



European Union Health Policy Forum

The EU Health Policy Forum Strategic Priorities

**Including
Specific Priorities for 2009-2010**

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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

Developed by the EUHPF Working Group on Strategic Priorities

Mission statement

EUHPF's mission is to contribute to the development, implementation and evaluation of EU health-related policies and related actions

to empower European citizens in health for life. The EUHPF implements its mission by bringing together wide variety of pan-European health NGOs and industry associations¹. Through communication back to its member networks, the EUHPF enables health actors at national and local level to better initiate, influence, monitor and evaluate health-related policies at EU level as well as by facilitating co-operation between stakeholders and 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 improvement and protection of 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 illness and diseases and 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 sharing 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 and the strategic approach embodied in the EU Health Strategy as well as 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

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

- Demographic change: its impact on health systems and health needs
- 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.
- 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:
 - a. Social and employment policy
 - b. Economic development (growth and competitiveness) policy
 - c. Internal market
 - d. Regional cohesion policy
 - e. Agriculture and rural development policy
 - f. Consumer protection
 - g. Environment
 - h. Transport
 - i. Research
 - j. Education
 - k. Information and Society
 - l. Neighbourhood and Development Aid policies
 - m. Tax
 - n. Budget
- (5) Principles of health promotion and disease prevention;
- (6) Access to health information, health education and health literacy;

- (7) Patients safety and quality of care;
- (8) Potential and conditions for effective use of new technologies in health sector.

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) The Lisbon strategy - including the revision of the 'jobs and growth' priorities; the impact of the Lisbon strategy on health inequalities and recommendations for a post-Lisbon strategy
- 2) Better regulation - including the review of impact assessments
- 3) Specific EUHPF response to the White Paper on Adaptation to Climate Change
- 4) The implementation of the Health Strategy