

# MEETING OF THE HIGH LEVEL GROUP ON NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

02 DECEMBER 2015  
10.00-17.00

CHAIR: John F. Ryan, Acting Director SANTE C

## DRAFT MINUTES

---

### 1. INTRODUCTION BY THE COMMISSION

The 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity was chaired by **John F. Ryan, Acting Director SANTE C**. The meeting focused on encouraging physical activity (area 6 of the EU Action Plan on Childhood Obesity). The draft minutes of the previous meeting were adopted and the draft agenda of the meeting was approved.

### 2. WELCOME BY THE LUXEMBOURGISH PRESIDENCY

The **Minister of Health of Luxembourg** was due to illness replaced in the opening of the meeting. A representative of the Ministry of Health, explained the national policies and initiatives on nutrition and physical activity. The Luxembourgish strategy to address childhood obesity was presented. It puts focus on developing local competences and resources, changing the food environment and reducing health inequalities. Luxembourg places physical activity at the same level as nutrition.

Following Latvia and Italy, the Luxembourgish EU Presidency followed the Trio Presidency's focus on promoting healthy lifestyles.

### 3. WHAT IS NEW

The **Joint Research Centre** provided an overview of scientific news and developments in the fields of nutrition and physical activity. Health at Glance 2015, the ex-post evaluation of FP7 and the WHO physical activity country sheets were mentioned.

### 4. UPDATE ON POLICY BRIEFS

The **Joint Research Centre** presented an update on the policy briefs that are being prepared on school-based interventions to promote the consumption of fruit and vegetables and the intake of water. The policy briefs will provide insights to decision-makers on the key components from effective school-based interventions based on current research evidence. The Joint research Centre called upon the Member States to contribute to the policy briefs. The findings will be published in Spring 2016.

Both publications directly support the implementation of area 2 the Action Plan on Childhood Obesity that promotes healthier environments, especially at (pre-) schools, as well the work by the Joint Action on Nutrition and Physical Activity, especially work package 6 (Healthy environments) and work package 7 (Early interventions).

Related to the topic, DG SANTE referred to the training possibilities for teachers offered under the European Social Fund.

## 5. ENCOURAGE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The **Federal Ministry of Health of Germany** presented the national experience on promoting physical activity, including the Prevention Act of 2015 and a new funding programme (2015-2017) on prevention of overweight and obesity among children and young people. Many of the objectives contained in the EU Action Plan on Childhood Obesity are addressed. The funding programme follows an integrated approach, addressing physical activity, nutrition, stress management (mental health), etc. Physical activity–nutrition–stress management are seen as a triad in Germany: all three components should be taken into consideration in devising measures.

The **Ministry for Energy and Health of Malta** presented the national strategies to promote physical activity and obesity prevention, such as 'Healthy Weight for Life' – National Strategy for Malta (2012-2020) and a 'Whole School Approach to a Healthy Lifestyle: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Policy' (launched in February 2015). Malta showed a video of the 'Schools On The Move', an initiative that targets adolescents in schools and their community, promoting movement during recess (10 schools; 3000 children).

**The Chair** reminded the Member States of the importance of monitoring initiatives in the all areas of the Action Plan on Childhood Obesity.

## 6. UPDATE BY WHO

**WHO** presented the Physical Activity Strategy for the WHO European Region 2016-2025, gave an update of the Global database on the Implementation of Nutrition Action, and shared the results of the WHO Commission Report on Ending Childhood Obesity.

**Germany** underlined the importance of increased cooperation at EU level on activities related to physical activity, including with DG Education's Expert Group on health-enhancing physical activity.

**The Chair** added that the new Health Policy Platform IT tools could be used to support further cooperation and sharing of documents.

## 7. NATIONAL POLICY UPDATES

The **Ministry of Health of France** gave an update on the national policies in the field of physical activity, with a focus on the National Nutrition and Health Programme.

The Programme has five strategic levels: information/education/communication; improving the environment; organisation of screening and support for nutrition-related diseases; training of professionals; and monitoring and evaluation.

## 8. UPDATE REFORMULATION

Following the meeting of the national reformulation experts on 1 December 2016, where an agreement on a text for the Added Sugars Annex was reached, **the Chair** presented the next steps. The Member States are expected to officially endorse the Added Sugars Annex by 15 December. The text will be shared today with the members of the EU Platform. Industry will be asked to commit to the implementation of the Added Sugars Annex by proposing measurable steps and actions.

Further discussions with stakeholders will be organised to prepare operational objectives and concrete actions. The first such opportunity will be a meeting between the High Level Group and the Platform on 18 January 2016, dedicated to discuss future activities. A second possibility for further discussions will be during the Dutch Presidency Conference on Food Product Improvement (22-23 February 2016, Amsterdam).

The intention is to reach an agreement at the Joint Meeting of the High Level Group and the EU Platform (3 March 2016) on how different actions will support a successful implementation of the Annex on Added Sugars.

The **representative of the Netherlands EU Presidency** mentioned that input to the draft Roadmap on Food Product Improvement is welcome. The aim is to have a final version ready before the Netherlands EU Presidency Conference on Food Product Improvement on 22-23 February in Amsterdam.

## **9. HEALTH PROGRAMME PROJECTS**

The **Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (Chafea)**, which implements the EU Health Programme on behalf of DG SANTE, presented the background and the tools of the third EU Health Programme 2014-2020. An update was given on the grants for projects and Joint Actions, operating grants, and direct grants to international organisations.

A database with information about past and ongoing projects, joint actions, conferences, and operating grants can be accessed at: <http://ec.europa.eu/chafea/projects/database.html>

In 2016, Chafea will be organising a cluster meeting on nutrition and physical activity to present to the media the results of projects in these fields.

**The Chair** underlined the importance of (good) project results to help to steer policy development.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**The Chair** mentioned that ideas are welcomed on how to engage all stakeholders to better address the current refugees' crisis.

He also mentioned that a questionnaire on possible uses of existing sport infrastructure was distributed, to test for new ideas on the topic.

## **11. CONCLUSIONS BY THE CHAIR**

The Chair concluded that

- Measures to promote physical activity are of high relevance to address the obesity challenges in Europe;
- Member States are reminded to take concrete action in the 8 areas of the Action Plan on Childhood Obesity; for the monitoring process, Member States will be requested to update the relevant database at the beginning of 2016.
- Member States are invited to contribute to policy briefs as developed by Joint Research Centre;
- Regarding the Annex on Added Sugars, Member States and their reformulation experts were thanked for their work. The next step will be to discuss the implementation of the annex with industry and stakeholders. The Netherlands EU Presidency Conference will be an opportunity for Member States and Platform members to continue discussions on food reformulation.

The next meeting will be a half-day meeting in the **morning of 6 April 2016 in Brussels** and will focus on '**Restrict marketing and advertising to children**' (area 4 of the Action Plan on Childhood Obesity). This is followed in the afternoon by the Joint Meeting of the High Level Group and the EU Platform.