

Calendar of events

January

14 January: [Personal health Systems workshop](#) (Brussels)

19 Jan: [Social NGOs' Key demands for 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion](#) (Brussels)

21 Jan: [Opening Conference of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion](#) (Madrid)

28 Jan: [Improving the Health and Wellbeing of Migrants](#) (Brussels)

Feb

3 February: [Intelligent Energy European Info Day](#) (Brussels)

10 - 12 February: [International Conference: "Towards Better Work and Well-being"](#) (Helsinki, Finland)

24 - 26 February: [5th WHO Ministerial Conference on Health and Environment - Protecting children's health in a changing environment](#) (Parma, Italy)

28 Feb: [World Rare Disease Day 2010](#)

Mar

9-12 March: [XIVth International Congress for Infectious Diseases](#) (Miami, Florida)

10 - 12 March : [WHO/Europe: Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health](#) (Parma, Italy)

15 - 18 March : [World of Health IT Conference & Exhibition](#) (Barcelona, Spain)

22-26 March : [Week for EU Health Promotion and Health Equity](#) (Brussels)

22-26 March: [EU Sustainable Energy Week 2010](#) (Brussels)

Apr

6 - 7 April : [Health 2.0 Europe](#) (Paris, France)

8 - 9 April : [6th edition of the French Prevention Days](#) (Paris, France)

8-11 April: [WCPD 2010: 6th World Congress on Prevention of Diabetes and its Complications](#) (Dresden, Germany)

9 - 11 April : [1st Latin American and Caribbean Conference on Global Health](#) (Cuernavaca,

EU News

New Determine report shows health equity makes economic sense

Targeted investment to address health inequalities by action on the social determinants of health is more cost effective than paying for the consequences of health inequalities. Evidence to support this argument has been presented in a new report written by Teresa Lavin and Owen Metcalfe from the Institute of Public Health in Ireland, as part of the [Determine project](#) being co-ordinated by EuroHealthNet.

The report concludes that while economic arguments can and are being used to support action on health inequalities, there is great potential for more work at the member state level in encouraging policy-makers across a range of sectors to consider health in economic terms. The EU can play a key role in establishing common approaches and methodologies to undertaking economic analysis that incorporate health and health equity.

The report is available on the Health Inequalities portal [here](#).

EuroHealthNet report surveys health inequalities indicators

The indicators and data that are available to monitor health inequalities have been collected for a new report from EuroHealthNet. This includes an overview of the data gathered at EU level, the relevant European projects and initiatives for analysing health inequalities, as well as other international methods used to measure the extent of health inequalities.

The WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health stressed the importance of ensuring routine monitoring systems for health equity at the local, national and international level. This report provides a comprehensive summary of what is currently being done.

You can download the report [here](#).

EuroHealthNet urges EC to make 2020 a healthier new year

EuroHealthNet has urged European Commission chiefs to revise their draft plan for economic strategies to include health and social improvements. Responding to the current consultation process for the Europe 2020 proposal, EuroHealthNet points out that the Commission recently published its proposals for addressing health and social inequalities but has overlooked its own plans in the suggested priorities to replace the Lisbon strategy.

In its consultation response EuroHealthNet recommends:

- the inclusion of indicators showing policymakers the extent and cost of inequities;
- a stronger sustainable development approach
- investment in improvement of wellbeing measures, particularly in early years of life.

The response in full is available on the Equity Channel [website](#).

New EU Commissioners nearly in place

The President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso, has announced the new team of EU Commissioners for the term 2009-2014. Of particular interest is the new EU Commissioner designate for health and consumer affairs, John Dalli, from Malta, currently the country's Minister for Social Policy.

As Minister for Social Policy, Dalli has been responsible for health, employment, housing, labour, and industrial relations. He has also been Malta's parliamentary secretary responsible for industry and Minister of finance and economic affairs.

Mexico)

14 - 16 April : [18th International Conference on Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services](#) (Manchester, UK)

21-22 April: [EC Thematic Conference on Mental Health: Mental health and older people](#) (Brussels)

May

5 - 7 May : [EGEA VI: Social and Health Benefits of Balanced Diet: The role of fruits and Vegetables](#) (Brussels)

13 - 15 May : [5th European Conference on Rare Diseases](#) (Krakow, Poland)

19 - 21 May : [6th European Sustainable Cities & Towns Conference](#) (Dunkerque, France)

20 May : [EU Public health Forum](#) (Brussels)

19 - 23 May : [Congress for the New Urbanism \(CNU\)](#) (Atlanta, USA)

24-26 May: [2nd World Forum Against Drugs](#) (Stockholm, Sweden)

Jun

16-18 June: [INIC10: "All Together Now: Exploring the Many Faces and Facets of Integrated Care"](#) (Tampere, Finland)

June 25-26 : [Aging and Sleep 2010](#) (Lyon, France)

June 28th - July 1st : [9th Annual International Conference on Health Economics, Management & Policy](#)

Jul

11 - 15 July : [International Congress on Obesity](#) (Stockholm)

11 - 15 July : [IUHPE World Conference on Health Promotion: Health, Equity and Sustainable Development](#) (Geneva)

Oct

12-14 Oct: [MedTech Forum 2010](#) (Brussels)

21 October : [EU Health Policy Forum](#) (Brussels)

Nov

8-9 November: [EC Thematic Conference on Mental Health: Mental health in workplace settings](#) (Berlin)

10 - 13 November : [2010 EUPHA conference](#) (Amsterdam, The Netherlands)

16-19 Nov: [Global Symposium on Health Systems Research](#) (Montreux, Switzerland)

2011

Slovenian Janez Potocnik, formerly commissioner for research, has been named for the environment portfolio, while employment social affairs and inclusion will be the responsibility of Hungary's László Andor. The previous health commissioner Androulla Vassiliou has been designated for education, culture, multilingualism and youth.

The appointment of the European Commissioners is subject to a hearing in the European Parliament during which MEPs will assess the suitability of each candidate for their particular roles. The votes confirming or rejecting new appointments takes place on 26 January.

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_designate_2009-2014/index_en.htm

Sweden completes its presidency of EU...

Sweden has reached the end of its six-month spell at the helm of EU politics, and has highlighted its activities related to the economic crisis, such as encouraging and supporting people to enter or re-enter the labour market and to gain access to employment. The ratification of the Lisbon Treaty also has important potential implications for health (see Equity Channel briefing [here](#)) while national ministers adopted a new multi-annual programme in the area of freedom, security and justice, known as the Stockholm Programme.

Additionally, new rules concerning tobacco taxation means that Member States now have the flexibility to increase the minimum tax on cigarettes, which may help reduce tobacco consumption.

More information about the Swedish Presidency outcomes can be found [here](#).

...and Spain takes over the European agenda

As Spain takes over the EU presidency it has said that as part of a Trio with Belgium and Hungary, it will give priority to the social dimension of the post-2010 Lisbon strategy for growth and jobs and an explicit commitment to "integrate health aspects and health determinants into other EU policies."

The agenda also includes plans to continue work on the social determinants of health and the reduction of inequalities, the promotion of healthy lifestyles, including healthy nutritional habits, measures against obesity and the prevention of addictions such as smoking, alcohol drinking, drugs.

Please click [here](#) to access the Trio Presidency agenda.

Public Health at EU level: the last 12 months

An overview of EU legislation related to public health has been published by the Working Party on Public Health, part of the Council of the EU.

The document outlines the activities of the Working Party on Public Health in relation to the agendas of the Czech, French and Swedish Presidencies of the EU, and also includes work by other committees such as the Social Protection Committee and the Working Party on Agricultural Questions.

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/09/st16/st16805.en09.pdf>

The year ahead: European Commission publishes health work programme 2010...

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Health has published its Work Programme for 2010, part of the implementation of the second programme of Community action in the field of health (2008-2013).

For this work programme, the budget for the call for proposals has been reduced and as a result it is expected that there will be fewer projects funded than in previous years.

The total budget for the 2010 Work Programme as a whole is just under €48m, broken down as follows:

- The total budget for the call for proposals for projects is €13.3m, with the possible financial contribution from this budget being up to 60% per project for eligible costs.
- The total budget for joint actions is €10.6m, with the possible financial contribution from

March

28-30 Mar: [European Conference Tobacco or Health](#) (Amsterdam, The Netherlands)

this budget being up to 50% for eligible costs.

- The total budget for operating grants is €2m, with the possible financial contribution from this budget being up to 60% per project for eligible costs.
- The total budget for Tenders is €15.1m: The Call for Tenders will be sent separately and is expected around mid 2010

The deadline for submitting proposals is 19 March 2010.

http://ec.europa.eu/health/programme/how_does_it_work/call_for_proposals/index_en.htm

...and EAHC presents previous EU-funded health projects

The Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC) has published a database of the projects, conferences, and operating grants funded through calls for proposals in the years 2003 to 2008 under the previous EU Public Health Programme and the current EU Health Programme 2008-2013.

The database is searchable by project title, acronym or abstract and contains information about the top 50 most viewed projects.

<http://ec.europa.eu/eahc/projects/database.html>

Taking action to prevent depression and suicide

EuroHealthNet participated in an event in Budapest on "Prevention of Depression and Suicide-Making it Happen", organised by the European Commission and Hungarian Ministry of Health with the Support of the Swedish Presidency of the EU and in collaboration with WHO Regional Office for Europe.

Viktor Kaldo from the Karolinska Institute spoke on behalf of EuroHealthNet about how depression is presented on the internet and in media, while the conference also heard about EU action on social protection and mental health and access to care for depressed persons and those at risk for suicide.

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_determinants/life_style/mental/ev_20091210_en.htm

EU alcohol forum considers effects on workplace and youth health

Further research to be carried out into the effects of alcohol in the workplace was considered at the 5th Plenary meeting of the European Alcohol and Health Forum, a topic likely to form the basis for the future work of the Forum's Science Group (SG). Alcohol accessibility and harm was another area considered by the SG for future exploration.

Also discussed was the need for more research into whether education is effective in influencing alcohol consumption among young people, and whether self-regulation schemes will lead to genuinely responsible marketing practices.

A summary of the Forum meeting is available [here](#).

Highlights of the Help 2.0 campaign

The European Commission directorate-general for health has produced a summary document outlining the achievements of the EU "Help - For a life without tobacco" campaign. The media campaign is conceived with a special focus on young people and addresses tobacco prevention, cessation and the dangers of passive smoking in the 27 EU Member States.

In 2009 the campaign established the the European Student Network on Tobacco Control, which coordinates and enhances youth participation in the Help campaign. The campaign was also present on present on youth-oriented national websites in all European countries and on pan-European sites such as Facebook, Yahoo, MSN and YouTube.

The full campaign summary can be accessed [here](#).

Living conditions, social exclusion and mental well-being

The European Foundation for Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound) has published a report on the factors that influence perceived social exclusion and the impact that this has on mental well-being. Such factors include labour market access, income and lifestyle standards, and access to social support.

The report draws on the results of the Second European Quality of Life survey (published in 2007) and finds a clear gradient across social groups, with the more disadvantaged individuals reporting lower levels of mental well-being – although the relative impact of disadvantage varies significantly between countries and country groups.

Please go [here](#) for the full Eurofound report.

Better health through household energy efficiency

The European Commission and its partners in the European Universities Continuing Education Network (EUCEN) have launched two new modules of DOLCETA, an online consumer education tool. The two new modules are dedicated to sustainable consumption and to services of general interest (such as telecoms, energy, transport, water supply and postal services).

The platform allows user to learn about actions such as how to develop a sustainable home with lower energy bills and environmentally-friendly furniture or home appliances, and offsetting the carbon dioxide emissions produced when driving the car, flying or using your computer.

<http://www.dolceta.eu>

Platform set up to help develop healthy towns and cities

The newly launched EU-funded VIAJEO project will design, demonstrate and implement an IT-based open platform to collect and process data for travel information and transport planning in cities in Europe, China and Brazil.

VIAJEO will facilitate information exchange and centralise data from various sources, providing needed support to transport management and city planners, with the overall aim of improving overall urban transport services and planning.

http://ec.europa.eu/research/transport/news/article_9911_en.html

National news

FRANCE: reducing the risk of HIV and STIs

A series of 96 recommendations to reduce the risk of sexually-transmitted diseases formed the core of a report by France Lert, Director of Research at the National Institute for Health and Medical Research (Inserm) and Gilles Pialoux, epidemiologist at Tenon Hospital in Paris.

The French National Institute for Prevention and Health Education (INPES) organised a special day for discussions about strategies to reduce the risk of HIV and STI, during which the report was presented to over 200 participants. In addition to the need for proper protection and regular checks, the report calls for more targeted prevention messages to those most at risk, through modern channels such as the internet and mobile communications platforms.

<http://www.ifr69.idf.inserm.fr/article.asp?id=686>

Sweden: linking early intelligence, socioeconomic status and health

Academics in Sweden have published recent findings on the relationship between early IQ and health has led to the controversial hypothesis that early intelligence is the explanation for the association between socioeconomic status and health.

In an article for the BMJ, they suggest that suggest that the length of own education is inversely associated with all cause-mortality until age 75, even when IQ at age 10 is adjusted for. Social background and own social career seem unlikely to be responsible for mortality differences by childhood IQ.

<http://www.fhi.se/en/News/News/Early-intelligence-education-and-mortality/>

England: NHS launches Start4Life healthy babies campaign

Over three hundred of the 1,500 babies likely to be born this New Year's day could be overweight or obese by the time they start school unless action is taken. The revelation comes as Start4Life - a new campaign to support pregnant women and parents of babies to give their baby a healthier start in life – is launched by the NHS in England.

The campaign is part of Change4Life, the mass movement which launched a year ago and which is helping families 'eat well, move more and live longer'. Start4Life centres around six 'building blocks', based on the latest infant health research, to help parents know what's right for their baby.

More details on the Department of Health for England [website](#).

Other international news

New report assesses performance of health systems

A new report from the WHO Europe office outlines the trends in public health indicators over the last four years, looking at what factors influence health and the challenges for the future.

In general, the report considers the contribution made by health systems in improving population health in the WHO European Region, in light of the reforms made to service delivery, resource generation, financing and stewardship.

The report is available on the WHO Europe [website](#).

The dangers of too narrow a focus on finance

Financial sustainability is of limited use as a policy goal for public health, given the lack of clarity over its precise meaning, according to a new report from the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies.

The report points out that although the concept of financial sustainability is cited as a major concern during debates over health policy, it is not clearly defined in terms of willingness to pay for health care, the value of the benefits gained from health spending and how to improve the performance of the health system.

<http://www.euro.who.int/Document/E93058.pdf>

HEAL laments lack of EU leadership during UN summit

The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) has expressed disappointment at the failure of world leaders to agree on specific action to tackle climate change. The result was a "non-binding declaration without clear commitments from any government", according to the organisation.

HEAL also regrets that the EU was not more strategic in pushing for a 30% emissions reduction target, despite the numerous benefits that will result from such action, not only for health but also for other sectors such as agriculture, energy and transport.

The HEAL position statement on the UN Copenhagen summit is available [here](#).

Using Health Highlights

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