

COUNCIL RESOLUTION**of 29 June 2000****on action on health determinants**

(2000/C 218/03)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Whereas:

- (1) The European Community must make a contribution towards ensuring a high-level of health protection.
- (2) Key challenges in this context include genetic, biological, lifestyle and behavioural, environmental, social, economic and political factors which can have a significant influence on people's health.
- (3) The Community should always be equipped to meet these challenges both in terms of policy and measures and in terms of appropriate political and administrative structures, particularly bearing in mind the future enlargement of the Community.
- (4) Some of the abovementioned factors can be influenced by action by the individual and some by the organised efforts of society, including institutions at national and European level, either directly or indirectly.
- (5) The future health strategy of the European Community should aim at addressing, within the powers provided for by the Treaty, factors that act as health determinants, through prevention and health promotion measures and the development of healthy policies in all other areas of Community activity,
- (6) TAKES NOTE of the results of the debates held at the European Conference on health determinants in the European Union held at Evora on 15 and 16 March 2000, which placed particular emphasis on mental health and the health of young people, and on tobacco, alcohol and nutrition, and recommended a series of practical and targeted steps to address the challenges in these areas.
- (7) UNDERLINES the need for the Community to direct its action towards preventing disease and promoting health, in order to reduce premature deaths from preventable diseases and to maximise disability-free life expectancy among the EU population.
- (8) STRESSES that the Community should consider in which areas it can take action most effectively, then design and implement appropriate strategies, in close cooperation with the Member States, bearing in mind the need to take account of the important cultural and socio-economic differences between Member States.
- (9) CONSIDERS that the increasing differences in health status and health outcomes between and within Member States call for renewed and coordinated efforts at the national and Community level and require that a main focus of the Community health strategy must be on tackling health inequalities.
- (10) STRESSES the importance of the new Community public health strategy building upon the activities on specific determinants taken in the existing programmes, especially with respect to tobacco, nutrition and alcohol; underlines its view that it is important not only to ensure continuity with existing actions, but to take forward work on these issues in a fully coherent and systematic way.
- (11) POINTS OUT that the Community possesses a large array of policies and means by which to bring about a significant and beneficial shift in the way some of the key health determinants come to influence people's health and it would be, therefore, necessary to marshal energies and resources to achieve in each relevant sector tangible progress towards ensuring such shift.
- (12) INSISTS on the need to develop expertise in evaluating the impact of the other policies on health and its determinants.

- (13) STRESSES the fundamental importance of sharing and disseminating scientific knowledge.
- (14) WELCOMES the Commission's commitment to developing a broad health strategy and the presentation of its proposal for a new health programme, containing a specific strand of action aimed at addressing health determinants by means of health promotion and disease prevention underpinned by inter-sectoral policy; concurs with the Commission that there is a need to develop the appropriate knowledge base for this and, therefore, an efficacious health monitoring system must be established for this purpose.
- (15) INVITES the Commission to take account of these considerations as well as of the results of the mid-term evaluations of existing programmes in drawing up detailed plans and implementation strategies for the new programme on public health and in ensuring a smooth transition from the existing action programmes.
- (16) INVITES the Commission to complete, with external evaluators, the evaluation of the existing programmes foreseen in their decisions before the start of the new action programme so that the evaluation results can be used in the start-up of the new programme.
- (17) INVITES the Commission, in carrying forward its broad health strategy, to exploit the full potential for Community action in relation to health determinants using the full range of possibilities for action under the Treaty so as fully to ensure a high level of health protection in the definition and implementation of all Community policies and activities.
- (18) CALLS UPON the Member States to provide their full support to such policies and facilitate their implementation at national and Community level.
-