



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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SAN 89

NOTE

from : Permanent Representatives Committee
to : Council

No. prev. doc.: 8850/07 SAN 73

Subject : EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL POLICY, HEALTH AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS
COUNCIL MEETING ON 30 AND 31 MAY 2007
Health promotion by means of nutrition and physical activity
- *Adoption of Council conclusions*
(Public debate, pursuant to Article 8(3) CRP proposed by the Presidency)

1. At its meeting on 2 May 2007, the Permanent Representatives Committee examined the above-mentioned text proposed by the Presidency and agreed to transmit the draft conclusions as set out in the Annex to the Council.
2. The Council is invited to adopt the proposed draft conclusions.

**STRENGTHENING OF HEALTH PROMOTION AND DISEASE PREVENTION
BY MEANS OF BALANCED NUTRITION AND SUFFICIENT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY**

- Draft Council conclusions -

The Council of the European Union

1. NOTES that the citizens of the European Union attach a great deal of importance to their health and consider it an essential prerequisite for a high quality of life;
2. RECOGNISES that prevention is a prerequisite for European added value and for prosperity and thus makes a vital contribution to the Lisbon Strategy;
3. RECOGNISES that health promotion and disease prevention – especially in the form of balanced nutrition and sufficient physical activity – constitutes a European guiding principle;
4. RECALLS that Article 152 of the Treaty provides that Community action shall complement national policies and be directed towards improving public health, preventing human illness and diseases, and obviating sources of danger to human health;
5. ASSERTS that health promotion and disease prevention constitute a task for the entire society, in which there must be equilibrium between individual and public responsibility;
6. ACKNOWLEDGES the important role played by civil society in the context of health promotion and disease prevention;
7. NOTES that specific interests of target-groups, differences in age, the level of education, as well as social and cultural background must be taken into account for health promotion;

8. REFERS to the results of the high-level conference on "Health in All Policies", organised by the Finnish Presidency in Kuopio, Finland, from 20 to 21 September 2006;
9. RECALLS the European Charter on Counteracting Obesity adopted at the WHO European Ministerial Conference held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 15 to 17 November 2006;
10. NOTES the results, as laid down in the "Memorandum", of the high-level conference on "Prevention for Health. Nutrition and Physical Activity – A Key to Healthy Living" organised by the German Presidency in Badenweiler, Germany, from 25 to 27 February 2007;
11. RECOGNISES that the consecutive Presidencies of Germany, Portugal and Slovenia will be taking up and furthering health promotion and disease prevention, with their own areas of emphasis, within the framework of the agreed 18-month Programme¹;
12. NOTES WITH CONCERN the increase in overweight and obesity throughout the European Union, in all population age-groups, especially among children and young people, and those in lower socio-economic groups;
13. NOTES WITH CONCERN that, throughout the European Union, chronic, non-communicable diseases which could be avoided through early prevention measures, such as: cardio-vascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, back and joint complaints, as well as obesity, are on the increase;
14. NOTES that these diseases are often the result of unbalanced diets and a lack of physical activity, which considerably impair the quality of life and life expectancy of those affected and engender high costs for health and social systems, as well as economic costs due to lower productivity;

¹ Doc. 17079/06.

15. STRESSES that healthy eating combined with a healthy and active lifestyle will not only limit obesity but also other diet related health problems such as anorexia. All these diseases need to be tackled within a multifactor approach taking into account broader psychological, cultural and lifestyle influences;
16. INVITES the Member States to
- reduce the number of overweight and obese persons, in particular children, in line with the goals set out in the Badenweiler Memorandum and the European Charter on Counteracting Obesity
 - improve health promotion, healthy nutrition and physical activity at all levels and in all sectors of political decision-making and implementation, such as agriculture, environment, urban planning and building projects, transport, education, family and youth, the economics sphere, research, as well as in the workplace to improve employees' health and performance and reduce absenteeism;
 - support the creation of environments where healthy choices are favoured and easily made by all groups in society. Special attention should be given to children, young people and vulnerable groups;
 - promote healthy eating and opportunities for physical activity in, among others, kindergartens, schools and daily life, and in the subjects taught at educational establishments by, for instance, organizing healthy eating and physical activity awareness raising events in schools;
 - emphasize target-group specific elements such as age, sex, education and socio-economic background in all action aimed at informing people and improving their knowledge and ways of improving healthy life styles with a view to decreasing inequalities;

- support science and research focused on the determination of factors causing overweight, including methods to encourage changes in lifestyles, thereby taking into account the socio-cultural aspects that undeniably play a role in nutrition and physical activity;
- evaluate the accessibility of the target groups and the impact of measures taken so that sustainable behavioural changes can be ascertained. To this end, reliable, comparable data need to be available at national and European level, without creating undue administrative burden;

17. INVITES the Commission to:

- continue in the second programme of Community action in the field of health the promotion of strategies and measures which are based on health factors such as nutrition and physical activity;
- promote the Seventh Research Framework Programme to provide the evidence based scientific support for determining the relations between lifestyles, the nutrition and quality of the food offer and its marketing, the accessibility of structures enabling the development of physical activity, and health status;
- maintain, in the White Paper on nutrition, physical activity and health, announced for 2007, the Commission's commitment to the prevention of obesity and other important chronic and non - communicable diseases through a comprehensive strategy for healthy diets and physical activity and to highlight the political priority of this topic;
- include physical activity as one of the determinants for health in the forthcoming Green paper on Urban transport;
- strengthen Member States' links with the work of the European Platform on 'Diet, Physical Activity and Health' so as to promote the exchange of good practice;

- underline in its upcoming White Paper on Sports in Europe the link between sports, physical activity, urban planning, transport and health;
 - to continue the cooperation with relevant international organizations, in particular with the World Health Organization.
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REFERENCES

1. *Council Resolution on Action on Health Determinants* (OJ C 218 of 31.07.2000);
2. *Council Resolution on Health and Nutrition* (OJ C20 of 23.01.2001);
3. *Council Conclusions on Obesity* (OJ C 11 of 17.01.2003);
4. *Council Conclusions on Healthy Lifestyles* (OJ C 22/1 of 27.01.2004);
5. *Council Conclusions on the Promoting Heart Health* (doc. 9507/04 (Presse 163) of 02.06.2004);
6. *Council Conclusions on Obesity, Nutrition and Physical Activity* (doc. 8980/05 (Presse 117) of 03.06.2005);
7. *Council Conclusions on Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles and Prevention of Type 2 Diabetes* (OJ C 147/1 of 23.06.2006);
8. *Council Conclusions of the Health in all Policies* (doc. 15487/06 (Presse 330) of 30.11.2006);
9. *The European Commission Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health* (http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/nutrition/documents/eu_platform_en.pdf);
10. *Green Paper on 'Promoting healthy diets and physical activity: a European dimension for the prevention of overweight, obesity and chronic diseases'* (doc. COM (2005) 637 final of 08.12.2005);
11. *The Resolution of the European Parliament on 'Promoting healthy diets and physical activity: a European dimension for the prevention of overweight obesity, and chronic diseases'* (doc. INI/2006/2231 of 31.01.2007);
12. *European Charter on Counteracting Obesity* (doc. EUR/06/5062700/8 of 16.11.2006, adopted at the WHO European Ministerial Conference held in Istanbul, Turkey).

