

European Communities

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Working Documents

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DOCUMENT 349/77

Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and

Consumer Protection

on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the
Council (Doc. 230/77) on the ~~first~~ programme of research actions in the sector of
medical and public health research

Rapporteur: Mr. R. EDWARDS

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By letter of 20 July 1977 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament to deliver an opinion on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities on the first programme of research actions in the sector of medical and public health research.

On 12 September 1977 the President of the European Parliament referred this proposal to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Budgets for its opinion.

On 27 September 1977 the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection appointed Mr Edwards rapporteur.

It considered this proposal at its meetings of 27 September and 20 October 1977. The motion for a resolution and the explanatory statement were adopted unanimously at the meeting of 20 October 1977.

Present: Mr Baas, vice-chairman; Mr Edwards, rapporteur; Mr Andersen; Mrs Dunwoody (deputizing for Mr Ajello), Lady Fisher of Rednal, Mr Guerlin, Mr Ligios (deputizing for Mr Vernaschi), Mr Mitchell (deputizing for Mr Willi Müller), Mr Noè, Mr Plebe and Mr Schwabe.

The opinion of the Committee on Budgets is attached.

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A

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

embodying the opinion of the European Parliament on the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council on the first programme of research actions in the sector of medical and public health research

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council¹,
 - having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 235 of the EEC Treaty (Doc. 230/77),
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection and the opinion of the Committee on Budgets (Doc. 349/77),
1. Draws attention to the need for Community coordination of research in the field of medicine and public health;
 2. Expresses its approval, therefore, of the objectives and scope of the proposal which is intended to promote the prevention of human handicaps;
 3. Expects the Commission, in accordance with the traditionally universal nature of medical knowledge, to continue to promote such research at European level and to ensure that it is integrated and, where possible, coordinated with similar research being carried out in other parts of the world;
 4. Requests the Commission to incorporate the following amendments in its proposal, pursuant to Article 149, second paragraph, of the EEC Treaty.

¹ OJ No. C 208, 31.8.1977, p.2

PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL DECISION
adopting a concerted action in the field of
registration of congenital abnormalities

Preamble and recitals unchanged
Articles 1, 2, 3 and 4 unchanged

Article 5

- | | |
|---|--|
| (a) In accordance with | (a) unchanged |
| (b) The Commission shall prepare
yearly progress reports on the
basis of the information supplied,
and shall forward them to the
Member States. | (b) The Commission shall prepare
yearly progress reports, on the
basis of the information supplied,
and shall forward them to the
Member States <u>and to the European
Parliament.</u> |
| (c) At the end of the | (c) unchanged |

Articles 6 and 7 unchanged
Annexes A and B unchanged

¹ For complete text see OJ No. C 208, 31.8.1977, p.2

PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL DECISION

adopting a concerted action in the field of
cellular ageing and decreased functional capacity of organs

Preamble and recitals unchanged

Articles 1, 2, 3 and 4 unchanged

Article 5

(a) In accordance with

(a) unchanged

(b) The Commission shall prepare
yearly progress reports on
the basis of the information
supplied, and shall forward
them to the Member States.

(b) The Commission shall prepare
yearly progress reports, on the
basis of the information supplied,
and shall forward them to the
Member States and to the European
Parliament.

(c) At the end of the

(c) unchanged

Articles 6 and 7 unchanged

Annexes A and B unchanged

PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL DECISION
adopting a concerted action in the field of
extracorporeal oxygenation

Preamble and recitals unchanged

Articles 1, 2, 3 and 4 unchanged

Article 5

- | | |
|---|--|
| (a) In accordance with | (a) unchanged |
| (b) The Commission shall prepare yearly progress reports on the basis of the information supplied, and shall forward them to the Member States. | (b) The Commission shall prepare yearly progress reports, on the basis of the information supplied, and shall forward them to the Member States <u>and to the European Parliament.</u> |
| (c) At the end of the | (c) unchanged |

Articles 6 and 7 unchanged

Annexes A and B unchanged

EXPLANATORY STATEMENTI. INTRODUCTION

1. On the basis of the opinion of the Committee on Medical and Public Health Research¹ and the Scientific and Technical Research Committee, the Commission has drafted a proposal for a Council decision adopting three concerted multiannual research actions in the field of:

- (a) the registration of congenital abnormalities (3 years);
- (b) the cellular ageing and decreased functional capacity of organs (4 years);
- (c) extracorporeal oxygenation (4 years).

2. These actions were elaborated on the basis of criteria and considerations involved in the implementation of gradual coordination between the research organizations of the Member States or in association with them. The overall cost is estimated at 8,950,000 u.a., of which 1,090,000 u.a. are accounted for by the costs of coordination, spread over 4 years and to be charged to the Community budget.

3. This proposal for a Council decision provides for the setting up of a coordinating committee for each of the actions on which the Member States will be represented by one representative and one alternate. With the exception of Luxembourg, which will take part in the first programme only, all the Member States will take an active part in the three concerted research actions. Finally, Article 6 of each of the proposals for decisions stipulates that the Commission may extend this coordination to third countries, engaged in similar research activities.

II. COMMENTS

4. The proposed actions on the coordination of medical research constitute the first instalment of the Community programme on medical research. This research clearly merits our approval. One is tempted to ask, however, why did not work in this area commence earlier? Anything which contributes to preventing human handicaps cannot be given too much encouragement, whether inside or outside the Community.

¹ This committee was set up in 1972 by the Working Party on Scientific and Technical Research Policy (PREST) of the Medium Term Economic Policy Committee and from 1974 was placed under the responsibility of the Scientific and Technical Research Committee (CREST) (See OJ No. C 7, 29.1.1974, p.3, Article 5)

5. Without detracting from the immense value in human terms of the research actions proposed, your committee would draw attention to the provisions of Article 4 of the three proposed Council decisions. It has examined whether the task of coordinating the various research sectors could not be performed by the existing Committee of Senior Officials on Public Health, which was set up by Council decision of 16 June 1975¹ and whose terms of reference were extended by Council decision of 27 June 1977².

6. One of the tasks of this committee is to collect relevant information on the conditions under which general and specialist medical care is given. Your committee originally took the view that on the basis of these objective data, which could be centralized and analysed by the centres and research organizations listed in Annex A of each proposal, basic research into preventive medicine, the early detection of diseases and rehabilitation could be coordinated within various temporary working parties under the Committee of Senior Officials on Public Health and in consultation with the Scientific and Technical Research Committee (CREST).

7. Recalling the concern which Parliament had repeatedly expressed regarding the ever-growing number of advisory committees set up to assist the Commission and which sometimes operate in a rather cumbersome and inefficient manner, your committee recommended that attempts be made to achieve a measure of centralization in the administrative supervision of present and future common research actions in the field of medicine. After thorough investigation, your committee decided at the rapporteur's suggestion, to maintain Article 4 of each of the proposals for Council decisions in its original version.

8. With reference to Article 5, the committee considers that Parliament should be informed regularly of the implementation of the coordination and the results of this coordinated research. Given its powers of budgetary control over the management of Community funds, it is obvious that Parliament should be provided with progress reports while the research actions are actually being carried out and not merely when they have been completed.

III. CONCLUSION

9. The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection recommends the European Parliament to approve this proposal on the coordination of these three medical research actions, provided that the provision of regular progress reports and information on the results achieved is guaranteed.

¹ OJ No. L 167, 30.6.1975, p.19

² OJ No. L 176, 15.7.1977, p.13

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON BUDGETS

Letter from the acting chairman to Mr AJELLO, Chairman of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection

Brussels, 4 November 1977

Subject: Proposal for a first programme of research projects in the field of medical and public health research (Doc. 230/77)

Dear Mr Ajello,

At its meeting of 3 November the Committee on Budgets considered the proposal for a first programme of research projects in the field of medical and public health research (Doc. 230/77).

The Committee took note of the financial statement which was provided by the Commission and which gave exhaustive information concerning the cost of the programme, and its breakdown over the four years.

The Committee gave a favourable opinion¹ to this proposal and asked me to write to you to inform you of this.

Yours sincerely,

Lord BESSBOROUGH
Acting Chairman

¹Present: The Earl of Bessborough, acting chairman; Mr Alber, Mrs Dahlerup-Andersen, Mr Dalyell, Mr Delmotte (deputizing for Mr F. Hansen), Mr Hamilton, Mr Schreiber, Mr Shaw, Mr Vanveltoven and Mr Würtz.

