

**Flash Report**  
**Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health**  
**Workshop on Communication and Information**  
**25 January 2012**



**Conclusions of the Chair**

On 25 January 2012, the EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health held a Communication and Information Workshop aimed at improving the communication process in the Platform.

The workshop focused on external communication with stakeholders and the general public, as well as the internal communication among members.

**Morning session**

The morning session was dedicated to the external communication of the Platform. The European Commission gave an overview of the state of play of communication in the Platform with special attention to the outcomes of the Platform Midterm Evaluation Report, the current webpages dedicated to the European Commission's activities on nutrition and physical activity, including a separate webpage on the Platform initiatives ([http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition\\_physical\\_activity/policy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/nutrition_physical_activity/policy/index_en.htm)).

Two other communication tools were also presented: the Health-EU Portal and the Health-EU Newsletter ([http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/newsletter\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/newsletter_en.htm)).

The special guest of the workshop - Mr. Micky Denehy (Founding Principal of the International School of Advertising and Communication of the European Association of Communication Agencies) - gave an overview of the challenges related to modern communication. Mr Denehy underlined that in order to foster communication encouraging change there is a need to:

- help people to identify with the situation;
- make communication 'real' to help people identify;
- use the power of storytelling to help them to identify with the situation;
- use powerful emotions that would lead to action.

Participants considered it appropriate to launch a campaign on the EU comprehensive strategy.

Regarding the Europa webpages, participants underlined that they could be more user-friendly. Finding relevant information can be troublesome, e.g. accessing the database with the commitments.

The discussion touched upon issues such as the recognized need for more communication about the Platform activities and the need to avoid potential conflicts of interest. Participants agreed there is more space for communicating on the Platform process centrally, i.e. from the European Commission.

**Afternoon session**

The afternoon session focused on internal communication in the Platform.

Two topics were discussed: the current extranet tool CIRCA and the possibility of using social media as means of communication among members.

A representative of the Directorate-General for Informatics introduced the new version of the extranet (CIRCA BC) which will offer more possibilities for interaction between users, as well as more intuitive information sharing.

During the debate, a majority of participants stated that, despite their interest in the social media, they prefer to use the extranet tool.

The Chair of the EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health, concluded that the workshop participants had reached consensus on the necessity to:

- enhance communication about the Platform process;
- improve the Europa website, including development of a specific webpage for the Platform that can serve as a communicating tool for the members of the Platform;
- elaborate a toolkit with e.g. factsheets, Power Point presentation and other useful material for Platform members and new Platform members;

- continue the use of CIRCA (and later CIRCA BC), including the planning tools such as calendar of events.

The Chair also underlined the need to pay particular attention to avoid conflicts of interests when the Platform promotes substance of the commitments. In this respect, Platform members suggested the possibility of "unbranded" communication.