




Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	1994/2223(INI)	Procedure completed
'Complementary' (or non-traditional) medicine).		
Subject 4.20.01 Medicine, diseases		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible		Rapporteur
	 Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection		Appointed 20/12/1994
			V LANNOYE Paul A.A.J.G.
	Committee for opinion		Rapporteur for opinion
	 Legal Affairs, Citizens' Rights		Appointed 29/10/1996
			PPE ALBER Siegbert

Key events			
06/09/1994	Non-legislative basic document published	B4-0024/1994	
16/01/1995	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
27/02/1997	Vote in committee		Summary
27/02/1997	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0075/1997	
28/05/1997	Debate in Parliament		
29/05/1997	Decision by Parliament	T4-0278/1997	Summary
29/05/1997	End of procedure in Parliament		
16/06/1997	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1994/2223(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 143-p5
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed

Documentation gateway

Non-legislative basic document		B4-0024/1994	06/09/1994	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0075/1997 OJ C 132 28.04.1997, p. 0005	27/02/1997	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0278/1997 OJ C 182 16.06.1997, p. 0015-0067	29/05/1997	EP	Summary

'Complementary' (or non-traditional) medicine).

In the teeth of opposition from doctor MEPs and amid concern about the need to ensure the safety of patients and protect them against quacks, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection has started the ball rolling towards official recognition of non-conventional medicine at European level. Such medicine includes chiropractic, homeopathy, anthroposophical medicine, traditional Chinese medicine (including acupuncture), shiatsu, naturopathy, osteopathy and phytotherapy. Some of these are already recognized in certain Member States but there are so far no Europe-wide rules. In accordance with EC Treaty obligations to allow freedom of establishment for professionals and freedom of choice for consumers, the committee adopted an own-initiative report by Mr Paul LANNOYE (Greens, B) containing a motion for a resolution aimed at harmonizing the status of non-conventional medicine throughout the Union. However, adopting a more cautious approach than the rapporteur would have liked, the committee called for a thorough study of non-conventional medicines by the European Commission and for a Commission report on Community-funded research already carried out. It called on the Commission to submit a draft directive guaranteeing non-conventional medical practitioners the freedom to provide services. The Council of Europe's European Pharmacopoeia should include the full range of pharmaceutical and herbal products used in non-conventional medicine, the committee thought, and the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products should be able to guarantee the quality and safety of such medicine. The committee stressed the need for harmonized qualifications and training, adding that an introduction to certain non-conventional medical disciplines should be included in the training of conventional doctors. It also asked the Commission to submit a proposal for a directive on food supplements. ?

'Complementary' (or non-traditional) medicine).

The European Parliament adopted the report on the status of non-conventional medicine by 152 votes to 125, with 28 abstentions. It should be noted from the outset that the rapporteur, Mr Paul LANNOYE (Greens, B), has withdrawn his name from the report, which he considers to be a misrepresentation due to the adoption of certain amendments - notably amendment 6 of Messrs Pedro APARICIO SANCHEZ (PSE, E) and Fernando PEREZ ROYO (PSE, E). The rapporteur had previously indicated that it was necessary to go beyond the "study" phase and consequently had called on MEPs to vote against the report. Responsibility for the report was ultimately taken by Mr Kenneth COLLINS (PSE, UK), who is Chairman of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection. The report basically calls on the Commission to attach priority to conducting a thorough study into the safety, effectiveness, area of application and the complementary or alternative nature of all non-conventional medicines and to draw up a comparative study of the various national legal models to which non-conventional medical practitioners are subject. It also calls on the Commission, if the results of the investigation permit, to launch a process of recognizing non-conventional medicine and, to this end, to take the necessary steps to encourage the establishment of appropriate committees. The report further urged the Commission, in formulating European legislation on non-conventional forms of medicine, to make a clear distinction between non-conventional medicines which are 'complementary' in nature and those which are 'alternative' medicines in the sense that they replace conventional medicine. It additionally calls on the Commission: - to ensure that the forms of therapy used in non-conventional medicine do not make use of medicines made from the organs of threatened animal species, which would encourage the illegal trafficking of such organs, - to submit a report as soon as possible to the Council and European Parliament on the results of the studies and research already carried out under budget item B-7142, which is earmarked for research into the effectiveness of homeopathy and other non-conventional medicines, - to submit a draft directive on food supplements which are frequently situated on the border between dietary and medicinal products. Such legislation should in fact help guarantee good manufacturing practice with a view to consumer protection, without restricting freedom of access or choice. Finally, Parliament called on the Council, on completion of the preliminary work referred to in its resolution, to promote the development of research programmes in this field, covering the individual and holistic approach, the preventive role and the specific characteristics of the non-conventional medical disciplines. For its part, it undertakes to do likewise. ?