

- drawing up appropriate methods and criteria as a basis for the integration of health requirements into other Community policies,
- drawing up appropriate methods and criteria and a formal mechanism for evaluating the effects of Community policies on human health,
- submitting a report on the preparation of methods, criteria and mechanisms for integrating health requirements into other Community policies and evaluating the impact of Community policies on health and on the degree to which those requirements are taken into consideration in the annual report on the matter,
- ensuring that health considerations are taken into account at every stage in the definition of proposals and that proposals containing health requirements are clearly defined as such.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

of 26 November 1996

on the reduction of smoking in the European Community

(96/C 374/04)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community,

Acknowledging that, at its meetings in Milan in June 1985 and in Luxembourg in December 1985, the European Council underlined the advantages of launching a European programme of action against cancer;

Noting that the Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, adopted on 7 July 1986 by their resolution ⁽¹⁾ a programme of action of the European Communities against cancer, which set as one of the objectives a contribution to an improvement in the health and quality of life of citizens within the Community by reducing the number of cases of cancer and under this heading gave priority to measures against smoking;

Noting that the Council and the representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, reinforced this objective on 17 May 1990 through Decision 90/238/Euratom, ECSC, EEC ⁽²⁾ adopting a 1990 to 1994 action plan in the context of the 'Europe against Cancer' programme;

Noting that the European Parliament and the Council, by Decision 646/96/EC ⁽³⁾, adopting an action plan to combat cancer within the framework for action in the field of public health (1996 to 2000), on 29 March 1996,

stressed that the risk factors inherent in lifestyles, especially smoking, need to be reduced;

Recalling that smoking is a risk factor in certain diseases, in particular cancer and cardiovascular diseases, and contributes to the deaths of 500 000 people in the Community each year;

Considering that the population in general, and young people in particular, should be protected against smoking;

Recalling that a key objective of any smoking reduction strategy must be to discourage young people from taking up the habit, in view of the addictive nature of smoking, and its long-term effects;

Stressing that exposure to the smoke of tobacco products is damaging to the health of all persons exposed;

Taking into account that a number of Member States have sought to discourage smoking by a variety of measures, including the increasing of retail prices, in particular through the imposition of a high level of excise tax;

Noting that the Council and the Ministers for Education, meeting within the Council, in their resolution ⁽⁴⁾ of 23 November 1988 concerning health education in schools identified smoking as a risk to health;

Noting that the Council and the Ministers for Health, meeting within the Council, in their conclusions of 13 November 1992, agreed that schools are important

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 184, 23. 7. 1986, p. 19.

⁽²⁾ OJ No L 137, 30. 5. 1990, p. 31.

⁽³⁾ OJ No L 95, 16. 4. 1996, p. 9.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ No C 3, 5. 1. 1989, p. 1.

for providing information and education on the prevention of ill-health;

Considering that the initiatives set out in this resolution will have an even more beneficial effect on public health when combined with health education programmes during the years of compulsory education and with information and public awareness campaigns;

Considering that the protection of public health should form a constituent part of the Community's other policies;

Noting that the Council, in its resolution of 20 December 1995⁽¹⁾, called on the Commission to ensure that health requirements are integrated into other Community policies;

CONSIDERS that it is necessary to evaluate the impact on tobacco consumption of, on the one hand, measures to promote smoking and other promotional activities and, on the other hand, interventions and measures intended to reduce smoking;

NOTES the 'Recommendations on Tobacco' of the High Level Cancer Experts Committee adopted at the Consensus Conference on Tobacco held in Helsinki in October 1996;

RECALLS that tobacco advertising and its influence on the incidence of smoking, particularly among young people, is the subject of a proposal from the Commission which is receiving separate consideration;

RECOGNIZES that, by cooperating and coordinating among themselves their policies and programmes to prevent illness and death associated with smoking and addiction to smoking in liaison with the Commission, the Member States can contribute to the reduction of smoking-induced diseases across the Community;

NOTES that the Member States have developed strategies to reduce the prevalence of smoking and that, while the choice of measures varies between Member States, examples include the following:

- allowing the sale of tobacco products only to adults,
- restricting access of young people to tobacco products by controls on their sale through automatic vending machines and by prohibiting the distribution of free samples of cigarettes or the sale of single cigarettes,

- encouraging measures to extend smoke-free areas in the workplace and providing for greater protection for workers from involuntary exposure to tobacco smoke,
- introducing restrictions on smoking in indoor premises open to the public such as restaurants, cinemas, offices, schools and colleges and on public transport facilities, with a particular emphasis on the protection of children, young persons, pregnant women and persons with respiratory diseases,
- increasing tobacco taxation levels with a view to maintaining the prices of tobacco products at a high level,
- strengthening health education measures to improve understanding of the risks of smoking as well as to discourage smoking, in particular measures focused on young people and on other groups of particular importance, such as pregnant women,
- introducing restrictions and controls on direct and indirect advertising, and on sponsorship and sales promotion of tobacco products;

NOTES that the Member States have introduced effective controls on labelling, including warning texts, and on the tar yield of cigarettes, applicable under Community directives;

URGES the Member States to continue to promote strategies and measures aimed at reducing the prevalence of smoking and regularly exchange information on these strategies and measures,

CALLS UPON THE COMMISSION:

- to take particular account in Community policies of the detrimental effect of smoking on the health and quality of life of citizens of the Community,
- to carry out surveys on best practices conducted in the Member States towards reducing the prevalence of smoking, and the evaluation of their impact,
- to examine, in the light of its assessment of measures taken by Member States, the possible further measures which might be taken by the Community to support actions taken by Member States directed towards the reduction of smoking,
- to support the efforts of Member States to reduce smoking and to present reports on a regular basis on the progress achieved by the Community in promoting coordination by Member States of their policies and programmes and on the potential for further initiatives.

⁽¹⁾ OJ No C 350, 30. 12. 1995, p. 2.