



**European Union
Health Policy Forum**

**The EU Health Policy Forum
Strategic Priorities**

**Including
Specific Priorities for 2009-2010**

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Contributors

Brendan Barnes, European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations
Florence Berteletti-Kemp, European Public Health Alliance
Nicola Bedlington, European Patient's Forum
Jeni Bremner, European Health Management Association
Deirdre Daly, European Midwives Association
Paul De Raeve, European Federation of Nurses Associations
Pascal Garel, European Hospital and Healthcare Federation
Francis Grogna, European Network for Smoking Prevention
Elke Grooten, European Generic Medicines Association
Spencer Hagard, International Union for Health Promotion and Education
Monika Kosinska, European Public Health Alliance
Mark Lange, European Health Telematics Association
Susanne Logstrup, European Heart Network
Mark McCarthy, European Public Health Association
Patricia Munoz, Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union
Clive Needle, EuroHealthNet
Mariann Skar, Eurocare
Lisette Tiddens-Engwirda, Standing Committee of European Doctors
Jenny Versnel, European Federation of Allergy and Airways Disease Patients

Content

Mission Statement.....	1
Strategic Priorities.....	1
Specific areas of interest that may arise from the Strategic Priorities.....	2
Recommendations for specific priorities for the period 2009-2010.....	3

The EU Health Policy Forum Strategic Priorities Including Specific Priorities for 2009-2010

Mission statement

The EUHPF's mission is to contribute to and advise on the development, implementation and evaluation of EU health-related policies and actions and to empower European citizens in health for life. The EUHPF implements its mission by assembling a diverse range of pan-European health NGOs and industry associations¹. Through communication back to its member networks, the EUHPF enables health actors at national, regional and local level to more effectively initiate, influence, monitor and evaluate health-related policies at EU level as well as enhancing co-operation between stakeholders, sharing best practices and supporting activities of EUHPF members.

Strategic Priorities

Health is one of the highest values for European citizens. There is a scope for actions at EU level aimed at protecting and improving health that complement actions at national, regional, local and individual level. Although the EU does not have responsibility for delivering health care, it has important competencies in improving public health, preventing and managing illness and diseases, obviating sources of danger to human health and fostering cooperation between Member states². The EU also has extensive powers in policy sectors that have significant impact on public health, e.g. economic development, employment, agriculture, environment, internal market, taxes, budget and competition. It also has a major role in facilitating the exchange of information on best practices in the field of health. In 2007, the EU adopted a comprehensive Health Strategy³ for the period 2008-2013. This strategy identifies priorities, provides for integration of health in other policy areas and creates a financial instrument for support of health activities in member states. According to this EU Health Strategy the future actions at EU level will focus on addressing health issues related to population ageing, on responding to health threats and effective use of new technologies in health care.

Taking into account the current EU competencies, the strategic approach embodied in the EU Health Strategy and the need for further actions at EU level with high potential added value for health, the EUHPF has identified the following strategic priority areas:

- Economic change: health as an economic driver and cost
- Demographic change: its impact on health systems and health needs

¹ Please see the Mandate of the EUHPF for more information of membership criteria and objectives

² Article 152 of the Treaty establishing the European Community

³ White Paper 'Together for Health: A Strategic Approach for the EU 2008-2013', COM(2007)630final

- Environmental change: its impact on organisation of health services and impact on health
- Social change and public health
- Technological change: innovation and development

Cross-cutting themes for the Forum include:

- Health related rights of citizens
- Health inequalities within and between EU member states.
- Public health capacity building and better integration of research into policy-making

Specific areas of interest that may arise from the Strategic Priorities

The priorities are broad allowing the EUHPF to respond rapidly to a changing policy and legislation environment. The EUHPF is a strategic body with the added-value of providing a collective opinion from a diverse and far-reaching stakeholder group. The following is a non-exhaustive, non-binding list of examples of topics that may be given priority:

(1) Formal competences of the EU institutions, institutional setup and budgetary provisions for health related activities;

(2) Progress of implementation of the EU Health Strategy;

(3) Implementation of the Public Health Programme (2003-2008) and programming for the Second Programme of Community Action in the Field of Health (2009-2013);

(4) Integration of health in:

- Social and employment policy
- Economic development (growth and competitiveness) policy
- Internal market
- Regional cohesion policy
- Agriculture and rural development policy
- Consumer protection
- Environment
- Transport
- Research
- Education
- Information and Society
- Neighbourhood and Development Aid policies
- Tax
- Budget

(5) Principles of health promotion and disease prevention;

(6) Access to health information, health education and health literacy;

- (7) Patient safety and quality of care
- (8) The EU health workforce
- (9) Potential and conditions for effective use of new technologies in health
- (10) Potential and conditions for the development of new approaches to increasing public health capacity

Recommendations for specific priorities for the period 2009-2010

From the above list, and having reviewed the Work Programme and Strategic Priorities of the Commission for this period it is recommended that the following four priorities are taken forward in 2009-2010:

- 1) Growth and Jobs
 - Contribute to the revision of the Lisbon Strategy
 - (i) Monitor the furthering of the Social Agenda for opportunities, access and solidarity
 - (ii) Evaluate the impact of the Lisbon Strategy on health inequalities
 - (iii) Provide recommendations for priorities of a post Lisbon strategy
- 2) Better Regulation
 - Review the implementation of impact assessments and evaluation tools in the context of Health in All Policies
- 3) Specific EUHPF response to the White Paper on Adaptation to Climate Change
- 4) The implementation of the Health Strategy
 - Advise the EU Institutions and monitor their efforts in the context of the implementation of the Health Strategy