

## Report – EU Expert Group on Social Determinants of Health and Health Inequalities

12-13 December 2011.

This meeting, of the EU Expert Group was chaired by Michael Hübel, Head of Unit for Health Determinants, European Commission. It had a particular focus on the recently adopted Council Conclusion on "Closing the health gap within the EU through concerted action on unhealthy lifestyle behaviours", as well as the Communication on national Roma integration strategies.

### **Tour de Table**

SWEDEN: Isis Nyampame is the new appointed member in the group replacing Karin Melinder who is now on retirement. Sweden is participating in the Joint Action of health inequalities in WP4, WP5. Various efforts and interventions to tackle health inequalities in Sweden are being implemented by different key actors at various levels. The government is committed to support these initiatives.

TURKEY: Turkey continues to implement the Health Transformation Programme with a focus on health inequalities (as discussed in the previous meeting).

POLAND: Updates on the Council Conclusions "Closing the health gap" and summary of the activities under the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU (see presentation on health priorities).

DENMARK: The new Danish government is prioritising social determinants of health and is currently developing a strategy. It has also carried out a review of health inequalities – Denmark could provide more information on this at a future meeting.

ESTONIA: Estonia has experienced a severe recession with peak unemployment at 20% - but so far there have been no great decline in health status, possibly as a result of a 20% cut in alcohol consumption. Estonia is currently collaborating with WHO in terms of mapping social inequalities –and could provide more information in a future meeting.

ITALY: A new government is in place. It is too early to report on expected changes regarding health inequalities.

FRANCE: A Proposal for a new National Health Strategy is currently being discussed. A key objective is to tackle social determinants of health and strengthening intersectoral actions. France will launch a research on Roma health mediators and analyze access to health care for irregular migrants. The outcomes will be published in the report. France could provide additional information at a future meeting.

GERMANY: Active involvement in Joint Action on health inequalities (HI). The fourth poverty and wealth report is expected to be presented to the government in June 2012. The national plan on integration (with a chapter on health) is to be presented in January 2012. National Action Plan on Integration of Migrants will be launched in January 2012. Germany will organise a Congress on Poverty and Health, on 8-9 March 2012 in Berlin.

UK: Currently very active on the Joint Action on HI and the EQUITY Action- Project; A new Institute on social determinants of health has been established as part of University College London UCL (led by Sir Michael Marmot). Additionally the UK will implement a 'social determinants of health' plan.

Mark Gamsu has been appointed as programme coordinator of the Joint Action on Health Inequalities.

BELGIUM: Is taking part in the Joint Action on HI. It has also established a national committee to discuss health inequalities.

MALTA: Active on Regions- programme; carried out analysis on health inequalities using routine data. Also published a report on chronic diseases and is working on a public health report with a focus on health inequalities.

BULGARIA: Working on Roma inclusion; developing common NCD programmes.

### **Updates from Others (Organizations)**

OECD: Has recently published a report on income inequalities and conducted a breast and cervical cancer screening study by income groups – see chapter on access to care in "Health at a Glance". The 2012 edition of Health at a Glance will include a report on the EU. OECD could provide additional information at a future meeting.

WHO: Health inequalities will be a central aspect of the new WHO Health Strategy 2020.

EUROHEALTHNET: will be organizing annual Health Equity Week on 29-31 May 2012 in Brussels. It will also hold a meeting on health systems and public health & capacity building regarding EU2020.

### **Update from the Commission**

See presentation<sup>1</sup>:

Additional points:

- Update on the last EU Communication on EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies. Member States are requested to submit their national Roma Integration Strategies or related sets of policy measure by the end of 2011. The specific country situation should be taken into account

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<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/health/social\\_determinants/events/ev\\_20111212\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/social_determinants/events/ev_20111212_en.htm)

- The Roma example of integration should be seen in the broader context of other vulnerable groups and their health situation.
  - Analysis of the National Roma Integration Strategies including the assessment of the health aspect will be done at the first quarter of 2012. The results will be published in a Commission policy document in Spring 2012.
  - There will be continuity of policies and contribution towards EU2020 goals through the work of Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion & Innovation on Healthy and Active Ageing.
  - A Commission proposal for a new health programme "Health for Growth" (2014-2020) is being currently discussed with Member States
  - The Commission will provide in the second half of 2012 a progress report on health inequalities situation in the EU as set out in the Commission Communication "Solidarity in health". Input to this report has been commissioned from a team led by Sir Michael Marmot for delivery in May 2012.
  - Preparation of the Direct grant agreement with IOM under the EU Health Programme (2012-2015). The focus of the work will be on access and accessibility to health care for migrants and ethnic minorities including Roma, addressing the underscored issues of health inequities.

## **Presentations:**

**Copies of the presentations are available on the following link:**

**[http://ec.europa.eu/health/social\\_determinants/events/ev\\_20111212\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/social_determinants/events/ev_20111212_en.htm)**

### Monday 12.12

Charles Price (DG SANCO): Update on EU Action on Health Inequalities

Arnaud Senn (DG EMPL): Implementation of the joint Communication on Health Inequalities -Addressing the Social Gradient

Canice Nolan (Sanco D2): WHO Rio Political Declaration on Social Determinants of Health

Marc Gamsu: EQUITY Action (JA on health inequalities))

Dr. Wija Oortwijn (ECORYS): Health of People of Working Age

Peter Goldblatt (John Wilkinson, Anne Scott, Chris Brookes and Caroline Costongs): Overview of the EU Consortium on Health Inequalities

Peter Golblatt (UCL): Health Inequalities in the EU – Summary and Recommendations

Chris Brookes (HAPI): Policy responses to Health Inequalities at the EU level

Anne Scott (London Health Observatory): Health Inequalities since 2005 – Selected results from the EU report

John Wilkinson (NEPHO/ Durham University): European Health Inequalities – Evidence Synthesis 2006-2011

Johanna Hanefeld (WHO): Health 2020 – The new European Policy for Health

Caroline Costongs (EuroHealthNet): Review of (sub)national Policy Responses to Health Inequalities in the EU

Agnieszka Czupryniak (Chair Working Party on Public Health): Polish Presidency Health Priority 2011 – Closing Health Gaps within the EU

### Tuesday 13.12

Hana Horak (DG SANCO): EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020

Ms. A. Rygaard Hjorthøj: Presenting a draft programme of the Danish Presidency of the Council of the EU

Giuseppe Costa (Turin University):

1. Euro-GBD-SE Project
2. Country Report - Health Inequalities in Italy

Project Report: Reviewing Public Health Capacity in the EU

Dr. Martin Kraver von Krauss (WHO Europe): European Action Plan for strengthening Public Health capacities and services in European Commission

Daniel Molinuevo (EUROFOUND): Living Conditions of the Roma - Substandard Housing and Health

*NB! All presentations are available on the SANCO Website:*  
[http://ec.europa.eu/health/social\\_determinants/events/ev\\_20111212\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/social_determinants/events/ev_20111212_en.htm)

### **Next steps**

The next meeting of the Expert Group on Social Determinants of Health and Health Inequalities is planned to take place in Luxembourg 19-20 June 2012;