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CONSULTATION OF NATIONAL COORDINATORS:
MULTI-NATIONAL STUDY ON SCENARIOS ON SOCIAL
AND ECONOMIC IMPACT OF AIDS

Report of a meeting

Bilthoven, The Netherlands,
25-26 May 1989

1989



EUR/HFA target 4

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TARGET 4

Reducing disease and disability

By the year 2000, the average number of years that people live free from major disease and disability should be increased by at least 10%.

Index:

ACQUIRED IMMUNODEFICIENCY SYNDROME
FORECASTING
SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS

1. Objectives

The objectives of the meeting were to:

- create a forum for the various European researchers involved in scenario research concerning the impact of AIDS on society;
- exchange ideas, working definitions and working plans;
- identify ways in which the various scenario projects on the impact of AIDS on society can be compared at an international level;
- plan for the future exchange of information, experiences and ideas from the various scenario studies;
- review the kind of information required/available for AIDS scenario building.

2. Opening

The meeting was opened by Professor E.J. Ruitenbergh, Deputy Director-General, National Institute of Public Health and Environmental Protection. The Institute is actively involved in AIDS projects with the EEC and has strong links to the WHO AIDS programmes. Mr R. Schreuder was elected to chair the meeting. Dr B. Gredler welcomed the participants on behalf of the World Health Organization to this joint meeting of the Health Policies and Planning programme and Regional Programme on AIDS and thanked the National Institute of Public Health and Environmental Protection for hosting the meeting.

3. Presentations

3.1 Multi-National Study of Scenarios on Social and Economic Impact of AIDS

Presentations were made by Dr B. Gredler and Mr R. Schreuder on the Multi-National Study of Scenarios on Social and Economic Impact of AIDS, recalling the meetings in Kiel and Geneva in 1987 and 1988. The key issues in AIDS are:

- effects on attitudes
- effects on the economy
- effects on the technology
- effects on health and social care
- effects on demography
- effects on education/prevention

The coordinators group, comprises project leaders in national institutes involved in AIDS scenario building, supported by two groups of experts, one on the economic implications, the other on the social implications of AIDS. The support group on social implications would comprise national social researchers and persons with expert knowledge in special fields of social and behavioural research and scenario techniques. This group will meet for the first time in October 1989, and the support group on economic impact will meet in Tewkesbury, United Kingdom, in July 1989. The national scenario studies

Dr P. Exon reported on the situation with regard to the impact of AIDS in the United Kingdom. Very little long-term thinking on AIDS is taking place and there has been no scenario building, although a number of modelling projects have been undertaken, mainly studies on direct cost, strengthening of monitoring arrangements, and sexual behaviour study.

Dr R. de Andres briefed on ongoing research activities in Spain, mainly on the economic impact of AIDS, which were mainly taking place at regional level (Catalunia and the Basque Autonomous Community). Furthermore, Spain is participating in various projects within the EEC context.

Mr M. Lagergren gave some information on the Swedish scenario approach which was stopped a few years ago. Analyses of epidemiological data were done and studies of interactions of different groups. An evaluation of different strategies could be mentioned with regard to prevention, testing (which included the use of a questionnaire) and behavioural changes.

4. Key issues

A short exercise was held on priority setting in scenario issues, to help value and rank scenario issues in the various countries. The scope of the scenario is narrowed down by ranging key issues which are judged on relevance, feasibility, cost, etc. It was felt that the different issues to be addressed should be discussed in a very broad forum, i.e. policy-makers, planners, the research community, etc. within each participating country. The key issues could be divided into three main areas: prevention, control, and health and social services.

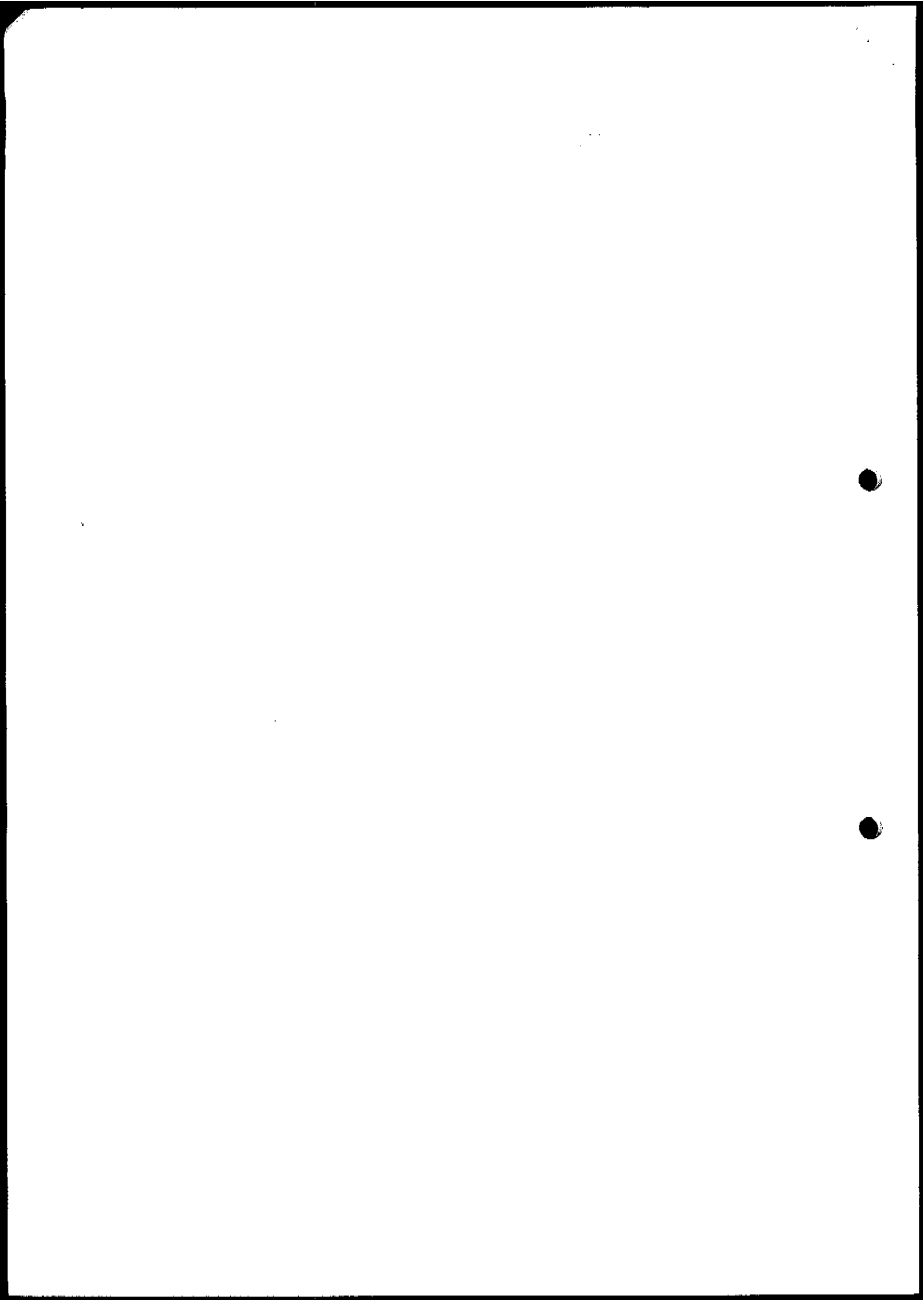
5. Plan of work

The proposed plan of work for an international scenario, based on national scenarios, was introduced (Annex 1). The Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland have already made a commitment to participate in the project. Spain and the U.K. would advise by September 1989 whether they will be joining the study. With regard to the total number of participating countries, it was discussed whether Poland and France should be approached for possible participation. Proposals for national scenarios would be available by the beginning through middle of September 1989 for comparison, and could be reviewed in the meeting of the support group on social implications in October 1989. It was recommended that the next meeting of the national coordinators be held in December 1989 to discuss the national project proposals and research protocols. To ensure an optimal exchange of information and that similar issues are addressed, it is very important that close contact exist between the two support groups and the national coordinators. It is expected that a joint meeting will be held in mid 1990, integrating the national AIDS scenario projects and the support groups on the economic and social implications.

With regard to the list of priorities prepared in Geneva, August 1988, it was felt that the ethical issue should be a key issue in itself and should not be classified under the effect on attitudes. The ethical issues are already dealt with in the WHO Regional Office for Europe by the Health Legislation programme and the Regional Programme on AIDS. The importance of data collection, both quantitative and qualitative, was stressed, for input into the scenario. A good entry point to start cohort studies, i.e. incidence, effect on behaviour, information campaigns and knowledge in different

population groups, could be the population survey, which is available in all countries. In order to assess and analyse the information contained in the different scenarios, it was felt that common denominators should be identified. Although variability is stimulating, it would be very difficult to verify the predictions and compare the individual scenarios, especially in view of the different cultural and socio-economic settings. One of the areas where standardization is important is in the different modelling approaches. For this group it could be feasible to identify a uniform set of parameters and data set for different modelling groups.

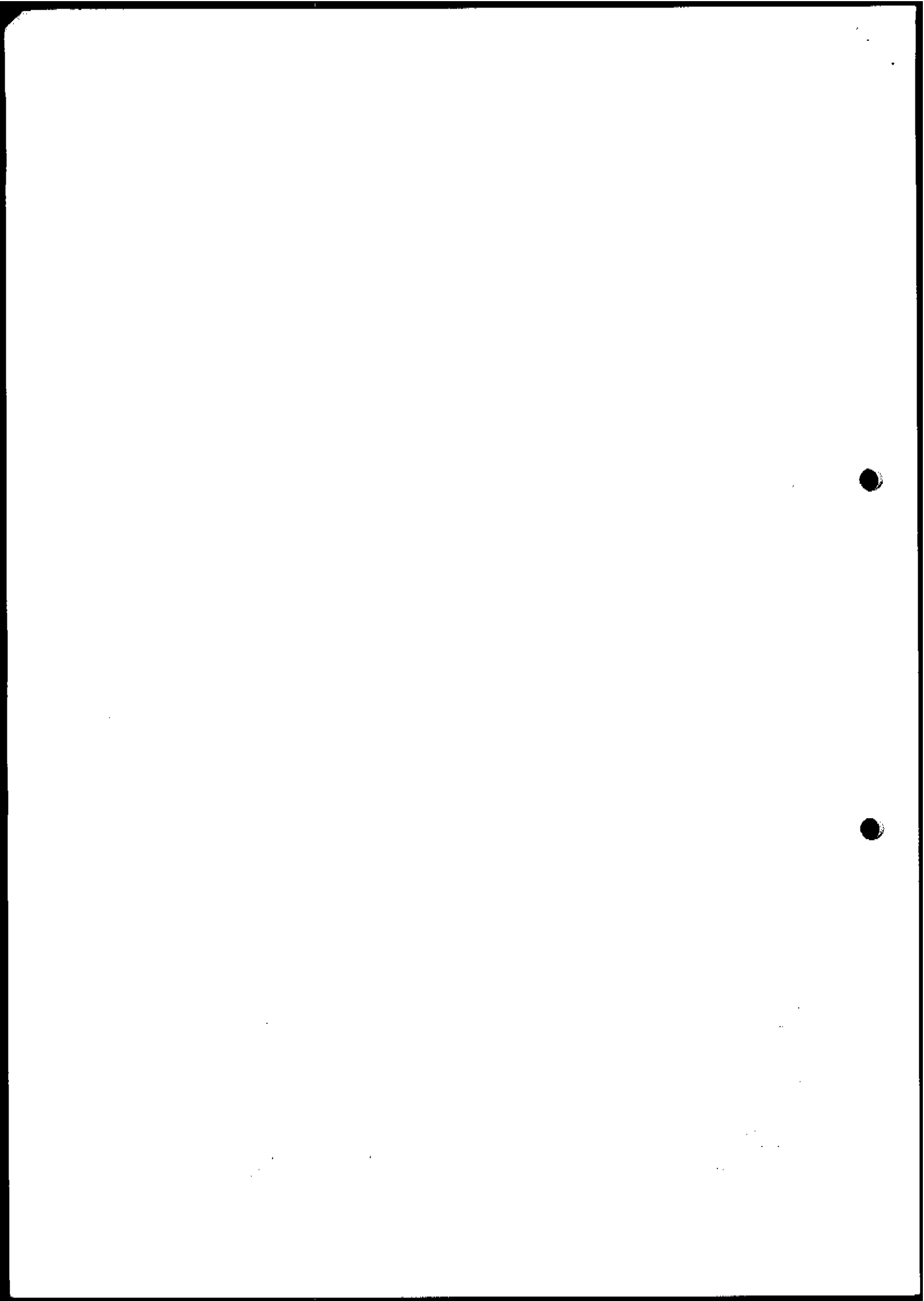
After the consultation of national coordinators, a preparatory meeting was held for the meeting on the social implications on AIDS which will take place in October 1989. The minutes of the meeting are attached as Annex 3.



MULTI-NATIONAL STUDY ON SCENARIOS ON SOCIAL
AND ECONOMIC IMPACT OF AIDS

Programme of work

First half September 1989	Statement of formal participation. Draft proposal for research project on AIDS scenario
17-19 October 1989	Meeting on the Social Implications of AIDS
December 1989	Meeting of national coordinators. Review of research proposals and protocol
June 1990	Joint meeting of national coordinators, the support group on economic impact and the support group on social implications of AIDS
December 1990	Meeting of national coordinators on the progress of the national scenario projects
April 1991	Meeting of national coordinators on the final reports of the studies and draft national scenarios
April-June 1991	Drafting of the international comparative scenario
June 1991	Meeting to review the reports
September 1991	Publication of the scenario reports



Participants

- Dr Rafael de Andres
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and Consumer Affairs, Madrid, Spain
- Dr Frans M. van den Boom
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- Dr Els M. de Bruijn
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Senior Medical Officer, AIDS Unit, Department of Health,
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- Mr Urs Gessner
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St Gallen, Switzerland
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- Mr Maarten Lagergren
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- Dr Reiner Leidl
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Netherlands Institute for Mental Health, Utrecht, the Netherlands
- Dr Xenia Scheil-Adlung
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Bonn, Federal Republic of Germany
- Mr Ronald F. Schreuder (Chairman)
Steering Committee on Future Health Scenarios, Ministry of Welfare, Health
and Cultural Affairs, Rijswijk, the Netherlands
- Dr M. Silberman
Vienna, Austria
- Dr Robert Steffen
Chief, Division of Epidemiology and Prevention of Transmissible Disease
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Headquarters

Dr James Chin
Chief, Surveillance, Forecasting and Impact Assessment

Regional Office for Europe

Dr Brigitte Gredler
Health Education Specialist, Regional Programme on AIDS

Mr Steven Wayling (Co-rapporteur)
Consultant, Regional Programme on AIDS

Ms Elisabeth Hald (Co-rapporteur)
Secretary, Health Policies and Planning

Preparatory meeting for the Meeting on the Social
Implications of AIDS, Bilthoven, 26 May 1989

A special session was held after the Meeting of National Coordinators: Multi-national Study on the Social and Economic Impact of AIDS on 26 May 1989, to discuss proposals for the composition of the Support Group on Social Implications and possible items for the agenda of the first meeting of the Group in October 1989. The list of participants is attached as Annex 4.

Dr Gredler briefly repeated the objectives of the Support Group, i.e. support to national scenario developments, act as methodological clearing house, develop operational indicators for some of the components of the national scenarios.

Participants were asked to identify suitable experts for the group, taking into account that the Support Group would consist of a number of national social researchers, complemented by experts in special fields of social and behavioural research and scenario techniques. The last group would not necessarily be limited to nationals of countries participating in the scenario study. Further proposals could be sent to the WHO Regional Office for Europe before 16 June 1989.

With regard to the programme it was proposed that the following items be included in the agenda of the meeting of the Support Group in October 1989:

- (1) Review proposals for the national projects of the participating countries (at present Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland);
- (2) Short overview of the social impact in countries;
- (3) Assist in identifying denominators and how to measure them;
- (4) Look at the procedure of the "cookbook", i.e. can simple models be used or not;
- (5) Review the incoming proposals from a methodological point of view;
- (6) Review the structure and information flow.

It is important that a balance is found between the social impact and scenario building. Furthermore, the meeting stressed that the group of national coordinators and the two support groups should be in close contact with each other in order to ensure a continuous flow of information among the groups.