



CROATIAN PARLIAMENT
Health and Social Policy Committee

Zagreb, 7th April 2017

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Opinion of the Health and Social Policy Committee

on

Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Directive 2004/37/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work COM (2016) 248

and

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Health and Social Policy Committee, pursuant to the powers conferred by the Standing Orders of the Croatian Parliament, on 6th April 2017 held 14th session to discuss the Position of the Republic of Croatia on the concerned Proposals for a Directive.

The discussion emphasized that formalin represents the only universal fixative that has been used in Pathology and Histology Laboratories all over the world more than a century. Huge majority of analysis have been based on the use of formalin in order to diagnose the disease and treat more than 50 million cancer patients. Even the latest revolutionary steps in therapy – introducing the so called “smart therapy” have been enormously based on samples fixed in formalin. At present there are no alternative fixatives validated to serve as formalin replacement, and even if it were, the standardization and systematization of diagnostic and therapy based procedures may require many years of complex and expensive processes with uncertain outcome, taking into account at least ten years of transitional period. Possible immediate removal of formalin from Pathology and Histology Laboratories throughout

Europe can lead to a complete collapse of patho-histological diagnostics and may cause an unforeseeable downgrade in therapy of most difficult patients.

In line with the discussion held, the Health and Social Policy Committee by sending an opinion to the European Commission within the framework of political dialogue of national parliaments with the institutions of the European Union, has reached the following

CONCLUSIONS

1. We welcome the proposals of the European Commission on the protection of workers from the risk related to exposure to carcinogenic chemical substances and further impact assessment in order to propose safe borders in terms of carcinogenicity.
2. We call on the European Commission to consider the admissibility of the exceptional use of formalin in the European health care system demanding at the same time that health control authorities check transport, personnel exposure and discharge of formalin until a replacement agent is discovered.

**CHAIRPERSON OF THE
HEALTH AND SOCIAL POLICY COMMITTEE**

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