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### EU News

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#### **EU Ban on Measuring Instruments Containing Mercury.**

The EU Commission intends to introduce a ban on the use of measuring equipment containing mercury. The proposal is part of the EU's strategy on mercury to reduce the amount of toxic mercury which ends up in waste disposal sites. Until now, individual EU States have worked to different regulations. The EU will now set out clear guidelines governing the sale of measuring equipment containing mercury. The new regulations will mainly affect thermometers (for measuring either body or room temperature), barometers and equipment for measuring blood pressure. Special measuring instruments for medical purposes will be exempt from the proposals, since no suitable alternatives currently exist. The Commission's proposal has yet to be approved by the EU Parliament, the Council and Ministers.

#### **Expert Network on the Use of Antibiotics**

The GRACE (Genomics to Combat Resistance against Antibiotics in Community – acquired Lower Respiratory Tract Infections in Europe) research project is to investigate the growing resistance to antibiotics. The project will focus in particular on respiratory diseases, such as lung infections and bronchitis. Expert teams in nine EU States will work together in the search for new treatments.

Across Europe, top research institutes, medical care centres and leading international research representatives specialising in areas such as hospital medicine, basic healthcare and epidemiology will be linked by a common network. A total of 11.5 million euros has been set aside for the project between now and 2011.

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