COMMISSION DECISION

of 17 July 2018

setting up a Commission expert group 'Steering Group on Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases' and repealing the Decision setting up a Commission expert group on rare diseases and the Decision establishing a Commission expert group on Cancer Control

(Text with EEA relevance)

(2018/C 251/07)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Whereas:

(1) Under Article 168(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union Member States are required, in liaison with the Commission, to coordinate among themselves their policies and programmes in the areas referred to in paragraph 1 of that Article. The Commission may, in close contact with the Member States, take any useful initiative to promote such coordination, in particular initiatives aiming at the establishment of guidelines and indicators, the organisation of exchange of best practice, and the preparation of the necessary elements for periodic monitoring and evaluation.

(2) The Council adopted on 7 December 2010 Conclusions on 'Innovative approaches for chronic diseases in public health and health care systems' ([1]) which invite the Member States to identify and exchange good practices for chronic diseases.

(3) The Commission adopted, on 4 April 2014, a 'Communication on effective, accessible and resilient health systems' ([2]) which provided that the initiatives through which the Union can support policymakers in the Member States will focus on methods and tools allowing Member States to achieve greater effectiveness, accessibility and resilience of their health systems.

(4) The Commission adopted, on 22 November 2016, a 'Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on Next steps for a sustainable European future: European action for sustainability' ([3]) which stated that the Union is fully committed to be a frontrunner in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals adopted in the framework of the United Nations. In particular, in contributing to the Sustainable Development Goal 3 'Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages', the Union complements Member States' actions through legislation and other initiatives on public health, health systems and environment-related health problems. The Commission will help Member States to reach the targets under this Goal, in particular reducing chronic diseases' mortality.

(5) Regulation (EU) No 282/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council ([4]) which establishes the third programme for the Union's action in the field of health (2014-2020) provides that one of the thematic priorities of the programme is to promote health, prevent diseases and foster supportive environments for healthy lifestyles. Actions under this priority include supporting cooperation and networking in the Union in relation to preventing and improving the response to chronic diseases including cancer, age-related diseases and neurodegenerative diseases, by sharing knowledge, good practices and developing joint activities on prevention, early detection and management of non-communicable diseases.

(6) In view of those commitments and obligations in the public health area, it is therefore necessary to set up an expert group in the field of health promotion, disease prevention and management of non-communicable diseases and to define its tasks and its structure.

([1]) OJ C 74, 8.3.2011, p. 4.
([2]) COM(2014) 215 final, 4.4.2014.
([3]) COM(2016) 739 final, 22.11.2016.
([4]) Regulation (EU) No 282/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 March 2014 on the establishment of a third Programme for the Union's action in the field of health (2014-2020) and repealing Decision No 1350/2007/EC (OJ L 86, 21.3.2014, p. 1).

(7) Commission Decision C(2016) 3301 ([1]) sets out a revised set of rules for all Commission expert groups. The new rules aim to bring more clarity and transparency with respect to the composition of expert groups. Accordingly, the tasks and the structure of the expert group on health promotion, disease prevention and management of non-communicable diseases should be defined in compliance with that Decision.

(8) The expert group should provide advice and expertise to the Commission in formulating and implementing the Union's activities in the field of health promotion, disease prevention and management of non-communicable diseases and foster exchanges of relevant experience, policies and practices between the Member States and various parties involved.

(9) The expert group should advise the Commission in the selection of good and best practices to support their transfer and scaling up in the Member States by using the EU Health Programme or other financial instruments of the Union.

(10) The expert group should help the Member States reach the Sustainable Development Goal 3 and in particular reduce premature non-communicable disease mortality.

(11) The expert group should advise the Commission in its efforts to coordinate activities which contribute to reduction of premature mortality due to non-communicable diseases.

(12) The expert group should advise the Commission on improving the uptake of research results in the area of health promotion, disease prevention and management of non-communicable diseases.

(13) The expert group should coordinate its activities with the expert group on health information (EGHI) which advises the Commission on health information needs, technical solutions and priorities for evidence-based health policymaking. In particular, the expert group should use the knowledge of the EGHI when assessing the process and outcomes of transfer and implementation of best practices.

(14) With a view to ensuring effective transfer and implementation of best practices and policy interventions among countries the expert group should be composed of authorities of the Member States

(15) Rules on disclosure of information by members of the expert group should be laid down.

(16) Personal data should be processed by the expert group in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council ([2]).

(17) As the Commission expert group 'Steering Group on Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases' will deal with matters currently under the mandate of the expert group on rare diseases set up by Commission Decision of 30 July 2013 setting up a Commission expert group on rare diseases and repealing Decision 2009/872/EC ('Decision setting up a Commission expert group on rare diseases') ([3]) and of the expert group on Cancer Control established by Commission Decision of 3 June 2014 establishing a Commission expert group on Cancer Control and repealing Decision 96/469/EC ('Decision establishing a Commission expert group on Cancer Control') ([4]), those Decisions should be repealed.

(18) It is appropriate to fix a period for the application of this Decision. The Commission will in due time consider the advisability of an extension,

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

Subject matter

The expert group 'The Steering Group on Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases' ('the group') is set up.

([1]) Commission Decision C(2016) 3301 final of 30 May 2016 establishing horizontal rules on the creation and operation of Commission expert groups.

([2]) Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data (OJ L 8, 12.1.2001, p. 1).

([3]) Commission Decision of 30 July 2013 setting up a Commission expert group on rare diseases and repealing Decision 2009/872/EC (OJ C 219, 31.7.2013, p. 4).

([4]) Commission Decision of 3 June 2014 establishing a Commission expert group on Cancer Control and repealing Decision 96/469/EC (OJ C 167, 4.6.2014, p. 4).

Article 2

Tasks

The group's tasks shall be:

(a) to assist and advise the Commission in taking initiatives to promote coordination between the Member States to address challenges caused by non-communicable diseases in the Union;

(b) to advise the Commission in the selection of best practices to support Member States in their transfer and further implementation in the area of health promotion, disease prevention and management of non-communicable diseases by using the EU Health Programme or other financial instruments of the Union;

(c) to support the Commission in monitoring the progress towards reaching the Sustainable Development Goal 3 under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 'Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages' and in particular towards reducing mortality due to non-communicable diseases;

(d) to advise the Commission in its efforts to coordinate activities which contribute to reduction of premature mortality due to non-communicable diseases;

(e) to advise the Commission on improving the uptake of research results in the area of health promotion, disease prevention and management of non-communicable diseases;

(f) to assess the outcomes of transfer and implementation of best practices in cooperation with the Expert Group on Health Information which will provide advice on relevant health data in the area of health promotion, disease prevention and management of non-communicable diseases.

Article 3

Consultation

The Commission may consult the group on any matter referred to in Article 2.

Article 4

Membership

1. The group shall be composed of one member per Member State. The Member State shall inform the Commission of the authority it has designated as its member of the expert group.

2. The members shall each nominate their permanent representative and one alternate, who shall be civil servants or public employees. The members shall communicate this information to the Commission and shall be responsible for ensuring that their representatives provide a high level of expertise.

3. The members may also appoint representatives on an ad hoc basis, depending on the meeting agenda of the group.

Article 5

Chair

The group shall be chaired by a representative of the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety of the Commission.

Article 6

Operation

1. The group shall act at the request of Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety, or other Commission departments if agreed with the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety, in compliance with the horizontal rules.

2. Meetings of the group shall, in principle, be held on Commission premises.

3. Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety shall provide secretarial services. Commission officials from other departments with an interest in the proceedings may attend meetings of the group and its sub-groups.

4. In agreement with the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety, the group may, by simple majority of its members, decide that deliberations shall be public.

5. Minutes on the discussion on each point on the agenda and on the opinions delivered by the group shall be meaningful and complete. Minutes shall be drafted by the secretariat under the responsibility of the Chair.

6. The group shall adopt its opinions, recommendations or reports by consensus. In the event of a vote, the outcome of the vote shall be decided by simple majority of the members. Members who have voted against shall have the right to have a document summarising the reasons for their position annexed to the opinions, recommendations or reports.

Article 7

Sub-groups

1. Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety of the Commission may set up sub-groups for the purpose of examining specific questions on the basis of terms of reference defined by the Commission. Sub-groups shall operate in compliance with the horizontal rules and shall report to the group. They shall be dissolved as soon as their mandate is fulfilled.

2. The members may nominate as their representatives in sub-groups civil servants or public employees who are not their permanent representatives in the expert group.

Article 8

Invited experts

Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety may invite experts with specific expertise with respect to a subject matter on the agenda to take part in the work of the group or sub-groups on an ad hoc basis.

Article 9

Observers

1. The representatives of the EFTA states that are parties to the Agreement of the European Economic Area may participate as observers in the meetings of the group.

2. The Chair may grant observer status to candidate countries and other third countries where it is in the interest of the Union that such country is involved in the work of the expert group, in particular based on an international agreement, an administrative arrangement or Union legislation. Public entities appointed as observers shall nominate their representatives.

3. Observers and their representatives may be permitted by the Chair to take part in the discussions of the group and provide expertise. However, they shall not have voting rights and shall not participate in the formulation of recommendations or advice of the group.

Article 10

Rules of procedure

On a proposal by and in agreement with Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety the group shall adopt its rules of procedure by simple majority of its members, on the basis of the standard rules of procedure for expert groups, in compliance with the horizontal rules.

Article 11

Professional secrecy and handling of classified information

The members of the group and sub-groups, as well as invited experts, are subject to the obligation of professional secrecy, which by virtue of the Treaties and the rules implementing them applies to all members of the institutions and their staff, as well as to the Commission's rules on security regarding the protection of Union classified information, laid down in Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 [1] and (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 [2]. Should they fail to respect these obligations, the Commission may take all appropriate measures.

[1] Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 of 13 March 2015 on Security in the Commission (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 41).

[2] Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).

Article 12

Transparency

1. The group and sub-groups shall be registered in the Register of expert groups.

2. As concerns the group composition (the expert group and its sub-groups), the following data shall be published on the Register of expert groups:

(a) the name of Member States' authorities;

(b) the name of the public entities acting as observers.

3. All relevant documents, including the agendas, the minutes and the participants' submissions, shall be made available either on the Register of expert groups or via a link from the Register to a dedicated website, where this information can be found. Access to dedicated websites shall not be submitted to user registration or any other restriction. In particular, the agenda and other relevant background documents shall be published in due time ahead of the meeting, followed by timely publication of minutes. Exceptions to publication shall only be foreseen where it is deemed that disclosure of a document would undermine the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council [1].

Article 13

Meeting expenses

1. Participants in the activities of the group and sub-groups shall not be remunerated for the services they offer.

2. Travel and subsistence expenses incurred by participants in the activities of the group and sub-groups shall be reimbursed by the Commission. Reimbursement shall be made in accordance with the provisions in force within the Commission and within the limits of the available appropriations allocated to the Commission departments under the annual procedure for the allocation of resources.

Article 14

Repeal

The Decision setting up a Commission expert group on rare diseases and the Decision establishing a Commission expert group on Cancer Control are repealed.

Article 15

Applicability

This Decision shall apply until 31 December 2023.

Done at Brussels, 17 July 2018.

For the Commission

Vytenis ANDRIUKAITIS

Member of the Commission

[1] Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents (OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43).