



COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 15.04.1998
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97/ 0153 (COD)

Amended proposal for a

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND COUNCIL DECISION

adopting a

**programme of Community action 1999-2003 on pollution-related diseases in the context
of the framework for action in the field of public health**

(presented by the Commission pursuant to Article 189 a (2)
of the EC-Treaty)

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

- (1) The initial proposal for a European Parliament and Council decision adopting a programme of Community action on pollution-related diseases was adopted by the Commission on 4 June 1997¹.
- (2) The Economic and Social Committee² and the Committee of the Regions³ delivered favourable opinions on this initial Commission proposal.
- (3) In the light of the European Parliament's opinion adopted on 11 March 1998, an amended proposal for a decision is now submitted by the Commission in accordance with Article 189a (2) of the Treaty. The text incorporates amendments that clarify and broaden the actions covered by the programme.
- (4) The European Parliament has adopted 12 amendments of which 4 are acceptable by the Commission (n° 7 in toto, n° 3, 9, 10 partially).
- (5) The amendments which are not acceptable by the Commission can be grouped as follows:
 - (a) amendments that refer to the Amsterdam Treaty, which is not yet ratified (n° 1-2);
 - (b) amendments that broaden the scope of the proposed actions to an unacceptable degree (n° 4, 11, 12 and 13);
 - (c) the amendment on the budget (n° 5). The financial perspectives, as they currently stand, do not allow for the sum proposed by the European Parliament. Due to the uncertainty over the future financial perspectives, the Commission cannot accept a financial framework that exceeds for each year of the programme the annual provision set out in its initial proposal for the first year of action, 1999;
 - (d) and an amendment which is not consistent with the corresponding wording used in previous decisions on public health programmes (n° 6).

1 OJ N° C 214 16.7.97, p. 7-10

2 Opinion delivered on 29 October 1997, OJ N° C 19 21.1.98, p. 6-8

3 Opinion delivered on 20 November 1997, OJ N° C 64 27.2.98, p. 91-95

Proposal for a

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND COUNCIL DECISION

adopting a programme of Community action 1999-2003 on pollution-related diseases in the context of the framework for action in the field of public health.

INITIAL PROPOSAL

AMENDED PROPOSAL

**THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND
THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN
UNION**

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 129 thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the Economic and Social Committee,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions,

Acting in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 189b of the Treaty,

1. Whereas pollution-related diseases are growing in importance throughout the European Community and raising public concern;

2. Whereas, in accordance with point (o) of Article 3 of the Treaty, Community action shall include a contribution to the attainment of a high level of health protection;

3. Whereas Article 129 expressly provides for Community competence in this field, by encouraging cooperation between the Member States and, if necessary, lending support to their action; promoting coordination of their policies and programmes, and fostering cooperation with third countries and international organisations competent in the sphere of public health; whereas Community action should be directed towards the prevention of diseases, and the promotion of health education and information;

4. Whereas Article 130r of the Treaty states that Community policy on the environment

shall contribute to protecting public health;

5. Whereas the prevention of pollution-related diseases has to include not only measures aimed at the sources and concentrations of pollutants and on limiting exposure, but also public health actions directed at the public to enable individuals to reduce exposure and mitigate adverse effects on health and whereas data on health effects and on exposure should be collected in parallel with data on concentrations of air pollutants;

6. Whereas in its Resolution of 11 November 1991¹ the Council and the Ministers for Health of the Member States, meeting within the Council, invited the Commission, in close cooperation with the competent authorities of the Member States, to take stock of the knowledge and experience available in the Member States, the Community and international organizations regarding the relationship between health and the environment;

7. Whereas pollution-related diseases have been identified as a priority area for Community action within the framework for action in the field of public health²;

8. Whereas in its Resolution (A4-0311/95) on the Medium-Term Social Action Programme 1995-1997³ the Parliament asked the Commission to present, under the proper procedures, the action programme on pollution-related diseases foreseen in the Commission's framework communication on public health;

9. Whereas, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, action on matters not under the exclusive competence of the Community, such as action on pollution-related diseases, must be undertaken by the Community only if and in so far as, by reason of its scale or effects, it may be better achieved at Community level;

10. Whereas the proposed measures in the present programme will yield a Community-added value by bringing together activities

¹ OJ N° C 304 23.11.91, p. 5

² COM (93) 559 final

³ OJ N° C 032 05.02.96, p. 15-24

already undertaken in relative isolation at national level and by complementing one another with significant results for the Community as a whole, by contributing to the strengthening of solidarity and cohesion in the Community and by leading, where the need is recognised, to the establishment of best practice norms and standards.

11. Whereas cooperation with the international organisations competent in the field of public health and with third countries should be fostered;

12. Whereas, by providing support for acquiring better knowledge and understanding of, and wider dissemination of information about, pollution-related diseases, their association with pollutants and their prevention, ensuring improved comparability of information on these subjects and by developing actions complementary to existing Community programmes and actions, while avoiding unnecessary duplication, the programme will contribute to the achievement of the Community objectives set out in Article 129;

13. Whereas a "modus vivendi" between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission concerning the implementing measures for acts adopted in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 189b of the Treaty was concluded on 20 December 1994;

14. Whereas this decision lays down, a financial framework constituting the principal point of reference, within the meaning of point 1 of the Declaration of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission of 6 March 1995, for the budgetary authority during the annual budgetary procedure;

15. Whereas the Community's financial perspective is valid up until 1999 and will have to be revised for the period beyond that date;

16. Whereas the financial framework for the last four years of the programme (2000-2003) shall be determined after the establishment of the future financial perspectives;

17. Whereas, in order to increase the value and impact of the programme, a continuous assessment of the actions undertaken

should be carried out, with particular regard to their effectiveness and the achievement of the objectives set and, with a view where appropriate, to making the necessary adjustments;

18. Whereas this programme should be of five-year duration in order to allow sufficient time for actions to be implemented to achieve the objectives set;

HAVE DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Establishment of the programme

1. A programme of Community action against diseases which are caused, provoked or aggravated by environmental pollution, hereinafter referred to as "this programme", is hereby adopted for the period 1 January 1999 to 31 December 2003 in the context of the framework for action in the field of public health.

2. The aim of this programme is to contribute towards ensuring a high level of health protection against pollution-related diseases by improving knowledge and understanding about health risks associated with them and how to address them, in particular with regard to asthma and other respiratory diseases, and to allergies.

3. The actions to be implemented under this programme and their specific objectives are set out in the Annex under the headings:

1. Actions on improvement of information on pollution-related diseases

2. Risk perception and risk management with respect to pollution-related diseases

3. Respiratory diseases and allergies

1. Actions on improvement of information on pollution-related diseases and their definition

Article 2

Implementation

1. The Commission shall ensure implementation, in close cooperation with the Member States, of the actions set out in the Annex.

2. The Commission shall cooperate with institutions and organisations active in the field of pollution-related diseases.

Article 3

Budget

1. The financial framework for the implementation of the programme for the year 1999 shall be ECU 1.3 Million, in keeping with current financial perspectives. The financial framework for the final four years of the programme (2000-2003) shall be determined in detail after the establishment of the future financial perspectives.

2. The annual appropriations shall be established by the Budgetary Authority in accordance with the financial perspectives.

Article 4

Consistency and complementarity

The Commission shall ensure that there is consistency and complementarity between the Community actions to be implemented under this programme and those implemented under other relevant Community programmes and actions.

Article 5

Committee

1. In implementing this action plan, the Commission shall be assisted by an advisory committee, hereinafter referred to as "the Committee", consisting of representatives of the Member States and chaired by the Commission representative.

2. The representative of the Commission shall submit to the Committee a draft of the measures to be taken concerning, in particular:

- (a) the criteria, and procedures for selecting and financing projects under this programme;
- (b) the evaluation procedure.

The Committee shall deliver its opinion on the draft, within a time limit which the chairperson may lay down according to the urgency of the matter, if necessary by taking a vote.

The opinion shall be recorded in the minutes; in addition, each Member State shall have the right to ask to have its position recorded in the minutes.

The Commission shall take the utmost account of the opinion delivered by the Committee. It shall inform the Committee on the manner in which its opinion has been taken into account.

3. The representative of the Commission shall keep the Committee regularly informed about Commission proposals or Community initiatives and the implementation of programmes in other policy areas which are relevant to the achievement of the objectives of this programme.

Article 6

International cooperation

1. In the course of implementing this programme, cooperation with third countries and with international organisations competent in the field of public health shall be fostered.

2. This programme shall be open to participation by the associated countries of Central Europe (CEC), in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Association Agreements or Additional Protocols related thereto concerning participation in Community programmes. This programme shall be open to participation by Cyprus and Malta on the basis of additional appropriations in accordance with the same rules as those applied to the EFTA countries, in accordance with procedures to be agreed with those countries.

Article 7

Monitoring and evaluation

1. In the implementation of this Decision the Commission shall take the necessary measures to ensure the monitoring and

continuous evaluation of the programme, taking account of the general and specific objectives referred to in Article 1 and in the Annex.

2. In the third year of operation of this programme, the Commission shall present to the European Parliament and the Council an evaluation report.

3. The Commission shall submit to the European Parliament and the Council a final report on completion of this programme.

4. The Commission shall incorporate into these two reports information on Community financing in the various fields of action and on complementarity with the other actions referred to in Article 4, as well as the results of the evaluations. The reports shall also be submitted to the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

ANNEX

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

I. ACTIONS ON IMPROVEMENT OF INFORMATION ON POLLUTION-RELATED DISEASES

Objective: to contribute towards a better understanding of the role of pollutants in the causation and aggravation of diseases in the European Community and of the basis and effectiveness of preventive actions.

1. Establishing priorities for the identification of those diseases in which specific pollutants are thought to play a role; comparing their prevalence and/or incidence and their relation to data on environmental factors in the different parts of the European Community; examining the data quality and identifying where data are lacking; analysing and reviewing data currently available on the toxicology of these pollutants, and identifying gaps in knowledge; comparing these data, including methods of collections, definitions and criteria used, as well as the way in which the information is used in analyses, in determining the actions taken and in informing the public.
2. Contributing to improve the comparability of data used in preventive actions by the support of exchanges of information on pollution-related diseases and their prevention, including cost-benefit analysis of the effectiveness of actions.

I. ACTIONS ON IMPROVEMENT OF INFORMATION ON POLLUTION-RELATED DISEASES AND THEIR DEFINITION

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II. RISK PERCEPTION AND RISK MANAGEMENT WITH RESPECT TO POLLUTION-RELATED DISEASES

Objective: to increase the level of knowledge and understanding about pollution-related health risks and their perception, assessment and management.

3. Supporting actions aimed at achieving better public understanding of risks, their assessment and management; promoting work on the public perceptions of pollution-related risks to health throughout the Community.

4. Promoting actions and exchanges of information on the methods of increasing the level of knowledge of the general public and opinion-formers about the assessment of pollution-related risks to health.

3. Supporting actions aimed at achieving better public understanding of risks, their assessment and management; promoting actions on the public perception of pollution-related risks to health, and on the way that they can be influenced by behaviour and lifestyle.

4. Promoting actions and exchanges of information on the methods of increasing the level of knowledge of the general public and specific groups about the impact of different policies on pollution and health, and the assessment of pollution-related risks to health.

III. RESPIRATORY DISEASES AND ALLERGIES

Objective: to support activities aimed at preventing and reducing the numbers of these diseases.

5. Contributing to the provision of information to the general public and to specific groups, on these diseases and the agents that play a role in them; supporting the development of ways to reinforce and link information campaigns;

contributing to the efforts of self-help or support groups active in the field of respiratory diseases and allergies.

6. Contributing to the comparison of various education and training initiatives used to combat these diseases, with a view to promoting best practice; reviewing the effectiveness of the preventive measures undertaken, including cost/benefit analyses.

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DOCUMENTS

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