

Doc. 10898
13 April 2006

Environment and health: towards better prevention of environment-related health hazards

Motion for a recommendation
presented by Mr Huss and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

1. It is now scientifically proven that there is an increasing link between environmental pollution and the emergence of diseases such as cancers, reproductive disorders, degenerative diseases of the central nervous system, asthma and allergies.
2. Air, water, food, housing, furniture, everyday items and even medical equipment sometimes contain chemicals, some of which are environmental pollutants harmful to health. Many components of the pollution or “universal cocktail” to which we are exposed every day are known to be carcinogenic, mutagenic, allergenic or neurotoxic, or to be endocrine disruptors.
3. Cancer no longer spares children: each year there is a 1% increase in paediatric cancers. The number of leukaemia cases has doubled in 20 years. Moreover, 10% of European children have allergy symptoms and 1 in 7 suffers from asthma.
4. All this scientific and statistical data has been presented and discussed in recent years at congresses and international conferences on environmental health problems, resulting in a growth of awareness and the framing of the first European strategies in this area.
5. Over the past ten years, the general public, civil society and patients' associations in Europe have also become aware of health hazards due to environmental pollution. The growth of civil society, citizens' associations, patients' associations and consumer associations is a challenge to European policy-making, especially in terms of better prevention and recognition of environment-related health hazards.

The Parliamentary Assembly, which respects the right to health and to a healthy environment, concludes that it should analyse and take stock of environment health issues and the national and European strategies for dealing with them.

Special attention should be paid to the following points:

- the new environmental hazards (including those due to chemicals)
- improving prevention in environmental matters
- the new concepts of “environmental health” and “environmental medicine”
- involving policy-makers, doctors, scientists and civil society associations in framing European environmental health programmes.

Signed (see overleaf)

*Signed*¹:

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¹ SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: not registered in a group