

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2552/06
by Jolanta Dičkutė (ALDE)
to the Council

Subject: Cervical Cancer

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) estimates there are 33 000 new cases and 15 000 deaths from cervical cancer (CC) every year in the EU. The IARC data also show that these rates of CC vary widely within the EU.

In 2003, former Commissioner Byrne acknowledged that this wide variation in cancer rates was largely due to different levels of screening activity in the different EU countries. To address this disparity, the Health Ministers adopted a Council Recommendation on cancer screening in December 2003 (2003/878/EC¹). Following this recommendation, it was specifically noted that all Member States should offer evidence-based CC screening through a systematic population-based approach with quality assurance. This recommendation foresees an assessment of its implementation no later than four years (2007) after its adoption.

1. In the operational programme for the Council for 2006 submitted by the Austrian and Finnish Presidencies, women's health is listed as one of the priority issues. What does this exactly entail, and will this include a focus on cancer in women?
2. When is the Council planning to discuss 'First guidelines for quality assurance in cervical cancer screening', which are planned to be published by the Commission?

¹ OJ L 327, 16.12.2003, p. 34.