

# EU Health Highlights

News about health in the EU from EuroHealthNet Brussels Office

February 2006, Issue # 2

## 1. Main Stories

- **DG SANCO publishes work programme for 2006**

The European Commission Directorate for Health (DG SANCO) has published its work programme and calls for proposals for projects for 2006. On the basis of the priorities of the current 2003-2008 Community action programme in the field of public health, DG SANCO has set priority areas for 2006 and defined new priorities within these areas:

1. health information
2. responding to health threats rapidly in a co-ordinated manner
3. health determinants

Priorities include work for children and to address inequalities, which EuroHealthNet prioritises and welcomes. Besides these work areas, DG SANCO encourages cooperation with other organisations such as WHO, OECD, ECDC( European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention), Eurostat , and encourages projects developing clear synergies with the 6<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme for Research, in particular for the area of scientific support to policies.

The total budget for the work programme 2006 is estimated at 55 million euro, and the indicative total amount for the call for proposals is estimated as 43 million euro. The co-financing rule remains 60-40% but a maximum of 80% funding could be envisaged where a project has a significant European added value. The deadline for submitting project proposals is 19 May 2006.

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph\\_programme/howtoapply/call\\_for\\_proposal\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_programme/howtoapply/call_for_proposal_en.htm)

- **European Parliament excludes health from the services directive**

The controversial directive to harmonise provision of certain services across EU borders was passed at its first reading in the European Parliament on 16 February. The directive aims to liberalise the provision of services between EU Member States, meaning that any entrepreneur from one country could offer his services in any other country within the EU.

This free movement of services had raised fears that workers from new Member States would provide cheaper services and thereby level down the so-called social model in Europe. Members of European Parliament found a compromise by deleting the 'country of origin principle' and excluding certain services from the scope of the proposed directive.

1. The replacement of the '*country of origin*' principle by the '*freedom to provide services*' principle (principle enshrined in the EC Treaty) means that service providers will have to abide by the law and social standards of the country where they deliver the service, thereby excluding fears of social dumping.
2. Certain services such as health and social services (among others) are excluded from the scope of the directive, which leaves it to member States to regulate the market (impose or remove protection barriers).

3. The adopted text prevents the Member States from erecting obstacles to the free movement of services but, at the same time stipulates grounds which would allow Member States to limit this freedom through national rules. These grounds are public policy, public security, environmental protection and public health.

Following the co-decision procedure, the Council as co-legislator will study the amended text. If all Parliament's amendments are acceptable to the Council, the legislation will be adopted in its modified form. If the Council rejects any of Parliament's amendments or adds any of its own, the text will return to Parliament for a second reading which is planned in August. There are hopes that the directive might be adopted by the end of 2006.

[http://www.europarl.eu.int/news/expert/infopress\\_page/056-5221-47-2-7-909-20060213IPR05194-16-02-2006--true/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.eu.int/news/expert/infopress_page/056-5221-47-2-7-909-20060213IPR05194-16-02-2006--true/default_en.htm)

- **Worries for health over the review of the 'Television without Frontiers Directive'**

The European Commission, DG Information Society and Media, has proposed to update the 1989 directive on 'Television without Frontier'.

The proposal aims to reduce the regulatory burden on Europe's providers of TV and TV-like services and to give more flexibility for financing audiovisual content by new forms of advertising and product placement (featuring a branded product in a programme in return for payment).

Although article 3 mentions that "*advertising shall not encourage behaviour prejudicial to health or to safety (...) and to the protection of the environment*" and "*audiovisual commercial communications must not cause moral or physical detriment to minors. Therefore they shall not directly exhort minors to buy a product or service*", this enhanced flexibility raises concerns on the impact of advertisements on people in general and on children in particular.

1. The proposed revised directive maintains the existing 12 minutes advertisement per hour ceiling but deletes the overall 3 hour per day ceiling. It also limits to one advertising block within any 35 minute period within films, news programmes and children's programmes.
2. Surreptitious<sup>1</sup> advertisement is strictly prohibited in 'children's' programmes' but no in-depth definition of 'surreptitious advertisement' and 'children's' programme' is provided.
3. Advertisement for unhealthy food targeting children is not prohibited.
4. Although 'Product placement' is currently illegal in most EU member states, the directive considers it as an alternative source of income for TV channels. The Commission wants to leave the choice to Member States whether to authorise product placement under certain obligations, but fails to restrict product placement of unhealthy food.
5. All forms of advertising and product placement for cigarettes and tobacco products are prohibited. As regard to alcohol, only

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<sup>1</sup> Obtained, done, or made by clandestine or stealthy means.

advertisements aimed at minors and/or encouraging immoderate consumption are prohibited. The promotion of medicinal products or treatments available only on prescription in the Member States is also forbidden.

6. Under this new legislation, a receiving country would not be able to restrict access to national TV screens for advertisement from another member state.

The proposed amended directive will be sent to the European Parliament and the Council under the co-decision procedure.

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/avpolicy/regul/com2005-646-final-en.pdf>

## **2. News from the European Commission**

- **Consultative meetings on Mental Health Green Paper**

Following publication of the EU Green Paper on Mental Health (October 2004), the three consultative working groups met for the first time on 16-17 January in Luxembourg. The meeting addressed the theme of 'prevention and promotion of mental health'. Member states, academic experts and civil society representative groups have been established.

The Platform consists of stakeholders from health, education, employment and other sectors. EuroHealthNet provides Clive Needle as the Chair while Kasia Jurczak is Rapporteur. The Platform members will have three meetings to provide common responses to the questions raised in the Green paper. The two upcoming meetings will take place on 16-17 March in Vienna on the theme of 'social inclusion and fundamental rights in mental health' and on 18-19 May in Luxemburg on the theme of 'information, data and knowledge in mental health'.

EuroHealthNet is also organising an informal consultation meeting together with the EU Social Platform on the 8th of March 2006 in Brussels. The objective is to enable a wider range of interested EU umbrella organisations to contribute their views on mental health in relation to social inclusion and human rights. The input will be fed into the consultation.

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph\\_determinants/life\\_style/mental/ev\\_20060116\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_determinants/life_style/mental/ev_20060116_en.htm)  
More details on 8<sup>th</sup> March meeting can be found on EuroHealthNet [website](#)

- **Commission launches multimedia initiative on health issues**

The Commission is co-funding the creation of a European databank of TV reports and documentaries on health and medicine to disseminate health information to citizens.

'*Health in Europe*' is managed by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), the members of which will produce the content, exchange the databank items free of rights between the participating organisations and broadcast the reports in all

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European languages. The EBU members will also use their own radio, web and print media to promote the content.

<http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/113&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

You can access the website of 'health in Europe' and have an overview of the themes of the documentaries broadcasted at the following link:

<http://preview.healthineurope.tv/index.htm>

- **DG Research explores philanthropic funding for research**



In 2002, the European Union decided that investment in research should increase in Europe from 2 to 3% as part of the Lisbon

strategy to become "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world" by 2010. At present, less than 2% of Europe's wealth (GDP) is devoted to research, which compares badly with 2.5% in the USA and more than 3% in Japan.

As progress towards that goal remains slow, DG Research commissioned an expert group to draft a report on how philanthropy – as provided by foundations, trusts and charities, for example – can play an important role in raising funds for research. The experts issued a series of recommendations to create incentives and eliminate obstacles which affect foundations, their donors and their beneficiaries in the area of research.

For more information of Investing in European research – reaching 3%  
<http://europa.eu.int/invest-in-research/>

To see the report by the expert group:  
<http://europa.eu.int/invest-in-research/policy08.htm>

- **EC promotes the active inclusion of people with disabilities**

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities has published a communication on promoting the 'active inclusion' of people with disabilities in the EU.

The Communication's overall aim is to improve the 'active inclusion' of disabled people through a range of initiatives and measures, including raising disability awareness among small and medium sized companies, reviewing how the European Social Fund can help support employment, training and equal opportunities for disabled people and promoting the concept of independent living for disabled people.

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment\\_social/emplweb/news/news\\_en.cfm?id=96](http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/emplweb/news/news_en.cfm?id=96)

- **EC report on 'The impact of ageing on public expenditure'**

The Commission report entitled "*The impact of ageing on public expenditure: projections for the EU25 Member States on pensions, health care, long-term care, education and unemployment transfers (2004-2050)*" provides projections, prepared by the European Commission (Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs) and the EPC's Working Group on Ageing Populations on the basis of commonly agreed assumptions and describe in detail the potential economic impact and the timing and scale of budgetary changes that could result from ageing populations.

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/economy\\_finance/publications/european\\_economy/2006/eespecialreport0106\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2006/eespecialreport0106_en.htm)

### **3. News from the European Parliament**

- **Sunshine excluded from the 'optical radiation' directive**

The European Parliament has voted to exclude natural sun radiation from the scope of the optical radiation directive.

The directive proposed to protect workers from optical radiation, including sun radiation, thereby protecting them from skin cancer. However it would have obliged workers to wear a tee-shirt while working outside in the sun.

The exclusion of natural radiation from the directive leaves it to each member state to decide whether employers should protect their staff from the sun.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4220844.stm>

- **Votes against violence**

The European Parliament has recently adopted a text urging for action to fight violence against women.

The text proposes a set of measures to raise awareness and overcome this problem. MEPs urged Member States to "recognise marital sexual violence as a crime and make rape within marriage a criminal offence" and "to ensure victims' right to safe access to justice." They also called on the Commission to devise a comprehensive strategic approach at EU level in order to put an end to the practice of female genital mutilation in the European Union.

[http://www.europarl.eu.int/news/expert/infopress\\_page/014-4909-33-2-5-902-20060131IPR04892-02-02-2006-2006--true/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.eu.int/news/expert/infopress_page/014-4909-33-2-5-902-20060131IPR04892-02-02-2006-2006--true/default_en.htm)

- **Tackling global health issues**

The GUE/NGL (European United Left/Nordic Green Left) group of the European parliament has organized a hearing on 'neglected diseases' to raise awareness on this global health issue at EU level.

"Neglected diseases" are tropical/developing countries diseases which can be fatal, and for which there is insufficient research and development of new drugs since this specific market is not profitable.

Diseases such Chagas Disease in South America, Leshmaniasis in Africa, India, South America, sleeping disease...etc affect millions of people each year.

A few initiatives have been undertaken by [Médecins sans Frontières](#), [Institut Pasteur](#), a few developing countries' governments and [DNDI](#) (Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative). These various initiatives call for a mention to neglected disease in the seventh Framework programme for research and stress the need for public leadership in funding the research for these specific diseases.

Briefing of the hearing is available on our EuroHealthNet Website [closed section](#).

#### **4. Events and Publications**

- **What's new on EuroHealthNet website ?**

- [‘How the EU decides’](#) an introduction to the EU decisional process
- [‘Capacity Building in the new Member States’](#), new page on the project led by the Latvian Health Promotion State Agency
- Policy page on [mental health](#)
- [New publications](#) on health and social inclusion by EuroHealthNet/NHS health Scotland
- Briefing on the “neglected diseases” debate on the [closed section](#).

- **Study on what older people eat**

A survey entitled EPIC-Elderly study, part of the well known European EPIC programme of diet research coordinated from Athens University and conducted in eight European countries, aims to determine how older people – divided into two groups (65-74 and over 75) – choose, acquire and store their food, how they prepare their meals and what significance they attach to them, and also how they judge community services in this field.

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/rtdinfo/47/article\\_3434\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/rtdinfo/47/article_3434_en.html)

- **New publication ‘Global Public Health’, An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice**

*‘Global Public Health’* is a peer-reviewed journal that engages with key public health issues that have come to the fore at global level.

Directed and supported by a leading international board of experts, the journal is broad-based and wide-ranging, including work that draws on the environmental health sciences; epidemiology; health policy and management; and the social sciences as applied to public health and medicine.

<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/journal.asp?issn=1744-1692&linktype=rates>

- **What European citizens fear most for their health**

The Euro barometer survey results show that environmental pollution (61%) and car accidents (51%) are the health concerns that the largest proportion of the population considers likely to affect them personally. Forty-nine percent are afraid of a serious illness and 42% think that their health could be damaged by the food they eat or by other consumer goods.

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/resources/special-eurobarometer\\_riskissues20060206\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/food/resources/special-eurobarometer_riskissues20060206_en.pdf)

- **Manual on getting funds to combat poverty**



The European Anti-Poverty Network has published a manual on how to obtain funds to fight poverty. The manual deals with how non-governmental organisations can best influence the management of structural funds so that they will be effectively used for the reduction and elimination of poverty and social exclusion in Europe. It looks at the way in which structural funds are designed, planned, publicised, delivered, monitored and evaluated.

[http://www.eapn.org/press/press\\_releases/press\\_release\\_050206.htm](http://www.eapn.org/press/press_releases/press_release_050206.htm)

- **1<sup>st</sup> anniversary of Kyoto Protocol effect**

The Kyoto protocol was signed by 34 industrialised countries in Kyoto in 1997 and came into force on 16 February 2005. The signatories have committed to limit their green house gas emissions by 2012 to come back to a level inferior by 5.2% to the level of 1990. The Kyoto Protocol should lead to the creation of an international exchange market of green house gas emission permits by 2008.

By early 2005, the European Union had already set up an exchange market of green house emission permits between the EU Member States. Exchange institutions (such as Powernext-carbon set up in June 2005 to facilitate exchange of carbon emissions quotas), already witness considerable increases of the volume of transactions.

Source: *Le Monde*, France

<http://www.lemonde.fr/web/article/0,1-0@2-3228,36-742246@51-690189,0.html> ( in French)

- **Award for innovative urban transport system**

The [NICHES consortium](#), in which the Council of European Regions and Municipalities (CEMR) participates, is organising the OSMOSE Awards for urban transport innovation. Local authorities who have introduced innovative, sustainable and effective measures in order to meet urban transport challenges are eligible for the competition.

The award is open to European local and regional authorities and their local partners. The deadline for submission is 31 May 2006.

<http://www.osmose-os.org/>

## **5. News from Member States / Organisations**



- **Sweden: Web encyclopaedia on child and adolescent health**

A web-based encyclopaedia on child and adolescent public health is now available at the Swedish National Institute of Public Health's website. The encyclopaedia contains information on health-promoting measures aimed at children and young people.

[http://www.fhi.se/templates/Page\\_6898.aspx](http://www.fhi.se/templates/Page_6898.aspx)

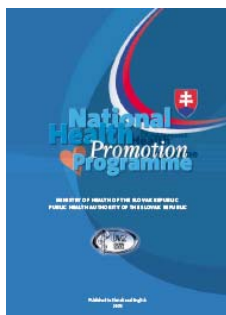
- **Malta: tobacco bill-board removed**

Tobacco advertisements on bill-board or bus shelters are being removed in Malta according to a regulation passed in December 2005.

Under that new regulation 'Tobacco, smoking control act', advertising material on shop canopies, sunshades, umbrellas and any other medium intended for communication outside of shops, bars, other establishments or open places should be removed by April 15.

Source: [Ministry of Health of Malta](#)

- **Slovakia updates its National Health Promotion Programme**



Slovakia has a National Health Promotion Program since 1995 and is updating it for the third time.

The aim of these changes is to create conditions which ensure good health for the entire population.

The primary objective of the updated National Health Promotion Programme is to initiate partnership of particular components of society to provide support for and improvement of public health in order to achieve continuous improvement in the public health status.

Source: [Public Health Authority of the Slovak Republic](#)

For the text in English of the updated National Health Promotion Programme:  
[http://www.uvzsr.sk/nppz/UVZ\\_SR\\_angl.pdf](http://www.uvzsr.sk/nppz/UVZ_SR_angl.pdf)

- **UK: White paper on health and social care system**

The document entitled '*Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services*' claims to provide new directions for the whole health and social care system in the UK. It confirms the vision set out in the Department of Health Green Paper 'Independence, Well-being and Choice'.

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/12/74/59/04127459.pdf>

- **UK: smoking ban in public places for 2007**



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The UK Parliament has recently approved legislation to ban smoking from most public places, including bars and restaurants, from July 2007. Sweden, Spain, Belgium, Malta, Italy, Norway and Ireland have already imposed similar or partial smoking bans.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/smoking/Story/0,,1709946,00.html>

## 6. Calendar of international events

<b>20-21.02.2006</b>	<b>Brussels</b> , Official launch of the European year of worker's mobility <a href="http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/workersmobility_2006/news_launch_en.htm">http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/workersmobility_2006/news_launch_en.htm</a>
<b>22.02.2006</b>	<b>Luxembourg</b> , DG Sanco Information Day <a href="http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_programme/howtoapply/infoday_2006/info_day_en.htm">http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_programme/howtoapply/infoday_2006/info_day_en.htm</a>
<b>6.03.2006</b> <i>New!</i>	<b>Brussels</b> , joint conference on the Lisbon Strategy jointly organized by the Social Platform, ETUC and European Environmental Bureau <a href="http://www.eeb.org/Index.htm">http://www.eeb.org/Index.htm</a>
<b>13-18.03.2006</b>	<b>Liege</b> , International Health Film festival 'Image Santé' <a href="http://www.imagesante.org">http://www.imagesante.org</a>
<b>16-17.03.2006</b>	<b>Vienna</b> , 'The stigmatization and Discrimination of Persons with a Mental Illness' Austrian presidency event <a href="http://www.eu2006.at/en/Meetings_Calendar/Dates/March/16_03Stigma.html">http://www.eu2006.at/en/Meetings_Calendar/Dates/March/16_03Stigma.html</a>
<b>29-30.03.2006</b> <i>New !</i>	<b>Paris</b> , INPES days for Prevention <a href="http://www.inpes.sante.fr">http://www.inpes.sante.fr</a>
<b>29-31.03.2006</b> <i>New!</i>	<b>Chantilly</b> , World Health Care Congress <a href="http://www.worldcongress.com/events/NW600/?confCode=NW600">http://www.worldcongress.com/events/NW600/?confCode=NW600</a>
<b>7.04.2006</b>	<b>World Health Day</b> , 'Working together for Health' <a href="http://www.who.int/world-health-day/2006/en/index.html">http://www.who.int/world-health-day/2006/en/index.html</a>
<b>25-27.04.2006</b>	<b>Brussels</b> , EuroHealthNet General Assembly
<b>25-27.04.2006</b>	<b>Vienna</b> , Informal meeting of Health Ministers Austrian presidency event
<b>10-12.05.2006</b>	<b>Malaga</b> , 'e-health in the Europe of Regions' conference, Austrian presidency event <a href="http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_information/documents/ev_20060510_en.pdf">http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_information/documents/ev_20060510_en.pdf</a>
<b>22-27.05.2006</b>	<b>Geneva</b> , WHO General Assembly <a href="http://www.who.int/en/">http://www.who.int/en/</a>

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<b>2.06.2006</b>	<b>Luxembourg</b> , Health Council
<b>15-17.06.2005</b>	<b>Ejsberg</b> , 5 <sup>th</sup> Nordic Health Promotion Research Conference <a href="http://www.5nhprc.sdu.dk/">http://www.5nhprc.sdu.dk/</a>
<b>19-21.06.2006</b>	<b>Vienna</b> , 14 <sup>th</sup> European Social Services Conference <a href="http://www.socialeurope.com/pdfs/Vienna/en_possible_works_hop_themes.doc">http://www.socialeurope.com/pdfs/Vienna/en_possible_works_hop_themes.doc</a>
<b>26-28.06.2006</b>	<b>Vienna</b> , European Conference on Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion <a href="http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_determinants/environment/IPD/documents/ev_20060625_en.pdf">http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_determinants/environment/IPD/documents/ev_20060625_en.pdf</a>
<b>28-30.06.2006</b>	<b>Budapest</b> , European Health Management Association annual conference <a href="http://www.ehma.org">http://www.ehma.org</a>
<b>4-8.10.2006</b>	<b>Gastein</b> , European Health Forum <a href="http://www.ehfg.org">http://www.ehfg.org</a>
<b>10.10.2006</b>	<b>World Mental Health Day</b> ‘ Building Awareness – reducing Risk: Mental Illness and Suicide’ <a href="http://www.wfmh.org/wmhd/abou.html">http://www.wfmh.org/wmhd/abou.html</a>
<b>18-21.10.2006</b>	<b>Budapest</b> , 7 <sup>th</sup> IUHPE conference ‘Globalisation and Equity, Inequalities in Health’ <a href="http://www.Equityinhealth2006.hu">http://www.Equityinhealth2006.hu</a>
<b>15-17.11.2006</b> <b>New !</b>	<b>Istanbul</b> , WHO Ministerial conference on counteracting obesity <a href="http://www.euro.who.int/nutrition/Obesity/20051123_1">http://www.euro.who.int/nutrition/Obesity/20051123_1</a>
<b>16-18.11.2006</b>	<b>Montreux</b> , EUPHA 2006 annual conference <a href="http://www.eupha.org/html/menu3_3.html">http://www.eupha.org/html/menu3_3.html</a>

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**Would you like to inform other members about new publications or events in your organisation or country? Please send contributions to [l.coulet@eurohealthnet.org](mailto:l.coulet@eurohealthnet.org)**

**Please see Events Calendar on [www.eurohealthnet.org](http://www.eurohealthnet.org) (under main menu item ‘News’) for upcoming events**

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