



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



**Council Conclusions on
Special Report No. 2/2009 concerning the
European Union's Public Health Programme (2003-2007):
an effective way to improve health?**

*2965th EMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL POLICY, HEALTH AND
CONSUMER AFFAIRS Council meeting*

Luxembourg, 12 October 2009

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

“THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING the Council conclusions on improving the examination of special reports drawn up by the Court of Auditors in the context of the discharge procedure¹;

1. WELCOMES Special Report No. 2/2009 concerning the European Union's Public Health Programme (2003-2007): an effective way to improve health?² (hereinafter "SR"); and RECOGNISES the efforts and achievements of the European Court of Auditors in producing this comprehensive SR;
2. TAKES NOTE of the Commission's replies which accompany the Report and WELCOMES the actions being already undertaken to improve the Commission's approach to the Public Health Programme;
3. RECOGNIZES that the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC) established by the Commission as of 1 January 2005³ contributes to improved management of Public Health Programme;

¹ Doc. 7515/00 FIN 127 of 3 April 2000 + COR 1 of 12 April 2000.

² Doc. 12074/09 FIN 262 SAN 191 of 14 July 2009.

³ OJ L 369, 16.12.2004, p.73

4. RECOGNIZES the European added value of the Public Health Programme as a tool to support the implementation of the Health Strategy as well as collaborative activities complementing national policies in this field, which is not provided by other means;
5. GIVES serious consideration to the overall conclusion of the SR and WELCOMES its Recommendations;
6. STRESSES that setting objectives which should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed (SMART), for all sectors of EU activity covered by the budget is an obligation under the Financial Regulation⁴;
7. INVITES the Member States and the Commission to pay utmost attention to the recommendations of the SR in implementing the present and developing any future Health Programme and in particular to:
 - a) assign clear targeted programme objectives that will be in proportion with budgetary means available;
 - b) ensure greater clarity in the intervention logic in the conception and implementation of the Health Programme, in particular at programme and project level, setting out coherent and better defined objectives which should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed (SMART), illustrating links between them and define process and performance indicators to measure their achievement;
 - c) ensure that there is a limited number of annual priorities focused on strategic topics and activities with European added value;
 - d) ensure participation of the Member States through the Health Programme Committee in setting the priorities and preparation of work plans as well as their implementation;
 - e) consider complementary cooperation mechanisms as a means of facilitating collaboration and the exchange of information throughout Europe with a view to complementing national programmes and activities.
8. INVITES the Commission, in implementing the current and any future Health Programme, to:
 - a) avoid any overlaps in projects portfolio and results of those projects and improve coordination between the different financial programmes managed by the different Commission's Directorate Generals;
 - b) keep projects objectives in line with programme objectives and "annual priorities" agreed in Annual Work Programme and set, wherever possible, quantified targets and process and performance indicators in order to facilitate monitoring of progress towards set objectives;
 - c) inform regularly the Council's Working Party on Public Health on the implementation of the programme;

⁴ Article 27(3) of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002 of 25 June 2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (OJ L 248, 16.9.2002, p. 1).

- d) facilitate the transition between the successive Health programmes and projects financed by those programmes, while taking into account evaluations made of the outcome of previous programmes;
 - e) make sure that results of projects are widely publicly available and improve dissemination and use of those result among concerned stakeholders.
9. INVITES the European Court of Auditors to audit the Health Programme (2008-2013), in view of its recommendation for Public Health Programme (2003-2007), and report back to the Council and the European Parliament not later than in 2011. On the basis of this audit and its recommendation the Commission, in consultation with the Member States through the Health Programme Committee, should propose further improvement of the management of the current programme and its implementation.”
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