

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1566/06
by Giorgos Dimitrakopoulos (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Protection of human health

In accordance with Annex III, part 1, reference number 12 of Directive 76/768/EEC¹, cosmetic products to whiten teeth containing more than 0.1% hydrogen peroxide may not be placed on the market. However, this percentage gives only a slight whitening effect. As a result, the industry has sought to have this provision amended.

A corresponding question posed by the Commission to the competent scientific committee, first in 1999 and subsequently in 2002, led to the firm conclusion that the hydrogen peroxide content may not exceed 3.6% and that levels above 0.1% require the supervision of a dentist. Nevertheless, the Commission is already proposing the 'provisional' use of hydrogen peroxide in concentrations up to 6%.

Is there any precedent for people being used as guinea pigs in this way? Is the Commission disregarding the precautionary principle, which is a fundamental Community principle in the field of human health?

¹ OJ L 262, 27.9.1976, p. 169.