

Tackling Childhood Obesity in Europe through Prevention and Partnership



Tuesday 22nd April 2014
NH Hotel du Grand Sablon
Brussels



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Overview

Childhood obesity is a major public health concern in Europe and according to the European Commission, around 22 million children in the European Union are considered overweight or obese, with the numbers growing by 400,000 every year. Chronically overweight children face a number of serious health, social and psychological challenges such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, problems in school and low self-esteem. According to the World Health Organisation, overweight children have a 60 per cent chance of remaining overweight or obese as adults.

The EU has an important role to play in dealing with these challenges through its public health, education and consumer policies. As part of its strategy on nutrition and physical activity, the European Commission launched the EU Platform on Diet, Physical Activity and Health in 2006. The Platform brings together a wide range of stakeholders such as food manufacturers, advertisers, consumers, NGOs, health professionals and public authorities and gives them the opportunity to collect good practices that can be rapidly disseminated and replicated in Member States.

Whilst maintaining that obesity is a complex and multifaceted problem which therefore requires a comprehensive approach, prevention, achieved through a variety of strategies focused in particular on children and, even earlier, on pregnant women, seems to be the most effective intervention. As childhood is an important period for forming healthy behaviours, the focus on early intervention in schools and families should be encouraged. Schools provide an ideal setting for children to understand the importance of healthy nutrition and lifestyle. Thus, the implementation of innovative projects at local and EU levels can play a pivotal role in raising awareness of the obesity issue.

This timely international symposium aims at reigniting the debate about an EU-wide strategy to tackle the issue of childhood obesity, evaluating current frameworks for action, the latest institutional developments and review the most relevant evidence-based interventions to promote healthy diets and physical activity aimed at preventing obesity. The symposium will provide a platform for the discussion of a better European regulatory framework, support the exchange of ideas and encourage delegates to engage in thought-provoking topical debate whilst sharing best practices and lessons learnt.

“Being overweight in childhood increases the risk of developing chronic diseases later in life, including type 2 diabetes. The upward trend of childhood obesity threatens to overwhelm our healthcare systems in the decades to come. (...) The reduction of obesity can only be achieved if we all continue working together.”

- Tonio Borg, European Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy, 20 June 2013

“Children are surrounded by adverts urging them to consume high fat, high sugar, high salt foods, even when they are in places where they should be protected, such as schools and sports facilities.”

- Zsuzsanna Jakab, Director of the WHO's regional unit for Europe, June 2013

Venue and Accommodation

NH Hotel Grand Sablon,
Rue Bodenbroek 2/4. B-1000 Brussels
Belgium



Why Attend?

- ✓ Discuss current EU policy initiatives and priorities, and the need for a continent-wide framework for breaking the cycle of obesity in Europe
- ✓ Examine the progress, challenges and next steps in tackling obesity and explore ways in which to encourage healthy lifestyle habits in every child
- ✓ Highlight the crucial importance of pre-conceptual years for effective obesity prevention and intervention at an early stage of life
- ✓ Analyse and learn from examples of best practices in different Member States and establish recommendations for future actions

Who Should Attend?

- Public Health Practitioners
- Health Promotion Practitioners
- Child Health Visitors
- Family Nurse Partnerships
- General Practitioners
- Local Authority Officers and Councillors
- Central Government Departments and Agencies
- Heads of Children's Services and Teams
- Pre-School, Infant School, Primary and Secondary School Head Teachers and Staff
- School Nurses
- Health Service Professionals
- Youth Services
- Leisure Services
- Food and Drinks Industry Professionals
- Midwives
- Maternity Care and Midwifery Organisations
- Maternity Support Workers
- NHS Training Departments
- Parent Participation Teams
- Parental Engagement Teams
- Paediatricians
- Teenage Pregnancy Coordinators and Advisors
- Local Pregnancy Advisory Services
- Heads of Early Years
- Play Groups
- Social Workers and Social Services Officers
- Family Planning Clinics
- Integrated Disabled Services
- Local Education Authorities
- Safeguarding Children Teams and Local Safeguarding Boards
- Voluntary and Community Organisations
- Third Sector Practitioners and Organisations
- Trade Unions
- Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Practitioners
- Academics and Researchers

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Programme

- 09:15** Registration and Morning Refreshments
- 10:00** Chair's Welcome and Opening Remarks
- 10:10** **Assessing the European Situation - Main Challenges and Policy Responses**
- General Trends and Figures
 - Driving Forces for Child Obesity in Europe - Examining Socioeconomic Factors
 - The EPODE Methodology - Progress and Success
 - Collecting and Analysing Data Across Member States
 - Recommendations
- 10:40** **First Round of Discussions**
- 11:10** Morning Coffee Break
- 11:30** **Discussing the EU Framework for Action**
- Addressing Policy Challenges - The Need for an Integrated Approach to Obesity
 - Understanding the EU Strategy on Nutrition and Obesity - Towards an Action Plan on Childhood Obesity
 - Good Practices from the EU Platform for Diet, Physical Activity and Health
 - Future Actions Needed to Tackle Obesity at EU Level
- 12:00** **Second Round of Discussions**
- 12:30** Networking Lunch
- 13:30** **Promoting Comprehensive Approaches in the Early Years**
- Focusing on Prevention in Schools - Healthy Eating Habits and Physical Activity as a Lifestyle
 - Determining Eating Behaviours
 - Identifying and Promoting Good Practices and Education Campaigns
 - Examples of Innovative Projects
- 14:00** **Third Round of Discussions**
- 14:30** Afternoon Coffee Break
- 14:50** **Encouraging Cross-Border and Action-Focused Partnerships across the EU**
- Risks and Opportunities for Food Industry-Institution Partnerships
 - Taxing and Labelling Unhealthy Products as a Policy Response
 - Providing Better Information on Food Products: Promoting Responsible Marketing and Advertising
 - Discussing the Role of Civil Society, the Media and Industry
 - Conclusions and Recommendations
- 15:20** **Fourth Round of Discussions**
- 15:50** Chair's Summary and Closing Comments
- 16:00** Networking Reception
- 16:30** Symposium Close

Please note that the programme is subject to change without notice

Event Details

Date: Tuesday 22nd April 2014
Time: 10:00am – 4:30pm
Venue: NH Hotel du Grand Sablon, Brussels



Key Speaker

- ✓ **Artur Furtado**, Head of Service, Nutrition and Physical Activity, DG Health and Consumers, European Commission (confirmed)

Forthcoming Events:

Improving Mental Health in the Workplace: Towards Better Prevention and Inclusion in Europe
25th March 2014

Copyright Harmonisation in the EU: Securing a Borderless Single Market in the Digital Age
26th March 2014

Employment and Social Inclusion in Europe: Developing Skills and Supporting Disadvantaged Groups
14th May 2014

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For further information please contact:

Parvin Madahar on +44 (0) 20 3137 8630

or email parvin.madahar@publicpolicyexchange.co.uk

Enquiries: 0845 606 1535

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