effect the specific results of the operation lie in its effective implementation and, above all, the functionality of the system in all the Member States. These depend on how well the two problems we have identified above are solved, in other words utilisation of the data and their faster availability, and in both these respects the Commission will do its utmost to ensure success.