

Food safety, human health protection: common authorisation procedure for food additives, food enzymes and food flavourings

2006/0143(COD) - 24/10/2007 - Modified legislative proposal

The European Parliament adopted 31 amendments in total with regard to the Commission's original proposal. The Commission has accepted most of the amendments, either in whole or in part and subject to some rewording. Four were rejected.

Technical/editorial amendments: The majority of amendments (in this case 21) seek to improve the proposal from a technical and editorial point of view. These amendments have largely been taken over by the Commission.

Transparency: Most amendments that seek to strengthen the transparency of the proposal have been accepted by the Commission given that information provisions form an integral part of the initial proposal. One amendment, however, that would require all application files to become available to stakeholders has been rejected. The Commission intends to make public a list of all request for authorisation and information. The routine publication of the full application files is not, though, considered acceptable.

Five year data protection with individual authorisation: Parliamentary proposals to provide for a five year period of data protection has not been taken over in the amended proposal. Such a provisions would change radically the present system for food additives. It would also result in a duplication of regulatory procedures, a compilation of systems of control and increased administrative procedures. Such an approach, therefore, would not be line with simplifying EU legislation. On a further point, the Commission is of the view that such a system would grant exclusive rights to individual operators and could hinder the free movement of products that are safe and that comply with specific legislation.

Deadlines: The Commission has accepted that the time for the European Food Safety Authority to give an opinion should be increased from six to nine months. The suggestion that the Commission should reduce the time to present a draft measure to the Standing Committee from nine to six months has been rejected.

Comitology: The Commission accepts that parts of the proposed Regulation's implementing powers should be governed by the new "regulatory procedure with scrutiny". In short, the Commission supports the amendment stating that comitology for updating the lists of food additives, food enzymes and flavourings should apply the regulatory procedure with scrutiny.