



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
HEALTH AND CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Public Health  
Health information

Luxembourg, 7 July 2014  
SANCO.C.2

## **EXPERT GROUP ON HEALTH INFORMATION (EGHI) MEETING**

**LUXEMBOURG 20-21 MAY 2014**

### ***SUMMARY REPORT***

#### **1. WELCOME AND ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA**

The Chair of the meeting Stefan Schreck, Head of Unit Health Information of the Directorate-General for Health and Consumers (DG SANCO) of the European Commission, welcomed the participants, with a particularly welcome the newly nominated delegates from Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland and Lithuania.

The Chair informed the participants that presentations and documents will be made available in CIRCABC. The minutes, list of participants and the presentations, with the agreement of authors, will in addition be made publicly available on the SANCO website. A document regarding data and privacy protection had also been distributed before the meeting and the participants were requested to contact the Commission in case of objection to publishing their names in the participants list.

The amended agenda was adopted after that the participants were informed that there would not be a separate presentation of the OECD/Eurostat/WHO joint questionnaires (Joint Health Accounts Questionnaire and Joint Questionnaire on Non-Monetary Health Care Statistics) but the most recent developments will be presented in updates from Eurostat and OECD.

#### **2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The summary reports for the meetings that were held 22 and 23 January were adopted. The final versions will be made available on SANCO web site together with the list of participants.

#### **3. DG ECFIN'S CONTRIBUTION FOR ASSESSING FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGES IN HEALTH CARE AND LONG-TERM CARE (DG ECFIN)**

DG ECFIN, Christoph Schwierz, gave a presentation on the horizontal Thematic Assessment Frameworks (TAF) for structural-fiscal reforms in the fields of health care and long-term care. The TAF is an analytical tool with the view to identify the main structural challenges, giving guidance to other Commission services and within the European semester.

#### **4. THE THIRD EU HEALTH PROGRAMME 2014-2020 (DG SANCO)**

Irene Athanassoudis, DG SANCO Unit Programme management and diseases, presented the third EU Health programme 2014-2020, which was adopted in March 2014. The presentation outlined challenges and focused on the main objectives which all included Health information and knowledge system (as it no longer exists as a separate strand). The implementation of the Programme is made by establishing Annual Work Programmes (adoption of the AWP 2014 in May) on the basis of which calls for proposals and call for tenders are organised every year. The Health Programme Committee establishes the Annual Work Plans. Each member state has a National focal point for the promotion of the Programme. The Consumers Health and Food Executive Agency (Chafea) carries out the Programme in close cooperation with SANCO.

#### **5. UPDATE ABOUT EU FUNDED PROJECTS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THIRD EU HEALTH PROGRAMME (CHAFEA)**

The last presentation of the first (half day) was given by Guy Dargent from the Consumer Health and Food Executive Agency (Chafea – the successor of EAHC). Relevant information on novelties for the Third Health Programme were given; i.e. how the new IT tool will facilitate procedures in grant preparation, reporting and information exchange. There will no longer be grants available for conferences, and the procedures for Joint Actions (JA) have changed considerably. At the end of the presentation an indicative timeline for JA was outlined.

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

#### **6. UP-DATES ON ON-GOING AND PLANNED HEALTH INFORMATION WORK BY EU MEMBER STATES, EEA, CANDIDATE COUNTRIES**

EGHI members reported orally on relevant work in their countries. Some had sent their contributions before the meeting and all were invited to send written input to the EGHI secretariat after the meeting. Web links of activities, that might be interesting for other countries, are welcomed in these reports. The Country reports document is regularly updated and made available in CIRCABC.

#### **7. CROSS-BORDER PATIENT REGISTRIES iNiTiative (PARENT) JOINT ACTION (NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC HEALTH, REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA)**

The Joint Action Cross-border Patient Registries iNiTiative (JA PARENT) started in May 2012 and will finish in May 2015. Matic Meglič, National Institute of Public Health, Republic of Slovenia, presented JA PARENT overall objective; to support the EU Member States in developing comparable and interoperable patient registries, focusing on clinical type registries in fields of identified importance (e.g. chronic diseases, medical technology). He pointed out that the results of the JA (guidelines on interoperable patient registries, supporting IT tools) will be suitable for direct reuse in a number of upcoming activities (preparatory activities for HI ERIC, JRC RD platform, etc.).

PARENT: <http://www.patientregistries.eu/>

#### **8. EUROPEAN CANCER INFORMATION SYSTEM – ACTIVITIES OF THE JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE – INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND CONSUMER PROTECTION (DG JRC)**

The European Cancer Information System and activities of the Joint Research Centre, Institute for Health and Consumer protection (JRC-IHCP), was presented by Jerica Zupan van Eijk. The Secretariat of the European Network of Cancer registries (ENCR) has been transferred from the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) to JRC, Ispra site, and is fully operational there since August 2013. On the basis of an administrative agreement with DG SANCO, JRC is further progressing the setting-up of a European Cancer Information System (ECIS). This work is being undertaken on the background of the Commission Communication on European Partnership on Action Against Cancer of 2009 which main aim is the successful reduction of the burden of cancer in Europe. Measures to implement this goal depend on accurate and comparable European cancer data (incidence-prevalence-survival-mortality). On this basis, JRC has set further priorities as follows: Providing an up-to-date mapping of the European cancer registries, their individual registration processes and needs; Becoming a reliable and sustainable data hub for epidemiological research in the cancer data domain; To bring all stakeholders and expert groups together to tackle priority issues through training programmes, conferences, workshops; Ensure alignment with other EU initiatives and other DGs of the European Commission (SANCO, EUROSTAT, RTD).

JRC: [http://ihcp.jrc.ec.europa.eu/our\\_activities/public-health/cancer\\_policy\\_support](http://ihcp.jrc.ec.europa.eu/our_activities/public-health/cancer_policy_support)

ENCR: <http://www.encre.eu/>

#### **9. INSPIRE DIRECTIVE AND OTHER HEALTH INFORMATION RELATED ACTIVITIES OF THE JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE - INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY (DG JRC)**

The Joint Research Centre, Institute for Environment and Sustainability (JRC-IES), Maria Vanda Nunes de Lima, presented the Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community - INSPIRE - Directive and other health information related activities in JRC-IES.

Information was also given on the INSPIRE conference to take place in Aalborg in June and its Workshop "INSPIRE in the health and safety domain" to which EGHI members will be invited.

#### **10. UPDATES FROM DG EMPL (KASIA JURCZAK, DG EMPL)**

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL) Kasia Jurczak, presented the latest developments and review of the Joint Assessment Framework for Health (JAF Health), the work done in relation to the European semester 2014, the Peer Review on Health System Performance Assessment (HSPA) and the Joint project with OECD on health system efficiency and health system performance assessment. The Peer Review on Health System Performance Assessment (HSPA) meeting, hosted by Belgium, was held 19-20 May and the meeting report will as soon as it is available be sent to EGHI member.

Social Protection Committee, JAF Health:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=758&langId=en>

Public consultation on the Europe 2020 Strategy: [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/public-consultation/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/public-consultation/index_en.htm)

#### **11. UPDATES FROM EUROSTAT**

Hartmut Buchow and Matthias Fritz, Eurostat, presented the public health statistical activities Jan-May 2014 including previous and current work on web site/database and

indicators, e.g. EU-SILC 3-yearly health module, EHIS and HLY, as well as information on disability statistics and causes of death statistics. Analysis work on diagnosis-specific morbidity is on-going.

Matthias Fritz also gave information on the European Union Open Data Portal, hosted by Publication office and DG Connect; with 80% of its data are from Eurostat.

Web link: <https://open-data.europa.eu/en/data/>

## **12. UPDATES FROM OECD**

Gaetan Lafortune, OECD Health division, gave information on latest developments and future work in health and health information. In the area of Economics of prevention, OECD work on obesity and alcohol was mentioned including relevant publications in the pipeline. Concerning the Health Workforce project (in collaboration with SANCO and WHO) skills mismatch, policies on education/training capacity and health workforce migration trends, work is in progress and results will be available end 2014/beginning 2015. The publication of the OECD Reviews of Health Care Quality aims to highlight and support policies to improve quality in health care. The publication 'Health at Glance 2014' (European edition), in collaboration with SANCO, will be published in Nov/Dec 2014, it will contain up to 35 countries and the number of ECHI's is extended.

## **13. UPDATES FROM WHO**

Ivo Rakovac, WHO/Euro, provided an overview of WHO/Euro health information issues since the last EGHI meeting. Among the areas covered were the Health 2020 indicators adopted at the Regional Committee in September 2013; the expansion of partners to the health information initiative launched with RIVM in 2012 which may serve as vehicle for an integrated health information system for Europe; the WHO/RIVM autumn school of health which was held in Turkey in October 2013; the work of the expert group to provide a support tool for Member States to develop national health information strategies for the European region; the new health information web-portal; upcoming WHO/Euro publications on health information; and a preview of WHO/Euro health information and evidence for policy activities for 2014/15.

## **14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Although that there had not been any trilateral meeting between EC, OECD and WHO; there has been an agreement on the finalisation of Roadmap on health information between EC and WHO and that the final wording is under discussion. The Chair added that there is currently a dialogue on a potential minimum set of common indicators at the European level.

The Chair reminded that, as it was informed in the Flash letter, there will be a written survey before the next EGHI meeting in order to explore suggestions and ideas on the future role and mandate of the EGHI. From SANCO perspective this is a result of two key developments, namely the adoption of the third EU Health programme and the potential setting up of a health information ERIC which may influence the future role of EGHI. The outcome of the survey will be taken into consideration in the preparation of a Commission decision comprising the setting up of a Commission expert group on health information. The starting point, as mainly confirmed by initial thoughts of those participants that shared their views, is that

- EGHI is the central expert group on health data in DG SANCO and it is central platform for discussing policy on health information.
- EGHI should be the central platform for discussions and exchange of information with participating countries and with Commission services on health information.
- EGHI is the central EU platform for discussions and exchange of information with international organizations on health information. As the only platform of its kind it is used in the attempt to avoid duplication of activities and for further harmonization of the core set of health indicators identified by each organization separately.
- EGHI should be the key advisory structure for any changes (in definitions, data collection methods, etc.) in European Core health Indicators (ECHI).
- The nominated representatives of EGHI should also advise the health information ERIC in the future. While the role of EGHI in the ERIC preparation phase should be the supervision of intermediate projects leading to the establishment of the ERIC.

The next EGHI meeting has not yet been scheduled.