

THE GASTEIN GAZETTE 2017

Health in All Politics
- a better future for Europe



PLENARY

By Iva Simkova

The Thursday plenary meeting was dedicated to discussion about policy-making made on local level and its current challenges. We were very lucky to welcome speakers willing to share their knowledge and experiences from different parts of Europe, i.e. Furio Honsell, Mayor of City of Udine (Italy), Des Cahill, Councillor, Cork City (Ireland) and Karolina Mackiewicz, Acting Executive Director, Baltic Region Healthy Cities Association. During the panel discussion, the speakers emphasized how important it was to implement instruments on local level where their effects are immediate: for example an installation of good lightning in a city park increases number of jogging people and therefore, improves the health in the city. It was also emphasized that in order to do local policy-making well, one needs to really know the situation in his/her city, which means talking to people, visiting social houses or use public transport at least from time to time. In the end of the discussion, all the speakers agreed that it was vital to communicate and share experiences with the citizens, in order to make the health-oriented political decisions more understandable throughout all of Europe.



DAY 2 @ EHFG2017

The second day of the European Health Forum Gastein was filled with thought-provoking talks and challenging debates with a heated discussion on how to provide affordable, accessible and efficient healthcare across Europe for all citizens. The forum highlighted the need to intensify the dialogue between key-stakeholders in order to make healthcare systems sustainable but also allow new cures to be translated from the lab to the clinic. While at the moment, the synergistic potential of novel drug discovery with stem cell therapeutics seems promising, it is true that clinically validated results might be akin to that rare needle in a large and complex haystack. However, if collaborative efforts across the scientific community, the industry, regulators and governmental bodies can be fostered in conjunction with investment on research under transparent and efficient terms, those needles will only multiply rendering the haystack much easier to search.

Eleni Antoniadou
Gastein Gazette Editor,
President of the European Health Parliament

The winners of the 2017 Young Forum Gastein Poster Competition were:

Facilitators and barriers to the use of economic evaluations in nutrition and public health - LAFRANCONI Alessandra

Signs of Patient-Centeredness? A Comparative Photovoice Assessment of the Linguistic Landscapes in Austrian and Canadian Hospitals - MCLERNON Laryn

Introduction to the European Network of Medical Residents in Public Health - IVANKOVIC Damir, VINKO Matej and MATEO Alberto

Warmest Congratulations!



F5: MEDICINES: NEW GAME NEW RULES

By Hines Philip

The room was packed, with people sitting on the floor to hear the impassioned discussions advocating access to better and affordable medicines - "Nothing is as powerful as an idea whose time has come" - Victor Hugo

A new BMJ study found that nearly half of oncology drugs approved by the EMA between 2009-2013 offered no meaningful improvement to survival or quality of life. Societies' expenditure on such drugs was further questioned by pointing out that, when it comes to oncology, there are far more cost effective means of achieving patient benefits e.g. increasing early diagnosis. Adding to the uncertainty around drug's efficacy were concerns over the non-transparent costs of drug development and their pricing.

These claims were contrasted to falling pharmaceutical expenditure and the real savings drugs offer the public purse; drugs are an investment rather than a cost.

There were many solutions extracted from the room: affordable value based pricing (using stricter endpoints, Big Data and patient reported outcomes); not-for-profit PPP's, and evaluation of what has worked in publically funded R&D; caps on profit margins; tailored corrections to market failures e.g. in AMR; the 2016 European Council Conclusions.



L1: ADDRESSING VACCINE HESITANCY IN CHALLENGING TIMES

By Maaïke Droogers

The issue discussed was vaccine hesitancy: the public is worried about the safety of vaccines. And the challenge is the current post-truth era: a time in which the objective facts about immunisation are less appealing to the public than emotionally loaded information. Martin Seychell (DG SANTE): we need to communicate not only the information on vaccination, but also the information about the vaccine preventable diseases, such as measles. We should communicate how serious measles is; people are dying.



F6: INFORMED VACCINES REGISTRIES

By Luís Guedes

Immunization is one of the most important inventions of modern medicine, and yet, we are failing in creating immunization records in the EU. Although there have been some good examples of this, such as the Mesvaccines.net website, there is a need for a common approach to this problem. It is something that the European Commission has been working on, but the challenges faced are tremendous. Nevertheless, we shall not forget that electronic immunization records have the potential to improve vaccines policies throughout the EU.





L2: HEALTH LITERACY IN ALL POLITICS

By Franjo Caic

Health literacy focuses on everyday life in many different aspects, including prevention and health promotion, and is changing during the life course. It empowers the citizens by providing them competences to make shared decision with healthcare professionals and encourages them to actively participate in health policy. Health is not necessarily the end goal we want to achieve, but the improved quality of life certainly is. The industry has the responsibility to educate all stakeholders about innovation and how to benefit from it, but it should not be the main source of information. It was emphasized that the institutional response is currently inadequate and their communication has to be improved. Involvement of different professions – such as journalists, librarians etc.– is crucial to achieve health literacy. Pharmacists were mentioned as the most accessible healthcare professionals and the last in the chain between patients and medicines.



L4: EARLY DIAGNOSIS LINKING BIG DATA

By Luís Guedes, Durdica Morosevic and Ramona Ludolph

This lunch workshop focused on the potential of Big Data and what it can bring to the health sector, especially in the sense of early diagnosis, treatment and follow-up. Diseases such as breast cancer and Alzheimer were presented as examples where Big Data can have a big impact. Nevertheless, there are great challenges ahead in this area, such as technical problems, the availability of data sources, data security, ownership and management, collaboration between professionals, ethical questions and the involvement and awareness of policy makers.



F7: HEALTH IN A POST-TRUTH WORLD

By Felix Gille

In an interactive workshop on health in a post-truth world, the European Health Forum Gastein invited participants to discuss three future scenarios for health: 1st 'The future is local', 2nd 'Your health, your responsibility', and 3rd 'Technology delivers'. The scenarios were developed by The Health Future Projects. After the group discussions, participants concluded that scenario 2 is the most likely and critically discussed the assumed positive and negative effects for the individual, healthcare system and society.

Further, reflecting on post-truth, conspiracy and alternative facts - the opening panelists discussed ways in which to engage in public debate to turn false into truth and to regain public trust. It became clear that there is no easy answer, however, the absolute need of accountability and engagement in public debate was stressed.

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eHealth is key to resilient health systems.
Electronic immunisation records can increase
vaccination coverage [#ehfg2017](#) [#vaccineswork](#)

[Boris Azais @borisazais](#)

Health costs unsustainable? "Share of health to
GDP stabilized or decreased since 2009" says
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[Francesco Florindi @francescoflo](#)

[. @michaelatold GH](#) challenges
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public/international/global health.
Good morning talk! [#EHFG2017](#)

[Andreea Antonovici @AAntonovici](#)

Ellen 't Hoen: Governments have the option to
intervene when patents lead to an access
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[Yannis Natsis @YNatsis](#)

Ministers state the self-evident. We cannot
negotiate with monopolies [#SystemsBroken](#)
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F8: HEALTH INEQUALITIES

By Katrin Berkemeyer

What are the barriers to tackle health inequalities and what are our windows of opportunity to progress in equitable health? This question was addressed from a variety of perspectives in the 'Health inequalities – threats and opportunities' session on Thursday late afternoon. The need to intervene in early life as health determinants can take effect even before birth (Tung-Liang Chiang), the challenge of the oncoming 'digital tsunami', such as disaggregated data (Clive Needle) and the necessity for prioritization of public health by the European institutions (Nicola Bedlington) were identified as main action points to tackle health inequalities for the near future. A possible window of opportunity was identified by Sharon Friel as well as Natasha Azzopardi-Muscat who both pointed out the necessity to create trade-sensitive health policy: meaning the design of health policy measures, coherent with trade policies to be effective in tackling the instrumentally strong industry and thus reducing health inequalities. Sir Michael Marmot concluded the session by pointing out that while there are still remaining inequalities within and between countries and populations, there is evidence for the effectiveness of tackling inequalities by making their reduction a strategic political priority.



F9: ENVIRONMENT & HEALTH

By Staes Elias

The "Environment & health"- session wanted to highlight the need to improve the dialogue between researchers and policy-makers and to better translate research evidence into practice. To this purpose, a series of EU funded research projects were presented that underpin the Ostrava declaration and the SDG's. Following this, we looked to newly emerging research needs connected to the current and the future environment and health challenges, with presentations on the "Exposome concept" and "Evidence for policy". The panel tackled a number of interesting questions from the room, after which Alessandra Lafranconi, one of the Young Gasteiners, briefly summarized the discussions we held, mentioning among other things the need to address this topic as a whole, to make it more sexy and to not underestimate the importance of frameworks in this context (because as we know "Every model is wrong, but some are useful").

REMEMBER!

For more summaries, blogs, tweets and other information about this years EHFG visit the website www.ehfg.org or follow them on twitter [@GasteinForum](https://twitter.com/GasteinForum)