



EU Platform on Diet,  
Physical Activity and Health

## **DIET, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH - A EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR ACTION**

**Plenary Meeting 1 July 2005**

### **Summary Report**

#### Agenda:

1. Introduction by the Commission
  - Report on Health Council
2. IT Tools
  - Baseline report
  - Circa Platform
3. Report from Working groups
  - Working group on healthy lifestyle
  - Working group on informing consumer behaviour
  - Work package on monitoring
4. DG Education and Culture
  - EAC ongoing internal consultation, not yet conclusive
  - Interesting points identified within established political priorities
  - Possible openness for the topic in some community actions
  - Exploration of the sports units possibilities to spread the Platform message
  - Plans for discussions in other Councils (Sports, Education)
5. Action plans – Presentation of work
  - Progress, round of the table
  - CIAA suggestion, room table available
6. Applications for Membership in the Platform
7. Presentation of “Code of conduct” from Mars by Gillian White
8. Use of logo
9. September meeting
10. Any other business

1. The Chairman (Robert Madelin, Director General SANCO) welcomed participants to the meeting. He particularly welcomed DG Education and Culture and its Director, Pierre Mairesse. The plans for discussions in other Councils would be taken after the presentation from DG EAC. There were no other comments on the draft agenda.

Matti Rajala, (Head of Unit Health Determinants) reported from the Health Council of the 3 June 2005. The Council welcomed the Platform initiative and underlined the need for a strategy on diet, physical activity and health. The Council conclusions (that were circulated at the meeting) were unanimously adopted.

2. The Chairman emphasised the Commission's focus on the importance of communication, and the need for a communication tool for the Platform. Commission Vice President Walstrom (Institutional relations and communication strategy) has presented a White Paper on this, acknowledging the need to improve interaction with citizens on what is ongoing in the Commission.

Jonathan Back (SANCO D 4) outlined the structure of the Baseline form which would be used to collect the information for the Platform database. This had been updated to take into account the comments received by the members after the 25 May meeting. The Platform members welcomed the form and pointed to some items that still need clarification. A final version of the form (in electronic format), will be sent to the members around mid-July. It would be desirable if forms were completed and returned by 1 September. This will allow for a preview of a working version of the database to be shown at the meeting on 21 September, with it going online on the Europa web site soon afterwards.

Mariann Skar (SANCO C 4) presented the Circa Platform which has been made available for members of the Platform in order to make information and working documents easily accessible. Members whose name was not listed in the meeting should send a request to the new email address "nutrition-platform@cec.eu.int"

3. The Chairman reminded the Platform that the purpose of the Working Groups was to identify gaps in knowledge. In the coming months they will have to be evaluated to see if they serve the planned purpose.

Matti Rajala reported from the Working Group on Healthy lifestyle on 30 May 2005. The working group agreed that the main items for discussions were as follows; How can awareness be raised, and what are the consistent key messages that should be given when promoting a healthy lifestyle? What measures are needed to make physical activity part of people's daily routine? Which kind of "multi-stakeholder actions" are expected to yield the highest impact, and how should they be implemented? The Working Group members will, as a first step, submit material on these issues to the Commission services, in order to build a future agenda. Nothing has been received so far. A group of "Friends of the Chair" was established in order to support the Commission in certain aspects of the work related to running the Working Group; the European Heart Network, EuroCoop and CIAA volunteered to be members of this group. Next meeting is the **13 September**. Material for building future agendas should be submitted by mid-July.

Paola Testori Coggi (Director, SANCO D) reported from the Working group on Informing Consumer Behaviour on the 31 May. The main focus of the meeting was to identify the priority areas in the mandate. It was important to have an output that could be used by the Platform and one of the main roles was to highlight best practice - be this from within the actions submitted as part of the baseline or elsewhere. The group should also identify new and innovation ways of informing consumer behaviour, again considering both the baseline and work elsewhere. A further role would be to suggest

positions that the Platform might take on current or potential actions. The intention being that once these were agreed they would motivate actors within the Platform and could also be used outside the Platform. However, it was recognised that the initial task of the group is to examine and clarify the best ways of getting messages across rather than discuss the detail of the messages. In relation to the first priority area, the Chair identified that it was important to have a clear understanding of the sub-themes *education, information and commercial communication*, the Commission representatives in the working group are to produce definitions. The group agreed to appoint rapporteurs, their task being to produce a summary paper for each sub-theme. The following organisations volunteered to be rapporteurs; Education – EuroCoop (Donal Walshe), Information – CIAA (Sabine Nafziger), Commercial Communication – BEUC/WFA (Sue Davies & Will Gilroy). The next working group meeting is **14 September**. Members were asked to send their submissions to the rapporteurs by mid-July at the latest.

Mattia Pellegrini (SANCO 02) reported from the work package on Monitoring on 1 June. The key issue for discussion involved; how the monitoring of impacts of actions may be best undertaken and whether participants hold a common understanding of monitoring within this framework. The monitoring group will concentrate on the self reported data and develop tools for monitoring the actions. At the next meeting there will be presentations from experts, such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) /Global reporting initiative (GRI)/World Health Organisation (WHO)/ EMAS or/and the companies own monitoring experts. Several of the members have experts in their organisation that can provide input/experts on the reporting system that are in use today. It was agreed at the meeting that SANCO should present the work on Health Indicators. Suggestions for speakers are to be sent before the 15 July. The next meeting will be the **12 September at 14.30**

4. The Chairman acknowledged that the original June timeline foreseen for the submission of commitments for 2006 has been difficult for Platform members to meet. However, the baselines should now all be delivered. The three remaining organisations who have not delivered are urged to do it as soon as possible.

Sabine Nafziger had tabled a document with a concrete proposal – that the Platform should develop a common project that all members could support, like the EPODE project. EPODE is building on the Fleurbaix Laventie “Together we can prevent obesity” an ongoing project since 1992, sponsored by the community and the industry in educating children in nutrition and physical activity. EPODE will expand to 10 cities. The idea of a common project was welcomed by several participants; however it was questioned if this particular project was the appropriate one. Before the next meeting additional ideas for common projects should be sent to the Commission for presentation and review at a Platform meeting.

5. Pierre Mairesse (Director, DG Education and Culture, responsible for Sport, young and civil society) introduced EAC activities and offered their contribution to the Platform process. He drew the attention of participants to a major study which was published online on 3 January 2005 “on *Young people’s lifestyle and sedentariness*” ([http://europa.eu.int/comm/sport/whatsup/index\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/sport/whatsup/index_en.html)). While the EU competence in sports is limited, , there is strong informal cooperation and exchange of good practice in this area which will be further developed. Regarding education and curriculum, the Commission can raise awareness and Commissioner Figel might be willing to address this issue in the forthcoming sports and education councils under the UK Presidency. .

Politically, it would be a win-win situation to raise awareness and co-operate, using networks and volunteer organisations. DG EAC have several programs that could be of interest, including the Town –twinning, Erasmus, Comenius and youth programme.

Mr Madelin suggested that a brief should be prepared that could be given to Commissioner Figel before the Council meetings in the UK. Members of the Platform discussed on how to co-operate with DG EAC and were invited to send ideas to the Commission to be put on the agenda.

6. The Commission services have developed a questionnaire that was sent out to applicants to join the Platform, requiring them to detail relevant actions which they are presently carrying out, and those they would additionally commit to within the framework of the Platform. The replies together with a motivated recommendation for acceptance or refusal of membership, were sent to the Platform meeting. The Chairman underlined that while the Platform is open to European-level organisations who can contribute to its objectives through concrete and verifiable commitments for action, it is necessary to keep the Platform operational by maintaining it at a manageable size. On this basis, four organisations were welcomed (Freshfel Europe, EuroHealthnet, the International Osteoporosis Foundation and the internal Diabetes Federation), while the application of one organisation required further clarification (HEAL).
7. Gillian White presented Masterfood's new programme for vending machines in schools called "Smart Choice" . New machines propose healthy alternative choices (e.g. water, dried fruits etc.) but leave schools free to decide which products they want to offer to pupils. The presentation raised questions around the need to ban vending machines in primary schools throughout the EU and the financial aspects linked to vending machines in schools. Members also asked for figures to evaluate the efficiency of the new programme. The Chairman asked Masterfood to come back to the platform in a year's time or so to provide feedback on the implementation for the new programme
8. It was agreed that Members of the Platform can use the logo for activities clearly connected to Platform activities, but not to foster commercial interests. If the logo is used, this should be reported using the Circa tool.. If there are doubts regarding the use of the Platform, members were invited to contact the Commission services.
9. Apologies were sent from the UK Presidency for not being able to participate in the Platform meeting. A draft agenda for the September meeting will be circulated as soon as possible. DG Research will give their presentation in the morning plenary session.
10. The next Platform plenary meeting is scheduled for 21 September in London.