

November
2009



EU HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

www.health-inequalities.eu www.eurohealthnet.eu
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Calendar of events

November

November 9th 2009:

[Special Eurobarometer on Discrimination](#) (Brussels)

9 - 10 November 2009:

[North West of England Wellbeing Conference 2009](#) (Manchester, UK)

9 - 11 November 2009:

[Global Energy Base](#) (Basel, Switzerland)

November 9th 2009:

[Conference on measures and strategies to combat men's violence against women](#) (Solna, Sweden)

November 10th 2009:

[Seminar on Social security and taxation](#) (Brussels)

November 10th 2009:

[Swedish presidency conference: "Growing together for a sustainable Europe"](#) (Gothenburg, Sweden)

November 10th 2009:

[Seminar: "The Health of People with Disabilities"](#) (Brussels)

10 - 11 November 2009:

[The role of governments and corporate social responsibility \(CSR\)](#) (Stockholm, Sweden)

11 - 12 November 2009:

[Swedish Presidency: Gender Equality Ministers Meeting](#) (Marrakesh, Morocco)

November 11th 2009:

[Climate Change Impacts on Human Health](#) (Brussels)

November 11th 2009:

[Careif international conference on Sport Education & Culture](#) (London, UK)

11 - 13 November 2009:

[Eurochild's 6th Annual Conference - Monitoring child well-being: better policy and practice](#) (Cyprus)

Dear Health Highlights Readers,

Welcome to our new style news service from EuroHealthNet! Our communications team has been looking at how we can improve what we do and make your reading easier. We are also practising what we preach about sustainable working. So we are now:

- Sending you a clearer electronic version of Health Highlights that you can read on screen more easily
- Encouraging you not to print it unless essential, but to forward it electronically to your colleagues
- Improving the events calendar so you can quickly link into what is going on
- Reporting more news more often so you get faster information about what affects your work

Here's how it works:

- An email version is sent to you for easy reading on screen.
- One click takes you to the direct links behind our short summaries, for more details.
- A lighter, printer-friendly version (PDF format) is attached if you do need to print a paper copy.

We hope you will like this and find it more useful. Do let us know: our Communications team Matt Williams (m.williams@eurohealthnet.eu) and Yoline Kuipers (y.kuipers@eurohealthnet.eu) are keen to make sure your news is included in Health Highlights and on our four websites, so send us your comments and stories.

Thanks to them for this new initiative – and to you for your interest and contributions to our news service.

*Clive Needle
Editor and Director, EuroHealthNet*

EU News

EU sets out action plan on HIV/AIDS

The European Commission has set out an action plan to tackle HIV/AIDS across Europe and neighbouring countries in the coming years, in the form of a strategy which aims to:

- to reduce new HIV infections across all European countries by 2013,
- to improve access to prevention, treatment, care and support and
- to improve the quality of life of people living with, affected by or most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS in the European Union and neighbouring countries.

There were 50 000 newly diagnosed HIV cases in the EU and the neighbouring countries alone in 2007 and an estimated 2 million people living with HIV/AIDS. In response to this situation, the Commission's strategy consists of three broad areas for action:

1. Scaling up the implementation of prevention strategies, which effectively target local realities and needs, while working towards ensuring universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support,
2. Supporting an effective response to HIV/AIDS in priority regions, such as the most affected EU Member States, the Russian Federation and the most affected neighbouring countries, and
3. Developing means to reach and support the populations most-at-risk and most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS across Europe.

The full text of the communication from the European Commission can be accessed at:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_threats/com/aids/com_aids_en.htm

Where next for EU action on health inequalities?

Following the publication by the European Commission on EU action to reduce health inequalities, a number of organisations have issued responses and briefing papers outlining the main points of the communication and also areas for discussion about how best to take forward this new strategy.

November 12th 2009: [AER Breakfast Briefing: Healthcare Mobility](#) (Brussels)

12 - 14 November 2009: [The Integration of Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in the Context of Climate Change, the Energy Crisis and Food Insecurity](#) (Agadir, Morocco)

November 14th 2009: [World Diabetes Day](#)

16 - 17 November 2009: [Series of Seminars on EU Anti-Discrimination Legislation](#) (Trier, Germany)

16 - 17 November 2009: [3rd European Renewable Energy Policy Conference](#) (Brussels)

16 - 19 November 2009: [Global Symposium on Health Systems Research](#) (Montreux, Switzerland)

16 - 20 November 2009: [Forum 2009: "Innovating for the health of all"](#) (Havana, Cuba)

16 - 17 November 2009: [Swedish Presidency Equality Summit](#) (Stockholm, Sweden)

16 - 17 November 2009: [Implementation of the Lisbon Strategy at regional and local level](#) (Gothenburg, Sweden)

November 17th 2009: [Climate Proofing EU Structural and Cohesion Funds](#) (Brussels)

November 17th 2009: [Roundtable: From Nice to Lisbon: an important step forward for EU Health?](#) (Brussels)

17 - 18 November 2009: [Swedish Presidency Conference on gender differences in educational outcomes](#) (Uppsala, Sweden)

November 18th 2009: [European antibiotic awareness day](#)

19 - 20 November 2009: [Swedish presidency conference on Partnership and the Social Dialogue within the European Social Fund](#)

November 20th 2009: [FAHM seminar: "Towards a balanced cooperation of public and private actors"](#) (Düsseldorf, Germany)

EuroHealthNet has responded by welcoming the strategy as a "new era for EU health", and encourages wide-ranging actions across all relevant EU sectors. "This is not a matter for the health sector alone," said EuroHealthNet Director Clive Needle. "The wide ranging powers of the EU and its member states provide great potential for world class concrete actions."

Equitychannel.net has also produced a briefing paper on the communication which includes a series of "next steps" for policymakers, such as the use of indicators to measure the impact of EU policies on health equity and a sharper focus on strategies which can be shown to genuinely reduce the avoidable differences in people's health.

The European Health Management Association (EHMA) has also produced a briefing which includes a reference to the potential medium-term importance of structural funds for building up action at national, regional or local level.

The EuroHealthNet response is available [here](#).

You can read the Equitychannel.net briefing [here](#).

The EHMA briefing paper can be accessed through [this link](#).

Determine partners meet to discuss capacity building

The Determine project has held an important meeting among partners to share information about how they are implementing capacity building activities. There was also an exchange of useful resources, areas of difficulty and potential areas for collaboration.

Among the outcomes of the meeting was an emphasis on the importance of using language that can be understood by other sectors, and the importance of educating about the social determinants of health due to the strong general perception that population health is primarily the domain of the health care system and/or health professionals. The Determine project was seen as a valuable link with other countries, with the added value of allowing people to converse with each other on common objectives. For the future, discussions were held about how similar arrangements might help to keep health inequalities high on the political agenda, including at EU and international levels.

The Final Determine Conference will take place in March 25, 2010 at the Spanish Representation in Brussels, part of the "Week for EU Health Promotion and Health Equity" that EuroHealthNet is organising on 22-26 March. For more information, please contact Ingrid Stegeman on i.stegeman@eurohealthnet.eu

www.health-inequalities.eu

Ministers call for more action on drug abuse among young people

Following the establishment of the EU Drugs Action Plan for 2009-2012, health ministers in the Council of EU have urged for more effective measures to prevent or delay the onset of drug use, particularly among young people.

Ministers attending the employment, social policy, health and consumer affairs council meeting in Luxembourg stressed the need to make sure that schools can provide a healthy and inclusive environment which will ensure that young people develop competencies and life skills leading to reduction of drug-related problems.

The council also encouraged parental support and family management programmes, regular assessment of the nature and magnitude of drug use and drug-related problems in the population and the use of new interactive communication tools such as the internet and social media to raise awareness and correct misperceptions as well as to support community prevention initiatives.

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/09/st13/st13405.en09.pdf>

Sweden leads healthy ageing initiative

The Swedish Presidency invitational conference 'Healthy ageing in Europe- lessons learnt and ways forward', took place in Stockholm, 22-23 October 2009

It was organized by the Swedish National Institute of Public Health and supported by the

November 20th 2009:
[WASTED: An International Conference on Alcohol and Young People](#) (Ashford, Kent, UK)

November 20th 2009 :
[Europe de l'Enfance](#) (Solna, Sweden)

23 - 24 November 2009 :
[EU Expert Group meeting on Social Determinants and Health Inequalities](#) (Luxembourg)

24 - 25 November 2009:
[Diversity Migration and Integration Interest Group meeting in Brussels](#)

November 25th 2009:
[International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women](#)

25 - 28 November 2009:
[EUPHA Conference on Public Health: Human ecology and Public Health](#) (Lodz, Poland)

26 - 27 November 2009:
['The Forgotten Children' Conference: addressing the subject of children of parents with a mental illness](#)

December

30th Nov - December 1st 2009: [Series of Seminars on EU Anti-Discrimination Legislation November](#)

November 30th 2009:
[Family jobs and e-innovation: the keys to new social and economic policies for the elderly and disabled people](#)

December 1st 2009: [World AIDS Day](#)

3 - 4 December 2009:
[Children in the Union - Rights and Empowerment \(CURE\)](#) (Stockholm, Sweden)

December 3rd 2009:
[International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#)

7 - 18 December 2009: [UN Climate Change Conference](#) (Copenhagen)

7 - 10 December 2009: [4th International Jerusalem Conference on Health Policy: Improving health and health care](#) (Jerusalem, Israel)

9 - 10 December 2009: [EPF Final Value + Conference](#) (Gothenburg, Sweden)

9 - 11 December 2009:
[European Crime Prevention Network \(EUCPN\) Board](#)

EuroHealthNet Special Interest Group on Healthy Ageing. The conference participants call on the European Commission to bring together all the current and upcoming ageing and health related initiatives under one umbrella of a European Healthy Ageing Strategy. This Strategy should include policies that are aimed at the promotion of a healthy, active, and independent living among older people and take into account the wider social and economic factors across all social groups. The strategy should be made part of the Post 2010 Lisbon Strategy.

Please go [here](#) for more information about the event.

Your chance to shape European policies on disability

The European Commission has issued a public consultation, in the form of an online questionnaire, to gather information from a wide range of people in preparation for developing a new EU Disability Strategy for 2010 to 2020.

The consultation covers several thematic areas covered by the strategy, including accessibility, independent living, education, employment and standards of living.

To take part in this consultation, please visit <http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=disabilitystrategy3>

Rights agency encouraged to raise awareness about multiple discrimination

EuroHealthNet took part in the stakeholder meeting held by the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) in Vienna, which focused on the FRA's project on Multiple and Intersectoral Discrimination in the area of health. Multiple and Intersectoral Discrimination, or MID, is defined as discrimination that takes place on several grounds that interact with each other in such a way that they are inseparable. Often people facing MID cannot resort to legal recourse, because they fall through the cracks of legislation that define discrimination on specific, narrow grounds.

Participants included the UK Equality and Human Rights Commission, EPHA, Amnesty International, the European Commission directorate-general for employment and the Race Equality Foundation. There was a general consensus that the FRA should focus on the issue of MID at large and provide specific examples of how it manifests in different groups, rather than focusing on specific groups from the outset. Raising awareness was seen as a priority, as was the need for better data on the issue.

The FRA welcomes written follow-up suggestions from all stakeholder group members. Please contact i.stegeman@eurohealthnet.eu if you are interested in this issue

EU funding boosts research into socio-economic sciences

The European Commission has allocated €70 million to 31 research projects in the field of socio-economic sciences and humanities, including research on the the impact of the service economy on growth and welfare, the social, cultural and political factors behind social inequality and the reconciliation of work and family life.

Additionally, the *WorkAble* project will look at how education can preserve the match between young people's supply of skills and competencies and changing labour-market needs in Europe.

It is hoped that the projects will enhance capability of the socio-economic sciences and humanities to contribute to the development of EU policies.

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/index.cfm?pg=newsalert&lq=en&year=2009&na=na-131009>

Work on alcohol abuse must focus on all ages

The Swedish National Institute of Public Health (FHI) has called for a greater focus on the problem of alcohol consumption among elderly EU citizens. The FHI says that this issue has until recently "fallen between the gaps of ageing research, on the one hand, and alcohol and drug research and policy, on the other," and hopes to reframe the subject as an important public health concern.

[meeting and conference on youth crime prevention](#) (Stockholm, Sweden)

10 - 12 December 2009: [High-Level Conference on the Financial Sustainability of Health Systems](#) (Prague)

10 - 11 December 2009: [Conference on Cohesion Policy and Territorial Development in Kiruna](#) (Sweden)

December 10 - 12 2009: [KBS meeting 2009: 'Episodic heavy drinking among adolescents'](#) (Nijmegen, The Netherlands)

December 15th 2009: [Seminar: Faith, Migration, Integration and Social Cohesion](#) (London, UK)

17 - 19 December 2009: [International Conference on Food Security and Environmental Sustainability](#) (Kharagpur, India)

2010

6 - 10 January 2010: [International Conference on Promotion Chronic Care](#) (Hong Kong)

10 - 12 February 2010: [International Conference: "Towards Better Work and Well-being"](#) (Helsinki, Finland)

24 - 26 February 2010: [5th WHO Ministerial Conference on Health and Environment - Protecting children's health in a changing environment](#) (Parma, Italy)

10 - 12 March 2010: [WHO/Europe: Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health](#) (Parma, Italy)

15 - 18 March 2010: [World of Health IT Conference & Exhibition](#) (Barcelona, Spain)

22-26 March 2010: [Week for EU Health Promotion and Health Equity](#) (Brussels)

6 - 7 April 2010: [Health 2.0 Europe](#) (Paris, France)

8 - 9 April 2010: [6th edition of the French Prevention Days](#) (Paris, France)

9 - 11 April 2010: [1st Latin American and Caribbean Conference on Global Health](#) (Cuernavaca, Mexico)

In this context, the FHI has produced a report, called "Alcohol consumption among elderly European Union citizens: health effects, consumption trends and related issues", which says that the absolute number of elderly people presenting with alcohol related problems is likely to rise as the European population ages. The report also highlights the gender differences surrounding alcohol consumption in this age group. Elderly men are over-represented in alcohol related hospitalisation and mortality statistics compared to elderly women.

<http://www.fhi.se/Documents/Aktuellt/Nyheter/Alcohol-Elderly-2009.pdf>

Preventing drug abuse has to go beyond just information, says report

Drug prevention programmes which take into account wider social issues are being seen as a more effective means of preventing drug abuse than interventions aimed at delivering information about drugs. These findings are presented in the latest annual report from the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA).

The report says that 2 years on, the EU-Dap study (www.eudap.net), involving 7 000 students aged 12–14 in seven European countries and evaluates a programme based on the comprehensive social influence approach, has been found to be effective in reducing frequent drunkenness and frequent use of cannabis. The programme combines training in life-skills with normative education and knowledge acquisition on substances.

<http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/publications/annual-report/2009>

Governments agree to confront risk of injuries from medical sharps

National governments across the EU have agreed to apply the Framework Agreement on prevention from sharp injuries in the hospital and healthcare sector, as signed on 17 July 2009 by HOSPEEM (European Hospital and Healthcare Employers' Association) and EPSU (European Federation of Public Services Unions).

The Agreement aims to protect workers at risk of injury from all medical 'sharps' (including needle-sticks) and to prevent the risk of injuries and infections caused by medical sharps. It is also expected to lead to new or updated policies covering risk assessment, risk prevention, training, information and awareness-raising. Promoting a safe and healthy working environment is one of the key goals of the EU Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs.

<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/09/st15/st15305.en09.pdf>

Experts advise WHO on pandemic vaccine strategies...

The Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) on Immunization, which advises WHO on policies and strategies for vaccines and immunization, has reviewed the current epidemiological situation of the pandemic worldwide and considered issues and options from a public health perspective.

SAGE recommended the use of a single dose of vaccine in adults and adolescents, beginning at the age of 10 years, provided such use is consistent with indications from regulatory authorities. Data on immunogenicity in children older than 6 months and younger than 10 years are limited and more studies are needed.

The experts also reviewed early results from the monitoring of people who have received pandemic vaccines and found no indication of unusual adverse reactions. SAGE recommended that any licensed vaccine can be used in pregnant women, provided no specific contraindication has been identified by the regulatory authority.

http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/notes/briefing_20091030/en/index.html

...and EU updates its H1N1 website

The EU's dedicated page on Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 has been given a new look, with easier access to the latest news from Member States and EU institutions, the most important

14 - 16 April 2010: [18th International Conference on Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services](#) (Manchester, UK)

5 - 7 May 2010: [EGEA VI: Social and Health Benefits of Balanced Diet: The role of fruits and Vegetables](#) (Brussels)

13 - 15 May 2010: [5th European Conference on Rare Diseases](#) (Krakow, Poland)

19 - 21 May 2010: [6th European Sustainable Cities & Towns Conference](#) (Dunkerque, France)

20 May 2010: [EU Public Health Forum](#) (Brussels)

19 - 23 May 2010: [Congress for the New Urbanism \(CNU\)](#) (Atlanta, USA)

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

June 28th - July 1st 2010: [9th Annual International Conference on Health Economics, Management & Policy](#)

11 - 15 July 2010: [International Congress on Obesity](#) (Stockholm)

11 - 15 July 2010: [IUHPE World Conference on Health Promotion: Health, Equity and Sustainable Development](#) (Geneva)

21 October 2010: [EU Health Policy Forum](#) (Brussels)

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

documents, press releases, videos, information and advices.

http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_threats/com/Influenza/h1n1_en.htm

Using odd tips to help young people quit

The European Commission has chosen a series of online animated videos called HELPERS as the new initiative in the 'HELP, for a life without tobacco' campaign to raise awareness about tobacco among young Europeans.

The series depicts 3 super-heroes who try to save smokers and non-smokers from the negative effects of tobacco, by giving them absurd tips and advice such as smoking inside a plastic bubble to prevent passive smoking.

<http://en.helpers-eu.com/#tab1Detail>

Perceptions of poverty and participation

Ahead of the 2010 European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, an EU survey (Eurobarometer) has revealed that nearly three in four European citizens feel that poverty in their country is widespread. Poverty itself is seen by many as having resources that are so limited that people cannot participate fully in society, not being able to afford the basic goods one needs to live, or having to depend on charity or public subsidies.

Unemployment, and wages and salaries which are not high enough to cope with the cost of living are seen as the most widely 'societal' explanations for poverty, while only 18% of Europeans believe that poverty is a result of poor health, long-term illness or disability.

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=4059&langId=en>

Europeans exposed to dangerous noise levels

The European Environment Agency (EEA) has launched the most comprehensive map of noise exposure to date, revealing the extent to which European citizens are exposed to excessive acoustic pollution. Prolonged exposure to even low levels of noise can trigger hypertension and disrupt sleep.

Lden is an indicator of the overall noise level during the day, evening and night, which is used to convey the annoyance caused by noise exposure. It is estimated that half of the population in urban areas with more than 250 000 inhabitants endure levels above 55 dB Lden (the lower EU benchmark for an average 24-hour period) as a result of ambient road noise. Just over 41 million Europeans are exposed to excessive noise from road traffic alone in the largest cities.

<http://www.eea.europa.eu/pressroom/newsreleases/eea-draws-the-first-map-of-europe2019s-noise-exposure>

National news

Scotland adds data to WHO European Health for All Database

NHS Scotland has produced a 2009 update to the Scotland and European Health for All (HfA) Database, which comprises Scottish data added to the WHO's European Health for All Database.

The database allows time trend and international comparisons for 600 health and health-related indicators, from 1970 to 2007 (where available) across the 53 Member States of the WHO European Region, plus averages such as the EU.

<http://www.euro.who.int/HFADB>

Community work helping disadvantaged people to better health

The National Health Service in England has produced the second report from its Communities for Health programme, aimed at helping some of the most disadvantaged communities in the country. The report, Unlocking the energy within communities to improve health, describes how community activities in more than 80 local authorities have encouraged behaviour change and

strengthened local partnership to tackle a wide range of key health priorities.

Actions range from local partners working together on community-focused schemes such as enhancing community allotments and improving the fitness of primary school children, to providing services for local ethnic minority communities, and volunteer schemes where neighbours look out for older people.

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Recentstories/DH_107095

Other international news

Acting on unnecessary risks can boost life expectancy

A report from the WHO has revealed that global life expectancy could be increased by nearly five years by addressing five factors affecting health: childhood underweight, unsafe sex, alcohol use, lack of safe water, sanitation and hygiene, and high blood pressure.

Other findings from the report include the fact that nine environmental and behavioural risks, together with seven infectious causes, are responsible for 45% of cancer deaths worldwide and that unhealthy and unsafe environments cause one in four child deaths worldwide. It is hoped that the report will highlight the combined effect of multiple risk factors and prompt action to reduce the risk factors responsible for many deaths and diseases.

http://www.who.int/entity/healthinfo/global_burden_disease/global_health_risks/en/index.html

Call for abstracts for EHMA annual conference 2010

The European Health Management Association (EHMA) has issued a call for proposals for papers that explore managing radical change in health with a particular focus on raising quality, improving efficiency and safeguarding equity.

In particular EHMA is hoping to tackle in more depth the theme "Managing Radical Change in Health: Quality, Efficiency, Equity" through both research papers presenting the findings from research and evaluation studies, and practice papers presenting the results of management projects and initiatives.

The call for abstracts can be downloaded [here](#).

European-level efforts essential for economic recovery, says report

More coordinated macroeconomic responses at European are required to deal with the effects of the financial crisis, according to an annual report by Eurofound, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions.

The agency's 2009 European Restructuring Monitor (ERM) Annual Report, 'Restructuring in recession', argues that there is clear role for the EU to coordinate national restructuring efforts in the longer term, particularly in terms of European-level measures to protect employment, such as the European Globalisation adjustment Fund.

The European Restructuring Monitor (ERM) Annual Report 2009 is available [here](#).

Towards better policies for immigrant children

The UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre has produced a report on the number, share and family circumstances of immigrant children in eight affluent nations: Australia, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The report presents the magnitude and diversity of national and social backgrounds, as well as living conditions and opportunities for migrant children in destination countries. This information can then be used to inform social policies that can address factors leading to deprivation and marginalization of immigrant children and to more effectively promote their development and social inclusion.

http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/ii_immig_families.pdf

Positive steps for better mental health

Mental Health Europe (MHE) has launched a new campaign, "*Mental Health and Social Inclusion: Making Steps!*" in response to findings that stigma and prejudice linked to mental health problems are still widespread. MHE says that current situation prevents people from being fully included in the community, as society frequently marginalises people facing mental distresses.

The campaign aims to shift the current focus of attention away from non-abilities, to a more positive approach in order to promote the social inclusion of people suffering from mental health problems through access to employment, education, quality-care and housing. The campaign was launched on the occasion of the World Mental Health Day 2009 (10 October), and is supported financially by the European Commission.

<http://www.mhe-sme.org/making-steps.html>

ECDC third report focuses on impact of vaccines in Europe

The third annual report on the epidemiology of 47 communicable diseases and two health issues across the EU and European Economic Area has been published. The result of a collective effort by 30 countries, it presents a comprehensive overview of the data from 2007 in standard tables and graphs, together with an analysis of the health threats monitored by ECDC during 2008.

Special attention is given this year to vaccine-preventable diseases, acknowledging the positive impact that vaccination has had on European public health, while highlighting the importance of maintaining vaccination coverage. This is a particular challenge in the case of measles, given the WHO goal for eradication of measles in Europe by 2010.

Please click [here](#) to access the full report.

Proper pensions are vital says older people's platform

AGE, the European Older People's Platform, has produced a statement on pensions reform in light of concerns about the potential consequences of the current financial and economic crisis on the long-term sustainability of their national pension systems.

AGE says that "substantial improvement" is needed to ensure pension adequacy, a decent level of minimum income for all pensioners, safeguards for workers' savings and pensioners' provisions and possibilities to extend working lives. The report stresses the importance of social protection as essential for social cohesion and adequate pensions to be necessary for the very large majority of the EU population.

http://www.age-platform.org/EN/IMG/pdf_AGE-pensions-UK.pdf

Reducing health risks in prisons

An international conference on prison health protection, organised by the WHO, brought together health experts from over 50 countries and produced an agreement on a set of recommendations to tackle the issue of communicable diseases in prisons.

The aim of the Madrid Recommendation is to ensure that, rather than making matters worse, prisons are a setting where health and health behaviour are improved and the risk of reoffending is reduced. Recommended measures include treatment programmes for infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and TB, guidelines on hygiene requirements and guaranteed through care for prisoners on entry to and after release from prison, in close collaboration with stakeholders.

<http://www.euro.who.int/prisons>

Study questions "model" Nordic health care systems

A new comparative study has been published, called "Nordic health care systems: recent reforms and current policy challenges", focuses on the "Nordic model" of health care. The study is concerned with the "demystification" of this model, which is often thought of as an ideal health care system which consistently strives for universalism and equity.

The study shows that the reality is considerably more complex than the idea of a "monolithic model" often viewed as the cornerstones of the Nordic social welfare state. While Nordic health

care systems do share important common features, such as tax-based funding, universal access, a high level of decentralisation, and publicly owned and operated hospitals, the study shows how healthcare systems in the four European Nordic countries have undergone a process of gradual change. Where they have mainly kept the goals and aspirations for their health system, each one of them has chosen their own path of reform, with different timing and approach. In particular in the area of health care services, principles of state monopoly and local political control have been questioned in terms of their ability to achieve the key goal of equity.

http://www.euro.who.int/observatory/Studies/20091021_4

EMHF calls for support of the Vienna Declaration to help improve men's health

The European Men's health Forum (EMHF) is asking people to sign the Vienna Declaration for the health of men and boys in Europe.

The declaration includes calls for the development of a better understanding of male attitudes to health, an investment in 'male sensitive' approaches to providing healthcare and work on health for boys and young men at schools and community settings.

http://www.emhf.org/index.cfm/item_id/305

Social Marketing schools online

Following the overwhelming success of the Bled Social Marketing Summer School held earlier this year, the National Social Marketing Centre (NSMC) has launched a new website www.socialmarketingsummerschools.org

The Social Marketing Summer Schools provide practical guidance on how social marketing can be applied to help senior managers and policy makers with responsibility for achieving behavioural objectives achieve their strategic goals and improve business performance.

www.socialmarketingsummerschools.org

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