



EU Health Highlights

October 2



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MAIN NEWS STORIES

Reform of the Common Agriculture Policy - CAP towards 2020



Clive Needle, Chair of the European Public Health and Agriculture Consortium and Director of EuroHealthNet commented. *"The legislative package presented today does not go far enough or adequately address the radical changes that will need to be made in production and consumption to address the challenges of chronic disease, climate change and feeding an increasing global population adequately, equitably and sustainably".*

EPHAC welcomes the intent showed by the Commission to shift towards resource-efficient local and regional food systems, but feels that a more holistic approach should be taken that provides multiple benefits for society such as access to foods necessary for healthy diet and building more resilient food systems. Climate change and loss of biodiversity will increasingly have an impact on health and well-being. Although the proposals have a

substantial “greening element”, they do not adequately address reducing dependency of agriculture on fossil fuels, chemical inputs and imported feedstuffs.

EPHAC welcomes the changes made in the legislative proposals to improve the School Fruit Scheme and the Most Deprived Persons Scheme, but we need to continue to develop ideas for a more comprehensive programme that improves access to foods of high nutritional value for all members of society including vulnerable groups. Linking production and consumption policy can be a driver in creating necessary change.



For more information about the CAP reform, click [here](#).

For more information about EPHAC position, click [here](#).

New EU Cohesion Policy package for 2014-2020



The EU Programme for Social Change and Innovation (PSCI) is an instrument managed directly by the Commission, in support of employment and social policies across the EU. Together with the European Social Fund and the EGF, it forms the third pillar of the EU Initiative for Employment and Social Inclusion 2014-2020. The PSCI integrates three existing programmes and

extends their coverage:

- Progress (Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity),
- EURES (European Employment Services)
- European Progress Microfinance Facility.

It will enable the Commission to increase policy coherence and impact of its instruments, which have common objectives, thus contributing to the Europe 2020 Strategy for Jobs and Growth. The PSCI will support policy coordination, sharing of best practices, capacity-building and testing of innovative policies, with the aim that the most successful measures be up-scaled, with support from the ESF.

The European Social Fund will have at least EUR 84 billion. Progress will continue its current activities (analysis, mutual learning and grants) and will have a specific budget for social innovation and experimentation, i.e. testing of innovative policies on a small scale, with the aim that the most successful ones can be up-scaled, including with ESF support. Out of the EUR 574 million proposed for Progress, in the 2014-2020 period, EUR 97 million will be allocated to experimental projects.

These proposals will be discussed by the Council and the European Parliament, with a view to adoption by the end of 2012, to allow for the start of a new generation of cohesion policy programmes in 2014.



For more information about the new EU Programme for Social Change and Innovation, click [here](#).

For more information, click [here](#).

To access “Questions and Answers on the legislative package”, click [here](#).

Information to patients on prescription-only medicines



The proposals maintain the current advertising ban on the prescription-only medicines and foresee that:

- Only certain information on prescription-only medicines would be allowed. For example, information on the label and on the packaging leaflets; information on prices; on clinical trials; or on instructions for use.
- Information on prescription-only medicines would only be allowed through limited channels of communication. For example, information on officially registered internet websites; or printed information made available when specifically requested by members of the public. A publication in general print media will not be permitted.
- The information must fulfil recognised quality criteria. For example, it must be unbiased; it must meet the needs and expectations of patients; it must be evidence-based, factually correct and not misleading; and it must be understandable.
- As a general principle, information which has not been approved before needs to be verified by competent authorities prior to its dissemination.

The revised proposals will now be debated by both the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers.



For more information, click [here](#).

More States introduce so called "sin taxes" on less healthy products

.The tax applies to products containing more than 2.3% saturated fat. The tax, imposed on domestic and imported food, is levied on the weight of saturated fat contained in these foods, and charged per kg of saturated fat. Food considered as being unhealthy, including crisps, soft drinks and chocolate bars, are already subject to a fat tax in Hungary. The new law, introduced on 11 July 2011, is aimed at "improving the health of the nation". Initially called 'the hamburger tax', the measure was dubbed 'crisps tax' or 'fat tax' after the Hungarian government decided that it would not affect fast food restaurants.

Caroline Costongs, EuroHealthNet Deputy Director, commented: "*a factor such as income has considerable impacts on health and the "fat tax" should not increase difficulties for those people who are already struggling to pay for their daily meals*".

The promotion of life-long lasting healthy eating habits is unfortunately compromised by the current financial crisis. Member States have suggested a cut of 29 % of the EU School Fruit Scheme that targets access to healthier foods to 5 million children in 32.000 schools - and a minority of Member States currently blocks negotiations related to the EU food aid programme for the most vulnerable.



To access the documents of the plenary meeting of the platform, click [here](#).

For more information about the Danish position, click [here](#).

Through its work carried out i within the Policy Action Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity (PAG NPA), EuroHealthNet works in order to counteract obesity in EU Member States. To access EuroHealthNet report "Focusing on obesity through a health equity lens" is available [here](#).

EU Health Strategy 2008-2013 - Mid-term evaluation

The main purpose of the mid-term evaluation of the EU health strategy is to:

- Evaluate the implementation and impacts of the EU health Strategy for the period 2008-2013;
- Carry-out an overview to see whether the principles and objectives, as well as the coordination mechanisms, are still equally weighted or whether they should be prioritised for the remaining period of the strategy.

EU Health Strategy covers the period 2008-2013 and aims to address the key challenges facing the EU in the area of health. To fulfil this objective, the evaluation is based on a mix of participatory and static data:

- Stakeholder interviews,
- Questionnaire to Member States.



To access the mid-term evaluation of the EU health strategy, click [here](#).

WHO - World Conference on Social Determinants of Health



WHO is convening a global conference in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to build support for the implementation of action on social determinants of health. The conference is bringing together States and stakeholders to share experiences on policies and strategies aiming to reduce health inequities.



To read editorials from Sir Michael Marmot and Rüdiger Krech on social determinants of health, click [here](#).

EuroHealthNet contributes and encourages research and exchange of information related to social determinants not only through its projects but also via The Equity Channel that aims at connecting interested people who want to see action on the social determinants of health. To visit the Equity Channel, click [here](#).

Marmot review - Consultation on the European Review of the Social Determinants of Health & the Health Divide

The Marmot Review team launched a consultation on the European Review of the Social Determinants of Health & the Health Divide in the WHO European Region.



The consultation document is available [here](#).

The list of questions for consultation is available [here](#).

Responses from individuals and organisations from across the 53 countries of the European Regions, from within all sectors and levels of government can be sent [here](#) by 25th November 2011

WHO/EU - Conference on Health 2020



The Conference on the New European Policy for Health, on 28-29 November 2011, represents an important milestone in the development of the Health 2020 policy that the European Region plans to endorse formally in September 2012. The meeting aims to explore how a whole - of-government and whole-of-society approach can further improve health and well- being, and to review and identify ways to establish or consolidate dialogue with critical stakeholders and all levels of government for Health 2020.



For more information, click [here](#).

The working document "The new European policy for health – Health 2020: vision, values, main directions and approaches" is available [here](#).

EU - High-level conference on Inequalities in Europe and the future of the welfare state



The conference to be held in Brussels on 5-6 December will take stock of how inequalities develop and explore ways of how to mitigate them. Seven panels will deal with crucial aspects of inequalities:

- Labour market inequalities and their mitigation
- Geographic dimension of social inequalities and their mitigation
- Mitigating inequalities through taxation – taxing fairly and efficiently
- Role of health and equal opportunities policies in mitigating inequalities
- Redistribution, cash benefits for mitigating inequalities
- Role of education and child policies - tomorrow's inequalities are here, in our children
- Conclusions, Europe 2020 and the future of a sustainable welfare state in the EU



For more information, click [here](#).

NEWS FROM EUROHEALTHNET

EUROHEALTHNET

EuroHealthNet at the 14th European Health Forum Gastein



Almost 700 people from 45 different countries attended the conference. EuroHealthNet was represented by EuroHealthNet Director Clive Needle. EuroHealthNet's members were also present, such as RIVM, the Polish National Institute of Public Health, the Stockholm County Council, North West Health Brussels Office, Veneto Region, the University of Debrecen and BZgA.

Clive Needle moderated two panels "What to do to make a partnership a success?" and "From a strategic plan to reality - The Way Forward". He also chaired the Round Table related to "What does Social innovation needs for Europe's health, especially for Europe's ageing population?".

In the context of the session related to "The partnership in real life: concrete ideas and real life examples", EuroHealthNet's member- BzGA – presented the national programme on Healthy and Active Ageing. Its main goal is to tackle the challenges of demographic change in Germany. The aims of the programme are – among others - to develop policies and activities for keeping people active, promoting mental health, giving information on disease. On 24 January 2012, the Federal Congress for stakeholders and professionals will be organised by BzGA. This conference will:

- bring together important topics on ageing from the regions,
- presentation of good practices and regional strategies,
- exchange data and knowledge, and
- start international cooperation.



For more information on the healthy and active ageing portal elaborated by BzGA, click [here](#).

All interventions and videos are available [here](#) and [here](#)

Speech by Commissioner Dalli is available [here](#).

Presentation of the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing is available [here](#).

EU Platform on Diet, physical activity and health - Plenary session

EuroHealthNet attended the latest plenary meeting of the EU Platform on diet, physical activity and health. The Plenary session focused on two main themes: education, as a component of platform commitments and a centre of initiatives addressing the objectives of the EU strategy on nutrition, overweight and obesity health related issues.; and communicating on the content of its commitments.



To access the documents of the plenary meeting of the platform, click [here](#).

First Annual Convention of the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion



Three sessions addressed the objectives of the Annual Convention:

- Several Ministers presented their views and ambitions on setting their national poverty target and their priorities
- Commission services debated with the audience about their work on poverty and inclusion and how they have implemented the Platform against Poverty in 2011
- Participants made suggestions for future actions in five parallel sessions, followed by a report back to the closing Plenary Session

The scope of the event was wider than in the series of Round Table Conferences for the fight against poverty and social exclusion organised so far. Progress in the work undertaken in order to achieve the EU's primary goal (i.e. reducing the number of EU citizens living in or in danger of poverty by 20 million by 2020) was discussed during the convention. This was accompanied by a review of the actions performed as part of the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion and by recommendations concerning future actions in this field.

A new Eurobarometer survey was published on the EU's social climate. It shows that although EU citizens remain negative when evaluating the general situation of their country, they seem to feel that the economy is recovering and are largely satisfied and positive regarding their personal situation. Speaking ahead of the EU Poverty Convention, László Andor, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion commented on the survey saying: *"Putting growth, employment and social cohesion on an equal footing is vital for Europe's recovery because achieving real prosperity also means taking well-being into account when measuring our progress"*. Europeans' perception about the general situation in their countries is, overall, much more pessimistic than that of their personal situation.

At the Millennium Summit, world leaders committed themselves to cutting by half by the year 2015 the number of people living in extreme poverty - people whose income is less than one dollar a day.



For more information, click [here](#).

To access the special Eurobarometer survey on social climate and its summary, click [here](#).

To access speech Commissioner Andor, click [here](#).

For more information on the International day for the eradication of poverty, click [here](#).

Third Health Ministers Forum: Health in All Policies



In particular, the representatives pledged to work towards the goal of including health in all policies: for health and health equity to be considered in all policy and investment decisions at the local and national levels. The Banja Luka Pledge calls on national governments in the WHO European Region and partner organizations to support the Network in achieving its extended goals. It concludes: *"We are convinced that our combined efforts at national, regional (south-eastern European) and European*

levels will bring about changes that will substantially improve the health and well-being of all our citizens."

EuroHealthNet was honoured to be invited to sign the Pledge as a new partner for SEEHN. In addition, EuroHealthNet was presented with an award by the SEEHN Presidency for work during the past decade. Director Clive Needle commented: *"We are delighted to be forging an important new partnership with this impressive network of states working at the highest levels with WHO to build better health in a region which is emerging from strife. In signing this Pledge we look forward to practical work together in future, and to help these states meet their needs and aspirations as EU partners or eventual members."*

The first and second health ministers' forums, in 2001 and 2005, resulted in the Dubrovnik and Skopje pledges.



For more information on the Banja Luka Pledge, click [here](#).

Health Policy Forum

EuroHealthNet participated in the EU Health Policy Forum (EUHPF) meeting where DG SANCO presented its EC anti-smoking campaign "Ex-smokers are unstoppable", the evaluation of the Health Strategy 2008-2013 and Health Programme mid-term evaluation 2008-2013. Moreover, the Polish Presidency reported back from the Council Senior Working Party on Public Health meeting where issues pertaining to the current reflection process by Member States on chronic diseases and health systems sustainability were discussed. Finally, DG SANCO set the preliminary date for the next Open Health Forum, 26-27 June 2012.

The EU Health Policy Forum brings together 52 umbrella organisations representing European stakeholders in the fields of public health and healthcare. It is supposed to be a consultative body with such networks on major policy and legislation issues in relevant fields. EuroHealthNet and others feel significant reforms will be needed (as indicated in the recent evaluation of the EU Health Strategy) if that aim is to be achieved during the term of office of the current Commissioner.

EuroHealthNet reports first to its members on details of such events. For information about how easy it now is to join EuroHealthNet or becoming a collaboration partner, please see EuroHealthNet [Website](#).



For more information about the Health policy Forum, click [here](#).

Conference - Solidarity in health - Closing the health gap between EU Member States

EuroHealthNet will participate in the EU Presidency conference "Closing the health gap between EU States" and will ask if "EU 2020 can help to close this gap?". EuroHealthNet Director, Clive Needle, will contribute a critical appreciation of how and whether policy and practice instruments available within the EU2020 umbrella will address priority public health conditions and how it aligns with the WHO Europe 2020 process. The conference aims to underline the relevance of health inequalities within the European Union.

The following issues will be discussed :

- closing the health gap,
- the place of public health in health policies,
- the role of promotion, preventive treatments and education as an instrument necessary to shape pro-health attitudes from the earliest stages of human

- development,
- preventing respiratory diseases and speech problems experienced by children as a basis for closing health, social and economic gaps encountered at later development stages.



For more information, click [here](#).

SPREAD - Sustainable Lifestyles 2050: Visions and Policy Actions



The "SPREAD Sustainable Lifestyles 2050" European Social Platform FP7 project consortium organises a meeting on 10th November in order to experience the future of sustainable lifestyles and the policies that will get us there. The key themes will be:

- Vision 2050: What will a future where all Europeans are living more sustainably look like? Experts from policy, business, society and design will present their visions for more sustainable futures;
- Promising practice 2011: What is current learning and promising practice for sustainable living from across the EU-27? Entrepreneurs and practitioners addressing more sustainable living models, today and from across Europe, will present their promising practices;
- Policy: What policies will enable more sustainable living options across Europe? Policy-makers, experts and practitioners will discuss promising policy practice already delivering more sustainable living and co-create policy action pathways to more sustainable lifestyles of the future.

The discussions will feed into the SPREAD [Sustainable Lifestyles 2050 project](#) a process that will result in a roadmap for strategic action for policy makers and will deliver innovative ideas for business, research and civil society organisations, to enable sustainable lifestyles across European society.



To register, click [here](#).

To know more about Spread, contact EuroHealthNet Senior Public Health officer [Cristina Chiotan](#)

GRADIENT - European Public Health Association (EUPHA) Conference



The EuroHealthNet Gradient project will be presented at the the European Public Health (EUPHA) Conference, at the round table "Tackling the gradient in health amongst children and their families: analysis of evidence and policies". Possible implications for good practice and future policies will be discussed among presenters and participants.



To read more on the programme and to register, click [here](#).

To know more about GRADIENT, click [here](#) or contact EuroHealthNet Research

and Coordinator [Giorgio Barbareschi](#).

EUROHEALTHNET MEMBERS

England – Department of Health (DH) - Healthy lives, healthy people: update and way forward



The Department of Health (DH) published a report "Healthy Lives, Healthy People". The changes proposed in the report are a response to the challenges faced to the public's health: two out of three adults are overweight or obese; and inequalities in health remain widespread, with people in the poorest areas living on average 7 years fewer than those in the richest areas, and spending up to 17 more years living with poor health.

A policy statement reaffirms the Government's vision for a new public health system. It sets out the progress made in developing a vision for public health, and a timeline for completing the operational design of this work through a series of Public Health System Reform Updates. However there has been much criticism from public health experts for the heavy reliance of private sector inputs and lack of government resources or targets.



To access the report "Healthy lives, healthy people, click [here](#)

FRANCE- Institut National de Prévention et d'Éducation pour la Santé (INPES) - Communication campaign - Fighting alcohol and drugs consumption



A communication campaign aiming at fighting alcohol and drugs consumption has been launched in France. This campaign has got three aspects:

- Fighting alcohol consumption for youth;
- Promotion of structures aiming at preventing drug consumption;
- Promotion of structures aiming at listening, giving advice and taking care of people dependent of alcohol and drugs.



For more information, click [here](#).

France – Institut National de Prévention et d'Éducation pour la Santé (INPES)



INPES lead an analysis related to gambling games and about players' profile, for the 2010 health survey.



For more information, click [here](#).

France – Institut National de Prévention et d'Éducation pour la Santé (INPES) – Promotion of Physical Activity



After four years, the study related to the physical activity of youth has been published. Regular physical activity contributes not only in the promotion of mental and physical health but also improves social relationships. European societies are currently faced by an increased sedentarism having as consequences obesity for children and teenagers. In France, 40% of teenagers do not practice physical activity. 15%-20% of them are overweighted.



For more information, click [here](#).

Germany - BZgA – Web portal on Mental Health



In Germany, more and more people are affected by psychological illnesses such as depressions. Such symptoms are particularly common for women. In one year, about 15% of the women and 8% of the men have a depression. On 10 October 2011, on the international day of mental health, BZgA elaborated a Web portal where current news and all necessary information are published.



To access the portal, click [here](#).

Germany - BZgA – Alcohol abuse prevention

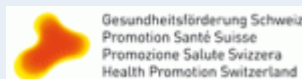


BZgA newsletter focused on prevention of alcohol abuse and warns on the risks of alcohol intoxication. Drinking is becoming a common behavior for many German youths.



To access the article, click [here](#).

Switzerland – Health promotion Switzerland – 13th Conference on Health Promotion



The 13th conference on health promotion will be held on 26-27 January 2012. The event aims at studying the future of health promotion.



For more information, click [here](#)

WALES – Public Health Wales - Public Health Wales conference



Jointly organised by Public Health Wales with the Welsh Government and in partnership with the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA), the conference on public health attracted policy

makers, leaders and public health professionals from across the public sector.



For more information, click [here](#)

WALES – Public Health Wales – “Launch of Cancer in Wales 1995 to 2009” Report



The Welsh Cancer Intelligence and Surveillance Unit (WCISU) has unveiled a new report detailing cancer statistics from 1995 to 2009. The report -published every three years - details cancer incidence, mortality, prevalence and survival for the whole of Wales and individual Health Board areas. It also draws comparisons between Wales and other World countries.

It takes into account 21 specific cancer types and a summary of all malignancies in Wales during the 15 years covered by the report apart from non-melanoma skin cancer, which is not always notified to WCISU. The report reveals that cancer incidence in Wales continues to increase, but mortality in Wales has decreased resulting in improved survival.



For more information, click [here](#)

NEWS FROM THE COUNCIL AND THE EU PRESIDENCY

Polish presidency – Tripartite Social summit

The key role of social dialogue in sustaining recovery and structural change was highlighted, as well as the need to involve the social partners in the national reform programmes implementing the Europe 2020 [objectives](#).

The Tripartite Social Summit aims at strengthening the involvement of social partners in discussions on macroeconomic problems. Its subject has been agreed by all participants (representatives of European social-partnership organisations, the European Commission, General Secretariat of the EU Council, Cabinet of the European Council President, Polish EU Council Presidency and two successive Presidencies — Denmark and Cyprus).



For more information, click [here](#).

Statement by President Barroso is available [here](#).

To access the social summit press conference video, click [here](#).

Conference - Challenges and opportunities for employment in the presence of demographic changes

For EuroHealthNet, as well as the link with individual well-being, employment is a major contributor to national and European productivity and competitiveness, with implications for the sustainability of social welfare systems. Better working conditions are therefore needed to improve quality of lives and alleviate pressure on European welfare systems.

Extending work life by wider entry into labour markets, good health during working years and appropriate retirement are preconditions for increasing the employment rates of all generations. Health promotion and disease prevention are therefore of utmost significance to help achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth by 2020 – the EU 2020 objectives.



For more information, click [here](#).

For more information on EuroHealthNet position, contact EuroHealthNet Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, [Stecy Yghemonos](#)

Informal meeting of Ministers for family affairs and gender equality



For EuroHealthNet, gender inequity cannot solely be attributed to innate biological differences as it is influenced by the environment we live in and the social conditions and cultural differences that exist between and within countries.

Discriminatory gender roles still influence crucial individual decisions on issues such as education, career paths, working arrangements, family and fertility. Gender inequalities result in underutilisation of talent and impose a heavy toll on the

economy. Important benefits could therefore be gained if genuine choices were equally offered for men and women throughout different stages of life. Gender-related biological differences and socially constructed inequalities or gender differences between males and females play a central role in determining whether individuals are able to realize their potential for a long and a healthy life. These translate into differences in life expectancy, mortality and morbidity risks, healthy life years, health behaviours and the use of and access to health care services.



For more information, click [here](#).

To access EuroHealthNet position on gender equality, click [here](#) or contact EuroHealthNet Policy and Advocacy Coordinator, [Stecy Yghemonos](#).

Conference - “Alcohol Policy in Poland and around the Europe: Medical and Economic Disadvantages of Using Alcohol” MEDUSA



The conference “Alcohol Policy in Poland and around Europe: the Medical and Economic Disadvantages of Using Alcohol (MEDUSA)” was attended by specialists from European countries and the US. The lectures and workshops featured presentations and discussions of the latest information and issues regarding alcohol, such as the health consequences of using alcohol, foetal alcohol syndrome (FAS), epidemiology, and alcohol policy in Europe and around the world.



To access the Statement from the European Expert Conference: Medical and Economic Disadvantages of Using Alcohol (MEDUSA), click [here](#)

To access the conference materials, click [here](#)

NEWS FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

HEALTH

European Alcohol and Health Forum plenary on alcohol-related harm

EU Commissioner John Dalli appealed to industry, civil society and the public health community to strengthen efforts to protect young people from alcohol-related harm, at the plenary meeting of the European Alcohol and Health Forum.

According to the most recent European surveys, half of school children aged 15 to 16 years have drunk alcohol in the past month - despite the minimum drinking age being 18 in most EU countries. The Commissioner stressed the need to step up action, especially when it concerns young people. This includes marketing and advertising exposure.

The European Alcohol and Health Forum was set up by the European Commission in 2007 in the context of the EU Strategy on Alcohol, to mobilise action across society to reduce alcohol related harm.



For more information, click [here](#).

To access John Dalli speech, click [here](#).

Public health and electromagnetic fields – Overview of the European Commission activities



Exposure to electromagnetic fields is widespread. While electronic devices contribute to quality of life, concerns regarding possible health effects cannot be dispelled despite overall reassuring results from numerous official scientific assessments. The overview of the European Commission activities aims at showing actions elaborated in this field.



To access the article, click [here](#).

Promotion of research on Rare Diseases



In the EU, a rare disease is one which affects fewer than 5 people per 10 000. The number of sufferers may still be high, however, as there are some 7 000 known rare diseases. Most are caused by genetic defects, but environmental exposure during pregnancy or later in life, often in combination with

genetic susceptibility, is another cause.

EU law and funding for R&D projects aim to promote the development of orphan drugs for patients with rare diseases. The EU is promoting optimal prevention, diagnosis and treatment of rare diseases by creating networks, sharing experience and training, and disseminating knowledge.



A series of reports have been published by the European in order to foster research related to rare disease.

- To access the Orphanet Report on rare disease research, its determinants in Europe and the way forward, click [here](#).
- To access the EUCERD Report: Health indicators for rare diseases II - Conceptual framework for monitoring quality of care , click [here](#)

- To access the RDTF Report: Health indicators for rare diseases I - Conceptual framework and development of indicators from existing sources, click [here](#)
- To access EUROPLAN - Recommendations for the Development of National Plans for Rare Diseases, click [here](#)

“Ensuring the delivery of solid scientific advice through safeguarding the independence of EFSA- consultative workshop

John Dalli attended the European Food Safety Authority's workshop on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes. In this context, he underlined the importance of the independence of the agency itself, of its work. For Commissioner Dalli, EFSA has developed a breach of trust policy and, so far, it is the only one of the agencies under the supervision of the Commission's Health and Consumers Directorate General to have done so.

- the European Medicines Agency (EMA) adopted a new policy in October 2010;
- the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) followed suit in November 2010 and is now awaiting the reply of the European Data Protection Supervisor; and
- EFSA has presented its revised policy for consultation.



To access Commissioner Dalli speech, click [here](#).

SANCO High level Conference

DG SANCO high level conference on the EU Health programme, postponed from the autumn, has now been rescheduled for 2nd-3rd May 2012.

European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing – Editorial P. Testori Coggi, DG SANCO Director General



Ms Paola Testori Coggi, Director General for Health and Consumers of the European Commission, wrote an article related to the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing. She highlights that the European Innovation Partnership is the European Commission's answer to the challenge of developing innovative ways of improving the quality of life for ageing population, and enabling people to stay active longer.



To access the article, click [here](#)

SOCIAL

Updated publication of indicators on population below poverty line and income inequality



The ECHI (European Community Health Indicators) project was carried out under the Health Monitoring Programme and the Community Public Health Programme 2003-2008. The result is a list of 88 'indicators' for the public health field arranged according to a conceptual view on health and health determinants. Under the second Health programme (2008 – 2013), the ECHIM joint action aims to consolidate and expand the ECHI Indicator system towards a sustainable health monitoring system in Europe.



Indicators on population below poverty line and income inequality have been published. To access these data, click [here](#).

RESEARCH

Conference - E-health and equity in the global health communities

The conference “E-health and equity in the global health communities” will be held on 15 December in Brussels. The event will focus on potentialities related to E-health in order to help and reinforce healthcare systems and improve safety, quality and efficiency of healthcare.



For more information, click [here](#)

“Information and Communication Technology - Fundamental for innovating in the healthcare sector”, Speech by N. Kroes

Information and communications technology is fundamental for innovating in the health and care sector European Commissioner for the Digital Agenda Neelie Kroes said in a speech to the members of European Parliament.

In November 2011, a Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP) will be presented including proposed actions to which the stakeholders have committed, and which will be taking the plan out to the wider stakeholder community. Following the SIP the Commission will respond through a Communication, highlighting which actions it will take to support the SIP and the wider objectives of the EIP AHA.



To access Nelly Kroes speech, click [here](#).

Website - More Years – Better lives: Addressing the ageing population



EU Member States will work together to fund strategic research on ageing. The Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) will look at the challenges of demographic change. Bringing together scientists, social scientists and representatives from industry, policy making and user organisations, the JPI will look at how to retain people in the labour market, help older people remain active and how to make future care systems sustainable.

So far 13 EU countries have signed up but according to the Commission's recent communication "More years, better lives – the potential and challenges of demographic change" all EU Member States should participate. Given the scale of the challenge, they should develop a common vision for co-ordinated research into ageing and demographic change, it says.



To access the Website, click [here](#).

NEWS FROM THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Ensuring blind people's access to information

The EP Petitions Committee said that visually impaired people should have full access to books and other printed products.

Following a complaint by the World Blind Union, the European Blind Union and the Royal National Institute of Blind People (UK), MEPs called for a binding treaty to ensure that persons with print disabilities can make accessible copies of published works and send them to other countries. Only 5% of published books are made accessible in richer countries, and less than 1% in poorer ones.

Parliament's demand for a legally-binding instrument has not been met so far. The Commission representative said that "we need a mandate by the Council for these negotiations". The next WIPO meeting will take place in November and the Commission expects to "continue working with the text that we have on the table, although we do not have a mandate for a full Treaty". The Petitions Committee decided to leave the case open and to address urgently an oral question to the Commission on this issue.



To access Petitions Committee Website, click [here](#)

RESPONSE TO PARLIAMENT QUESTIONS

Best practice under the programme of Community action in the field of health (2008-13)

For **Commissioner Dalli**, the second programme of EU action in the field of health (2008-13) promotes the identification and exchange of best practice. Actions funded under the programme have generated guidelines for practice based on evidence, indicators of successful interventions, networks and intervention processes of policy-makers, staff, volunteers and other relevant stakeholders.



More information on actions focusing on identifying and exchanging best practise as well as other actions funded by the Health Programme are available [here](#).

European year for active ageing and solidarity between generations

Commissioner Andor replies that the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations in 2012 aims to promote conditions for a better future for young and old in our ageing societies. The key to active ageing is to ensure that people can continue to contribute to the economy and society and to look after themselves as they grow older.



The Commission has started to post information relating to such commitments on the European Year's official [website](#).

NEWS FROM OTHER EU BODIES AND AGENCIES

European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) - Conference "Social Housing Investment: Economic models facing EU policies"



The EESC organized a conference where was discussed the question of evolution of the economic model of social housing in relation to EU policies.



For more information, click [here](#)

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) – Report "Migrants in an irregular situation: Access to healthcare in 10 European Union Member States"



The report found several barriers to accessing healthcare for migrants in an irregular situation, that is, non-nationals present in an EU Member State without a visa or residence permit:

- Irregular migrants – who are not usually permitted to work – are often required to pay for medical care that is available cost-free to nationals. This includes emergency medical care, as well as antenatal, postnatal and delivery care for pregnant women and healthcare for children.
- The risk of possible deportation deters irregular migrants from seeking even emergency healthcare. In some EU Member States, a policy or practice exists of reporting irregular migrants to immigration authorities when they access health services.

The report suggests several ways forward:

- Access to necessary healthcare should be made available cost-free to irregular migrants on the same basis as nationals. Children should have equal access to healthcare, and pregnant women should have access to services for antenatal and postnatal care, and for delivery.
- Healthcare authorities should not be placed under a duty to report migrants in an irregular situation to immigration authorities, and such practices should be discontinued.



To access the report, click [here](#).

European Medicines Agency (EMA) - Draft guideline on clinical investigation of medicinal products in the treatment of depression

The EMA published a draft guideline aiming at being a general guidance on the development for medicinal products for acute and long-term treatment of major depression. The main requirements for medicinal products for the treatment of major depression are reviewed and redefined based on experience with recent clinical development programs.



To access the draft guideline, click [here](#) or email [here](#).

European Centre for Disease prevention and Control (ECDC) - Health information seeking behaviour on the web

European Centre for
Disease Prevention and Control

Research shows that, although they have difficulty of identifying and filtering the most useful, accurate and credible sources, the health professionals use of the internet to obtain health and medical information has increased. Eight out of every ten patients presents printed internet-sourced health information at visits, which suggests a new dynamic in the traditional doctor-patient relationship. This is one of the findings of the literature review on health information-seeking behaviour on the web that ECDC published.

As for the online health consumer, they tend to be more educated, earn more, and have high-speed internet access at home and at work. The literature review also shows that women are more likely than men to search for health information. The literature review, one in a series of 'Insights into health communication' on the prevention and control of communicable disease in the European context, focuses on research published from 2006 to 2010 in English language.



To access the report "A literature review on health information-seeking behaviour on the web: a health consumer and health professional perspective", click [here](#).

To access ECDC reports related to health behaviour information, click [here](#).

OTHER INTERNATIONAL NEWS

WHO-Europe - World Mental Health Day

World Mental Health Day focused on investment. Good mental health contributes to economic prosperity, and improving a population's mental health yields benefits in both human and economic terms. Poor mental health has enormous implications for society; mental disorders are estimated to affect at least 25% of the population of the WHO European Region every year, most commonly through depression and anxiety.

Data from countries where information is available show that mental disorders account for as much as 44% of social welfare benefits or disability pensions in Denmark, 43% in Finland and Scotland, and 37% in Romania. In the Republic of Moldova, mental disabilities account for 25% of all social welfare benefits or disability pensions funded by the Government. Providing the care people want and need has both social and economic benefits: improved well-being and productivity. In consultation with European Member States, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and key partners, WHO Europe is developing a strategy that will guide the work for mental health in the European Region over the next decade.



For more information, click [here](#)

TobTaxY - Making Tobacco Tax Trendy



Capacity Building Workshops are currently organized and will take place in 5 strategically selected countries across the European Union, with representatives from the other 26 involved in the project. The objective is to identify 3 candidates, from each participating country, that would be willing to work together within their own jurisdictions after the training. Ideally, the team should include tobacco control advocates, as well as those with an economics background, so as to facilitate the

development of advocacy plans at national level for a tobacco regime that addresses both public health and fiscal concerns.

The Smoke Free Partnership organised an EU Advocacy Meeting on for health actors at the national level in preparation forthcoming Tobacco Products Directive (TPD) Revision, expected in the middle of 2012. The meeting was opportunity for the Smoke Free Partnership to give an introduction to the Tobacco Products Directive revision and the current state of play and show how to rebut tobacco industry misinformation on the TPD. The second part of the meeting was a workshop on how to adapt advocacy tools in support of the TPD in each country.



For more information, click [here](#) or contact EuroHealthNet Policy Officer [John Considine](#), or [Sam Villiers](#) from the Smoke Free Partnership.

International Labour Organisation (ILO) – Report - Addressing inequities in access to health care for vulnerable groups in countries of the European region

The international Labour Organisation (ILO) published a report highlighting issues that contribute to persisting inequalities in access to health care of vulnerable groups in the broader European region, including countries of the European Union (EU), the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), and selected countries of Central Asia. The report focuses on key determinants of

vulnerability, primarily labour market impacts such as income, employment, and related gaps in access to social protection, and to social health protection in particular.



For more information, click [here](#).

OECD – Report – Agriculture: Europe has unique opportunity to reform farm support

OECD published a report where it says that high commodity prices have made European farmers much less dependent on income support, offering cash-strapped governments a unique opportunity to reform the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Evaluation of Agricultural Policy Reforms in the European Union shows that European support to farm incomes has decreased substantially over the past 20 years.



For further information on OECD work on agriculture, click [here](#).

UNICEF - Impact of the of the Economic Crisis in Romania

UNICEF published an assessment of the Social and Poverty Impacts of the Economic Crisis in Romania for the period 2009-2010 where it confirms that fairly obvious fact in charting the effects of the Romanian economic and financial crisis during the period 2009-2010, when the crisis was at its peak.

The research found that 84% of respondents said that the crisis had affected their households "much or "very much". Poverty increased, unemployment soared, work in the informal sector dried up and remittances from abroad were down. The middle class suffered and the poor got poorer.



To access the report, click [here](#).

European Observatory of Inequality – Inequality Watch

Inequality Watch, the European observatory of inequality, is a network resulting from the desire of associations and research centres to observe the state and evolution of inequality in Europe. It is an independent information network for inequality in Europe. Its aim is to share and confront publications proposed independently by each member allows for a better understanding of the social and economic specificities of each European country, while keeping in mind their cultural and social differences in the perception of inequality.



For more information about Inequality Watch, click [here](#)

One of the recent publications released by inequality Watch is related to income inequalities in Europe, available [here](#).

UEAPME – Positionposition on the proposal for a directive on the minimum health and safety requirements regarding

electromagnetic fields

Last June, the European Commission adopted a new proposal for a directive on the minimum health and safety requirements regarding the exposure of workers to the risks arising from physical agents (electromagnetic fields). For the European association of craft, small and medium-sized enterprises (UEAPME) , the proposal improves the measures related to the minimum health and safety requirements but some technical issues are still needed.



To access UAPME position, click [here](#).

British Medical Journal (BMJ) - Act now to tackle the health and security threat of climate change

Climate change poses an immediate, grave and escalating threat to the health and security of people around the globe and must be tackled urgently, warned leading experts at a high-level meeting hosted by the BMJ (British Medical Journal) in London.

A statement released at the meeting warns that climate change will not only bring a global health catastrophe, but has the potential to threaten global stability and security. It urges EU to adopt urgently a 30% CO2 greenhouse gas reduction target by 2020 and national governments "to strive to adopt climate change mitigation targets and policies that are more ambitious than their international commitments."



For more information, click [here](#)

Conference - "Partnering for Better Health: improving care, accelerating growth and efficiency"

Microsoft organises a conference in Brussels on 30th November "Partnering for Better Health: improving care, accelerating growth and efficiency". The topic of the conference is to look into the future of hospitals and healthcare, through a series of workshops focused on transformative technologies for remote care, case management and to discuss together how the Internet, in particular cloud computing and interactive natural user interfaces, can play an impactful part. The event will bring together EU high growth start-ups developing new technology solutions, health providers and professionals, payers and patients, as well as policy actors from the European Commission, European Parliament and the Member States.



For more information, email [here](#)

OTHER NATIONAL AND LOCAL NEWS

ENGLAND – Obesity Call to Action

A bid to slash five billion calories off the nation's daily diet was set out as part of the Government's ambitious new plan to tackle obesity by the Department of Health. The obesity Call to Action announces a new national ambition for reversing the tide of excess weight in England. The country already has one of the highest rates of obesity in Europe and some of the highest rates in the developed world. Over 60 per cent of adults and a

third of 10 and 11 year olds are overweight or obese.



The Call to Action will be published on the Department of Health [website](#)

SACN's report on energy requirements can be found [here](#).

England - Marmot review – Joint submission to London Assembly Health and Public Services Committee's enquiry into Fuel Poverty

The Marmot Review Team gave evidence to the London Assembly Health and Public Services Committee's enquiry into Fuel Poverty. The three overarching recommendations were:

- Fuel Poverty: Fuel prices continue to rise, without tighter controls and demands on fuel companies to keep prices affordable it will be very difficult to eradicate or reduce fuel poverty which is projected to increase. Action is needed to reduce fuel prices and not to continue to subsidise energy companies
- Household Income: In times of increased unemployment and cuts to welfare spending it is very important that household incomes are sufficient to enable householders to keep their homes warm.
- Domestic Energy Efficiency: To address both fuel poverty and climate change it is important that improvements are made to the energy efficiency of homes



The joint submission and its summary are available [here](#).

SPAIN – Health is a human right - Petition

Right to health believes that health is a human right that should be guaranteed for all persons. However, nowadays this is not truth. In the context of the forthcoming elections to be held in Spain on 20th November, team of Right to health is mobilizing to get that political parties include in their election manifestos and in their subsequent government action a certain proposals to ensure right to health to everyone, including people in poor countries.



To contribute in the petition, click [here](#).

UK – Institute for Fiscal studies - Child and Working-Age Poverty from 2010 to 2020

This Commentary presents forecasts of relative and absolute income poverty in the UK among children and working-age adults for each year between 2010-11 and 2015-16, and for 2020-21, using a static microsimulation model augmented with forecasts of key economic and demographic characteristics.

Results should provide a useful guide to what might happen to poverty under current government policies.



For more information, click [here](#).

UK - £20 million to knock down mental health stigma

Time to Change is a programme run by the charities Mind and Rethink Mental Illness, set up in 2007, that tackles mental health stigma and discrimination. It works closely with people with mental health problems to build their confidence and leadership skills to address stigma

The new funding will allow Time to Change to reach 29 million members of the public and increase the confidence of 100,000 people with mental health problems to challenge stigma and discrimination.



For more information, click [here](#)

EVENTS

October 2011

- 24-25 October 2011: [3rd Meeting on the EU Committee of Experts on rare Diseases \(EUCERD\)](#) (Brussels, Belgium)
- 25-26 October 2011: [Cluster meeting of projects in the area of rare disease](#) (Luxembourg)
- 26-29 October 2011: [1th European Nutrition Conference](#) (Madrid, Spain)
- 27-28 October 2011: [European Network Conference on reducing youth drinking by law enforcement](#) (Rotterdam, The Netherlands)
- 27-28 October 2011: [E-health 2.0 Europe 2011](#) (Berlin, Germany)

November 2011

- 2 November 2011: [Rare 2011 - the EuroBiomed meetings on rare diseases](#) (Montpellier, France)
- 2-3 November 2011: [Ageing Globally – Ageing Locally” Planning all Our Futures](#) (Dublin, Ireland)
- 4-5 November 2011: [Evolving challenges - Ageing Locally " Planning all our futures"](#) (Dublin, Ireland)
- 7 November 2011: [AGE Platform Europe – Intergroup on ageing and intergenerational solidarity](#) (Brussels, Belgium)
- 7-8 November 2011: [Solidarity in Health - EU Presidency conferences on closing the gap in public health](#) (Poznan, Poland)
- 7-11 November 2011: [Qualitative and Quantitative Research methods in Health care and Medicine Use](#) (Copenhagen, Denmark)
- 9-11 November 2011: [6th World Congress on Tissue Banking](#) (Barcelona, Spain)
- 10 November 2011: [SMI - The Swedish Institute for Communicable Disease Control - The future of European prevention among MSM](#) (Stockholm, Sweden)
- 10-12 November 2011: [Welfare Development and health](#) (Copenhagen Denmark)
- 14-16 November 2011: [6th International conference on children's health and the environment](#) (Lodz, Poland)
- 15 November 2011: [BIO-Europe 2010—16th Annual International Partnering Conference](#) (Munich, Germany)
- 16-17 November 2011: [International conference on electromagnetic fields and health](#) (Brussels, Belgium)
- 16-17 November 2011: [2011 International Scientific Conference on EMF and Health](#) (Brussels, Belgium)
- 20-23 November 2011: [3rd International TEMOS Conference “Healthcare abroad and medical](#)

tourism" (Cologne, Germany)

- 23 November 2011: [Diet, Physical Activity and Cardiovascular Disease Prevention in Europe](#) (Brussels, Belgium)
- 23-25 November 2011: [ECDC Annual meeting on antimicrobial resistance and healthcare-associated infections](#) (Warsaw, Poland)
- 28 November-1st december 2011: [15th Annual Public Health Days](#) (Montreal, Canada)
- 30 November: 2nd December 2011: [Eurochild's Annual Conference 2011](#) (Cardiff, Wales-UK)

December 2011

- 5 December 2011: [Medicine and surgery in optimising the care of obese patients](#) (Munich, Germany)
- 9 December 2011: [Synergy in prevention and health promotion: individual, community, and environmental approaches](#), (Lisbon, Portugal)
- 15 December 2011: [eHealth and Equity in the Global Health Communities](#) (Brussels, Belgium)

2012

- 18-19 January 2012: [IT @ Networking Awards 2012: Raise Awareness of the World's Most Innovative Healthcare IT Projects](#) (Brussels, Belgium)
- 7-10 March 2012: [27th International Conference on Alzheimer's Disease international](#) (London, UK)

PUBLICATIONS

International Journal for Equity in Health - [Does socioeconomic status affect the association of social relationships and health? A moderator analysis](#)

European Anti - Poverty Network: [Active Inclusion – Make it happen!](#)

WHO - [Health professional mobility and health systems. Evidence from 17 European countries](#)

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