



**DIET, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH -
A EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR ACTION
25 SEPTEMBER 2014
10.00 – 17.00**

CHAIR: Mr Philippe Roux

FINAL MINUTES

1. INTRODUCTION

The meeting was opened by **Philippe Roux** who welcomed the participants and introduced the agenda, which focused on two main topics: the **draft Annual Monitoring Report** and the commitments in the field of **composition of foods (reformulation), availability of healthy food options and portion sizes**.

The agenda was adopted without comments. The draft minutes of the previous Platform meeting were adopted with the integration of the comments by FoodDrinkEurope and EuropeanHealthNetwork.

2. WHAT IS NEW, Jan Wollgast, Joint Research Centre

Mr Jan Wollgast provided an overview of recent publications and policy developments in the area of nutrition and physical activity. This included the brief overview of the new Commission, which will start to work on 1 November, and two JRC reports on 'Mapping of National School Food Policies' and 'The Role of Nutrition in Active and Healthy Ageing'.

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/default/files/lbna26651enn.pdf>

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3. POLICY DISCUSSION ON REFORMULATION

3.1 FOOD TAX AND REFORMULATION, Eugenio Stoppani, DG ENTER

Mr Eugenio Stoppani presented a recent study by DG Enterprise on food taxes and their impact on competitiveness of the agri-food sector. Although the primary focus of the study was on competitiveness, the study identified two key influences of tax on food reformulation, through the design of the tax (a specific tax is likely to impact more on product reformulation than an ad valorem tax) and the nature of the product it targets (reformulation differs from each category of products and is not always possible).

The Chair noted that the parallel between the issues examined by this study and the discussions within the Platform, reflecting the need to reflect on a holistic approach.

The **European Public Health Alliance** inquired more about the link between food taxes and public health. The Chair responded that further research could be done via Horizon 2020 as the Health Programme is not suited for this.

3.2 GENERAL OVERVIEW, Stephanie Bodenbach, DG SANCO

Ms Stephanie Bodenbach provided an overview of the policy of the Commission in the area of food reformulation. The Strategy for Europe on Nutrition, Overweight and Obesity-related Health Issues includes priorities on food reformulation, EU Framework for National Salt Initiatives, and the EU Framework for National Initiatives on Selected Nutrients. An update was given on the work being done by the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity on selected nutrients and their priorities, e.g. school meals and healthy options.

The Chair stressed that the overview showing Member States' priorities was a useful tool for the Platform members to identify areas of activities for which there is interest in the Member States. **FoodDrinkEurope** pointed at the many FP7 research projects already carried out that were looking into the technical challenges of reformulation which could be worth presenting.

3.3 TERIFIQ, FP7 PROJECT, Christian Salles, French National Institute for Agricultural Research

Prof. Salles, presented the FP7 funded project Terifiq, which tried out technological approaches to reducing the sodium-fat and fat-sugar content of food products, while ensuring the same nutritional and sensorial qualities of the products and their safety and affordability, (for consumers and industry).

To the question by **EuroHealthNet** on how the food will be marketed, **Prof. Salles** responded that the marketing of the reformulated products was not addressed by the project.

The Chair underlined the importance of cooperation with research and the interest of reporting results of research projects in the Platform meetings. In addition, he suggested that today's presentation would be followed by regular updates on the progress of the Terifiq project.

4. ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2014, John Griffiths, IBF

Mr John Griffiths provided an overview on the revised draft Annual Monitoring Report 2014, covering the Platform members' activities of 2013. A total of 59 comments were received and almost of all of them have been integrated; where this was not the case an explanation was provided and the concerned Platform member was contacted individually.

At the meeting the Plenary adopted the revised draft report. The Commission will publish the final version on the DG SANCO webpage.

5. STATE OF PLAY ON COMMITMENTS, Liam Durack, DG SANCO

An overview of the state of play on commitments was provided by **Mr Liam Durack**. There are 279 commitments in the database of which 121 are active and 158 are non-active. **11** new commitments have come in this year, among which 2 joint commitments.

The continuous need to raise the quality of the Platform was discussed, especially in areas that can support the implementation of the Action Plan on Childhood Obesity or that were identified as priority by the Evaluation Report of 2013 (children, physical activity and low socio-economic groups).

The Chair reminded all participants of the deadline of **30 November 2014** for submitting new commitments and that any new commitment submitted is relevant to the current year and a monitoring report should be submitted by **31 January 2015**.

6.1 OVERVIEW OF COMMITMENTS IN THE FIELD OF REFORMULATION, John Griffiths, IBF

Mr John Griffiths gave an overview of the commitments in the field of composition of foods (reformulation), availability of healthy food options and portion sizes.

Currently there are 31 commitments in this field, of which 19 are active commitments, and 1 is a new commitment. All but one of the 19 active commitments are from for-profit organisations, 63% from FoodDrinkEurope or its members. The commitments have a large geographical spread.

Over the last three years the number of active commitments in this field of activity has remained stable. Platform members should give consideration to develop further new actions on reformulation, healthy options and portion sizes.

It was shown that improvements in outcome reporting are highly desirable. Outcome measures as reported across the 19 commitments provide some helpful but incomplete information (for instance, there is not enough data on how many adults and children are reached by the commitments and there is limited reporting on the overall reductions in salt, sugar, fats, etc.).

6.2 ACTIVE COMMITMENTS

6.2.1 PRODUCT REFORMULATION AND INNOVATIONS, Dr Angelika de Bree, Unilever

Dr Angelika de Bree presented the nutrition strategy of Unilever and its efforts in product reformulation as a global approach for all products in its portfolio. She presented the commitment 'A long-standing effort to make our products healthier' that sets targets for the improvement until 2020 of their portfolio levels of sugar, calories, salt, saturated and trans fats.

In answering a question by the **European Federation of the Association of Dietitians**, Dr De Bree said that Unilever knew how much of a reduction in calories per head did this effort represent.

With regard to a question by **EuroHealthNet** on the marketing of the reformulated products, Dr De Bree stated that some products were re-put on the market without special labelling to avoid that customers (even if wrongly) associate it with loss of taste.

6.2.2 PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND CHOICE, Sebastian Emig, European Snack Association (ESA)

Mr Sebastian Emig gave an update of ESA's commitments and activities in the field of reformulation. He presented the commitment 'Product development and choice' which encourages ESA members to develop products with an improved nutritional composition, to implement a portion size of 30g for snacks and nuts, and to make products available in different pack sizes. Mr Emig mentioned that the nutritional value of savoury snacks is continuously being improved and stressed that reformulation requires significant investment and time with no guaranteed success. In 2013, all ESA members had implemented the ESA portion size.

6.2.3 UPDATE ON REFORMULATION COMMITMENTS, Dr Anne Roulin, Nestlé

Dr Anne Roulin reported on the progress of Nestlé's commitments in the field of reformulation and portion guidance, such as the action to reduce sugar content to 9g (or less) per serving in children's or teenagers' breakfast cereal brands.

She also presented two new commitments on healthier product offer: by 2015 Nestlé will have more whole grain than any other ingredient in any serving of children's or teenagers' breakfast cereals, and in the course of 2014-2015, Nestlé's efforts and related investment will intensify to ensure that every children and family product in the portfolio, offers Portion Guidance.

Answering to a question by the **European Society for Paediatric Gastroenterology Hepatology and Nutrition** if Nestlé intends to maintain the current products or replace them with reformulated ones, Dr Roulin responded that all reformulated products will be replacing the old ones, and this was done mostly silently.

All three speakers from Unilever, ESA and Nestlé confirmed that their reformulation efforts are on mainstream products (and not on niche products). The Plenary thanked the presenters for the efforts by their companies and congratulated them for the achievements reached so far.

The Chair concluded the discussion with the suggestion that the members could gather the achievements accomplished on reformulation for further dissemination. He thanked the speakers and suggested having updates on their reformulation efforts at a future meeting. The Chair also suggested having at some point an in-depth discussion on the marketing of reformulated products.

Following a question by the **European Federation of the Association of Dietitians**, the **World Federation of Advertisers** was asked by the Chair to provide clarification on the exact reach of the EU Pledge when it comes to advertising in schools and the wording concerning the exceptions when and if the school administration requests interventions in their premises.

7. STAKEHOLDER INITIATIVES IN ALL AREAS

7.1 UPDATE ON COMMITMENTS, Prof. Mary Fewtrell, European Society of Paediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition (ESPGHAN)

Prof May Fewtrell informed the Platform on the contribution of ESPGHAN to obesity prevention including an annual scientific conference, lectures and nutrition summer schools and position papers on the prevention of obesity and healthy diet. The association has participated in several EU supported research projects (e.g. a project which looked into the impact of nutritional counselling of pregnant overweight women).

The Chair encouraged ESPGHAN to share their scientific papers with the Platform (by posting them on Circabc) and with the Joint Research Centre (for the 'What is New' presentations).

7.2 HEPCOM: THE LEARNING PLATFORM FOR PREVENTING CHILDHOOD OBESITY IN EUROPE, Goof Buijs, Dutch Institute for Healthcare Improvement

Mr Goof Buijs presented the HEPCOM project that started in 2013 and is funded by the Health Programme. The project aims to increase the quality and level of local community and school interventions all over Europe on promoting healthy eating and physical activity among children and young people. Through an online platform HEPCOM makes tools from all over Europe available to policy makers and professional practitioners.

The Chair particularly welcomed the strong focus on the sustainability of the project as the HEPCOM platform is endeavouring to continue after the project is finished. In addition he referred to the problem that the tools are not available in all languages.

The Chair suggested that the HEPCOM partners contact the WHO as their NOPA database, which is supported by the Commission, has a section of good practices. Platform members could consider adding their commitments to this database.

7.3 HOW TO SUPPORT A MOVE TOWARDS MORE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, Mandy Ayres, Nike

Ms Mandy Ayres presented the Nike campaign “Designed to move”, which builds on the observation that physical activity has dropped significantly amongst children in the last years as a consequence of changes in lifestyle. Nike developed a comprehensive approach, involving all sectors, to promote physical activity. The campaign is supported by important political personalities, and more than 100 organisations have already co-signed the action. Nike is just beginning its campaign in Europe and is currently exploring ways to make the biggest impact.

The **European Region of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy** emphasised the importance of addressing schools, as there is heavy pressure on the educational system to prioritise other subjects at the expense of physical education.

The Chair welcomed this action to promote physical activity and encouraged Nike to join the Platform with a commitment in this area.

7.4 PILOT PROJECT RELATED TO THE PROMOTION OF HEALTHY DIETS: EARLY YEARS AND AGEING POPULATIONS, Aude Delesalle, P.A.U. Education

Ms Aude Delesalle gave a presentation of “We love eating”, a EU pilot project. The aim of this project is to develop and test materials designed to raise awareness on healthy diet among children, pregnant women and elderly. Local promoting groups have been created in 7 cities in 7 Member States. Central to the all activities is the message “Enjoy”, showing the positive, joyful and social aspects of eating and healthy habits. On 17 September 2014 the project was officially launched in all 7 cities with support from DG SANCO. The project now entered into the measurement and monitoring phase.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair informed the Platform that the Working Group on Monitoring and Reporting had met the day before and would meet a second time on 24 October. He encouraged the Platform

members to join the Working Group. Proposals developed by the Working Group will be presented at the next Platform meeting.

The Chair stressed the deadline of **30 November 2014** for submitting new commitments and that of **31 January 2015** for the monitoring report. No extensions will be granted so that the contractor can have the draft Annual Report ready by April. Discussion and adoption will then hopefully take place at the second Platform meeting of the year.

The Chair presented the dates and themes of the meetings for the year 2015. An overview was shared earlier via Circabc and the Chair asked all to block these dates. One Platform meeting in 2015 could be held in Milan in the context of the 'Expo Milan 2015'.

9. CONCLUSION

The Chair thanked the participants and concluded the following:

- The Annual Monitoring Report 2014 is adopted by the Plenary and will be available on the Webpage of DG SANCO.
- Acknowledge that the Platform members welcomed and appreciated the ongoing efforts in the area of food reformulation.
- The Platform members agreed that there is a need to improve the Platform's communication on its positive developments and results.

The next meeting of the Platform will be on **24 November 2014** and will focus on commitments in the field of **Marketing and advertising**.