

Nutrition Communication in Europe

6th Annual Meeting of the European Public Health Nutrition Alliance (EPHNA)

MEETING REPORT

**14 October 2019
Dublin, Ireland**

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ABSTRACT

The European Public Health Nutrition Alliance (EPHNA) was established in 2014. The EPHNA is a joint force of centres that are responsible for nutrition and health communication at country level. The starting point is public health nutrition.

The first years were mainly focused on expanding the network. From 2016 onwards the EPHNA focused on professionalising the organisation. By creating a vision, mission and focus for the EPHNA and going public by creating a website (www.ephna.eu) the first steps towards a professional alliance were made. EPHNA has the support of WHO Europe.

On October 14, 2019, fourteen organizations from thirteen European countries came together at the office of SafeFood in Dublin, Ireland. During this meeting, introductory presentations were given by all organisations that were present. A representative from Santé Publique France joined the meeting and presented on Nutri-Score. Furthermore the UK gave a presentation on their Sugartax.

The progress of the three EPHNA working groups ('Increasing Vegetable Intake', 'Healthy Schools and School Meals' and 'Creating European Dietary Guidelines') was shared. Finally funding opportunities and the way forward with the EPHNA were discussed.

EPHNA continues to expand its network and presence, towards becoming the leading partnership on nutrition communication in Europe.

The date and location for the next annual meeting needs to be confirmed.

Keywords

NUTRITION COMMUNICATION
NUTRITION INTERVENTIONS
NUTRITION CAMPAIGNS
BEST PRACTICE
PUBLIC HEALTH
NUTRITION GUIDELINES
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OBESITY
HEALTH
SUSTAINABILITY
CHILDREN MARKETING
SCHOOL MEALS
BREASTFEEDING
VEGETABLE INTAKE
NUDGING
FENS

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BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Gerda Feunekes welcomes all participants to this year's annual EPHNA meeting. She thanks our Irish members from SafeFood for hosting the meeting. Gerda Feunekes goes through the agenda of the day briefly and then gives a short introduction on EPHNA.

The EPHNA started in 2014 with only three countries and currently the EPHNA has 16 official members and several other countries are interested in joining the alliance. There is excellent networking and sharing of information going on, and several joint activities are taken up. The EPHNA has the full support of the WHO and the WHO wants to explore possibilities of working more closely with EPHNA.

It is the EPHNA's sixth annual meeting and it will be followed by a symposium on the 16th of October during FENS, also held in Dublin, where EPHNA will introduce itself to a broader audience. The symposium will be opened by Kremlin Wickramasinghe of WHO and three EPHNA members will be presenting during the symposium.

Introduction of the EPHNA

The EPHNA is a joint force of centres that are responsible for nutrition and health communication at country or regional level. Our starting point is public health nutrition

All present organisations at the meeting are active in the field of nutrition communication on a country or regional level. All of them are independent centres that are funded by the government and aim to translate scientific knowledge into concrete practice in the public arena, especially for consumers.

EPHNA feels that all consumers throughout Europe should have access to objective information and effective tools that help them make healthy food choices. Those objective information and tools are still absent in many countries.

The EPHNA currently has 16 members from 15 countries: Germany, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, Portugal, Spain, Denmark, Bulgaria, Poland, Malta, Greece, Ireland, Sweden, Latvia, the Netherlands.

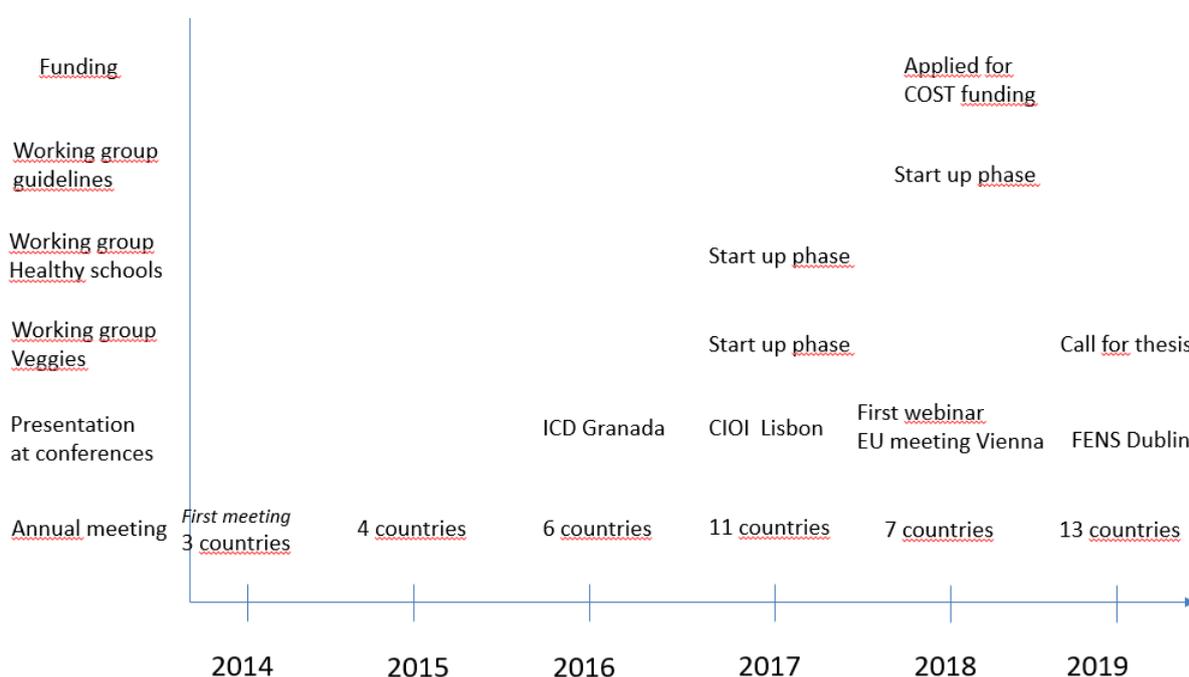
In the past year the EPHNA applied for funding by EU-COST twice, unfortunately both times unsuccessful. It is of great importance that we find some form of funding to support EPHNA and enable us to work on projects across countries.

EPHNA feels that all consumers throughout Europe should have access to objective information and effective tools that help them make healthy food choices. Those objective information and tools are still absent in many countries.

What has EPHNA achieved so far?

- Created a cross-European community on nutrition communication with countries from North, West, South and East Europe
- Created a website
- Started to find synergies in healthy food guidelines
- Started working groups with focus on challenging topics
- Presented EPHNA on several relevant European conferences
- Explored European funding opportunities and applied for funding
- Will have a symposium at FENS 2019

Gerda Feunekes presented a timeline to show the results of EPHNA since the start in 2014.



INTRODUCTORY SESSION

Introductions by all the organizations present

AGES - Österreichische Agentur für Gesundheit und Ernährungssicherheit (Austria) Bernadette Bürger

The Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety (AGES) is owned by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection and the Austrian Federal Ministry for Sustainability and Tourism. AGES was founded in 2002 and supports the management of the federal ministries and the two federal agencies subordinated to it in questions relating to public health, animal health, food safety, medical and drug safety, food

security and consumer protection along the food chain by providing professional and independent scientific expertise.

Highlights of the past year amongst others were an Austrian study on breastfeeding behaviour, infant and child nutrition in Austria, called 'Sukie', which they conducted amongst 1666 women.

Another highlight was their project 'Healthy eating from the start'. For which they implemented their national guidelines on school meals and created a training for teachers. Finally their foodstuff database called Food in the spotlight (FitS) was extended with new additional food product groups, updated with data from manufacturers via data supply agreements and they develop a new methodology regarding data collection.

In 2020 AGES will extend their FitS tool with more additional food groups. In spring 2020 they will complete their 'Sukie' study and analyse the results.

Finally within the project ;'healthy eating from the start' they have several things planned. Such as an update of the Austrian recommendations on complementary feeding, create a factsheet on infant and follow-up formula and digital trainings for multipliers (such as webinars).

Flemish Institute of Healthy Living (Belgium) Loes Neven

The Flemish Institute of Healthy Living works for the Flemish part of Belgium and is funded by the Government of Flanders, Department of Public Health.

The Flemish Institute of Healthy Living has several focus areas. One of their focus areas are schools and children in school, through interventions. Other focus areas are the work place, sport canteens and the local community. They work closely with the municipalities to work on a local level. They have just starting a program to that focusses on preventing undernutrition in elderly.

In September 2017 they introduced a new communication model: the food triangle, which include 10 messages for healthy eating, divided in four messages on what healthy nutrition is and six on how to eat healthily. For schools they have created guidelines for healthy school meals, including guidelines for educational material.

In 2020 new tools, such as a recipe platform and a communication strategy on healthy lunches, will be created to promote their food guide and guide on physical activities and sedentary behaviour e.g. Finally they will work on regulation of marketing towards children.

NICE (Belgium) Hilde De Geeter

There are two organisations in Flanders that have responsibilities in Nutrition Communication. Besides the Flemish Institute of Healthy Living, there is NICE. NICE (Nutrition Information Centre) is funded by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. Activities of both organisations are aligned.

Just one week ago they got a new government in Flanders. Because of the elections they couldn't make concrete plans for 2020 since their budget couldn't be confirmed by the government until now.

NICE has a magazine for health professionals, that comes out four times a year (Nutrinews) with 17.000 subscribers, a monthly newsletter that reaches 6000 people and a website. They work on the fruit, vegetable and milk scheme for schools which gives the school the opportunity to provide their pupils with fruit and vegetables or milk at least once a week during 10 or 20 weeks.

Although they couldn't plan ahead for 2020 they will continue with their current tools and they will update the information on healthy eating for pre-school children (age three to six).

The National Centre of Public Health and Analyses (Bulgaria) Vesselka Duleva

The National Centre of Public Health is part of the National Healthcare System in Bulgaria. The department of Food and Nutrition of the NCPHA has as main function in the implementation of the national nutrition policy and public health protection. It disseminates the national recommendations and communication materials such as recipe books. It also performs scientific research, expert consulting and develop and update recommended dietary values for energy and nutritional intakes for all population groups in Bulgaria. The main tasks of the department are developing, implementation and realization of national nutrition policy for the protection of public health. They perform scientific research, expert-consulting methodological and education activities in the field of food and nutrition.

The National Centre of Public Health collaborates with the Ministry of Health, other ministries, regional health inspectorates, and with international bodies such as the WHO and the EU. In Bulgaria nutrition is still an upcoming field.

Danish Veterinary and Food Administration (Denmark) Trine Enevold Grønlund

The Danish Veterinary and Food Administration is part of the Ministry of Environment and Food. Their working areas are Healthy diet and communication, International Cooperation, Export Promotion and Innovation.

The Danish Veterinary and Food Administration is responsible for the creation of dietary guidelines. In 2018, 10 recommendations were created on school meals and health, setting guidelines and recommendations on food provided, food marketing and what they learn about food in schools. These recommendations resulted in a governmental strategy on food, meals and health.

The official dietary guidelines in Denmark have been launched in 2013. The Nordic nutrition recommendations are at the basis of these guidelines and they will be reviewed in 2022. But because the Danish guidelines are outdated they will start working on new sustainable dietary guidelines already in 2020.

Just before summer they got a new government, since the government had a summer stop right after that, they haven't had much development over the summer.

Public Health England (United Kingdom) Alison Tedstone

Public Health England is responsible for the dietary guidelines and the communication on those guidelines within the UK. They support the department of health, education and agriculture. They also support local authorities on specific topics such as obesity.

In the past two years in England they have seen a big shift. Instead of policies on nutrition coming out of the department of health, they now have three whole governments working on improving obesity rates.

Chapter two of the childhood obesity plan focusses on labelling, at this point they are considering adapting Nutri-Score.

Other focus areas are retail, sugar reduction, marketing, schools and local communities.

Their national ambition is to halve childhood obesity and significantly reduce the gap in obesity between children from the most and least deprived areas by 2030.

Federal Centre for Nutrition (Germany) Margareta Büning-Fesel

The Federal Centre for Nutrition was founded in February of 2017 and is a separate department in the Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE) in Bonn (www.ble.de).

Their focus lies on both health and nutrition and on sustainability. The BZfE provides practical information and guidance for a healthy, sustainable and enjoyable diet and lifestyle, which are close to the everyday life of the target group(s). The BZfE provides easy-to-understand, food-based nutrition recommendations and guidance as a reference for a healthy food selection

The BZfE has a very wide target group. In the past year they have done a lot on the project of Germany becoming Breastfeeding friendly, including recommendations to promote breastfeeding in Germany.

Another development is that Germany is now supporting Nutri-Score, this came as a result of consumer research.

Their focus points and leading questions for 2020 are:

- How can the transformation towards a more sustainable society succeed and how can we contribute to a good transformation to ensure food in our planetary borders for future generations?
- Strengthening nutrition education in Germany
- Support the federal ministry in the communication around:
 - Nutri-score
 - The national reduction and innovation strategy (reduction of sugar, salt and fats)

SafeFood (Ireland) Marian O'Reilly

Ireland is divided in two jurisdictions, they have two Governments, for North and South Ireland. SafeFood was established in 1999 and is a North-South body and is funded by and covers both Government of the Republic of Ireland and the Government of Northern Ireland.

They are responsible for the promotion of food safety and healthy eating on the whole island of Ireland. SafeFood provides independent scientific advices and collaborates with other organisations to contribute to public health and wellbeing. The activities of SafeFood include:

- Promotion of food safety
- Research into food safety
- Communication of nutritional advice
- Promotion of scientific co-operation and laboratory linkages
- Provide independent scientific advice
- Deliver consumer focused review

The “START” campaign is their main campaign at the moment. It aspires to be a society-wide movement that will inspire and support parents to START building and persisting with healthy lifestyle habits. It seeks to help families take the first step and then to continue ongoing steps towards a healthier lifestyle for their children in order to tackle childhood obesity.

Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (Latvia) Iveta Pudule

The Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (CDPC) works in several research projects such as a health behaviour survey of school children, a health behaviour survey of adult population, childhood obesity surveillance initiatives and also does research on subjects such as salt intake and vitamin D consumption. They are directly subordinated to the Ministry of Health.

In Latvia, taxes are used as a tool to stimulate a healthier behaviour (e.g. higher tax on sugary drinks, lower tax on fruit) and those taxes are effective. Energy drinks cannot be sold to minors, so are completely banned from school canteens.

Latvia has established a national network of healthy municipalities. They got EU funding for health promotion programs and almost all (112) municipalities already participated to this network.

More recently they organised several events to promote local public health and prevent diseases in 24 municipalities, such as Educational lessons at schools for 5-8 year olds on basic principles of healthy eating (education through all human senses), the Healthy Nutrition Olympics for 9-10 year old students on healthy and balanced nutrition and practical classes on healthy, tasty, economical and creative cooking (always based on foods that are most common and available in Latvia).

Furthermore in 2019, in cooperation with Latvian nutritionist association, CDPC created vegetarian menus for preschools and primary school students. And finally they are currently working on modern and balanced general menu for preschool students.

Netherlands Nutrition Centre (The Netherlands) Gerda Feunekes

The Netherlands Nutrition Centre is an independent foundation. It is funded jointly by the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport. Its core business is to provide information on, and encourage consumers to make, healthier and more sustainable food choices. The NNC focusses on two long term ambitions (for 2025)

- **People** are motivated and have the knowledge and skills to make healthy, safe and sustainable food choices.
- **The environment** is designed to make the health food choice an easy one.

Their website is the main communication channel, but apps and social media are increasingly growing in importance as a channel to share information.

In the past year they have launched several campaigns on different topics:

- There is more than meat; a campaign that focusses on targeting men and informing them on plant based alternatives for meat.
- Breastfeeding at work; a campaign that focusses on employers and informing them and mothers on their rights considering breastfeeding in combination with work.
- Together against food waste; a joined effort of several organisations on cutting down food waste in households.
- The Food Switch campaign; which focused on informing the public on submitting a healthier lifestyle step by step, for instance by substituting ham for an egg or iced tea for unsweetened regular tea.

For 2020 they focus on an additional campaign on the food switches, and plan to make a choice for a new front of pack logo. Challenges lie in reaching specific target groups such as elderly, groups with lower social economics positions, and people with chronic diseases.

Institute of Mother and Child (Poland) Anna Fijałkowska

There are three institutes in Poland which are responsible for Public Health and Nutrition: The Institute of Public Health, the Institute for Food and Nutrition, and the Institute of Mother and Child. The latter covers nutrition communication towards children, adolescents and pregnant women. The Institute of Mother and Child is founded 65 years ago and in essence it is a research institute. It monitors preventive health care.

There is a close connection with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Sports. The Institute develops nutrition and physical activity guidelines for different age groups, including guidelines for breast feeding. The Institute worked in several national programs as a partner, such as 'eat healthy, grow healthy' and developed leaflets for the 'fighting obesity day'. Each year the Institute organizes scientific conference on obesity prevention for doctors, dieticians and teachers and several events for children, families and pregnant women which aim is to promote healthy life style among those groups.

Just before the meeting there were elections in Poland and due to the upcoming election in the past year no new programmes were started. However they are still conducting three large ongoing programmes. On the local level many programmes were conducted and Lidl started with a project on the reduction of salt.

Spanish Academy on nutrition and dietetics (Spain) Alba Santaliestra

The Spanish Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation, carries out the work in defense of the profession of dietitian-nutritionist and the sciences of Human Nutrition and Dietetics by the Spanish Association of Dietitians-Nutritionists (AEDN). AEDN was set up in 1988 and subsequently restructured into the General Council of Dietitians-Nutritionists of Spain (CGDN-E) and into the current Academy Spanish Foundation of Nutrition and Dietetics.

The Spanish Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics represents the scientific interests of human nutrition and dietetics, creating an institution that pursues the utmost recognition of human nutrition, dietetics and food sciences in Spain both at scientific and public levels.

They focus on:

- Fostering the advancement and scientific knowledge of Human Nutrition, Dietetics and Food sciences through the organization of scientific events, research projects, publication of reports and scientific positioning papers.
- The dissemination of Human Nutrition, Dietetics and Food sciences taking care of the general interests of the population.
- Take action in the diet of the population, improving their knowledge and attitudes in relation to the dietary habits, through initiatives that foster and promote an adequate diet for the healthy and the sick.
- Support the lifelong training of dietitians-nutritionists and other nutrition professionals, promoting the skills inherent to dietitians-nutritionists and preventing professional intrusion.

In 2019 they carried out 750 e-learnings and 606 face-to-face trainings to 1.356 professionals. They work with the World Wildlife Fund on sustainable eating, following the EFAD conference in Granada that Spain hosted in 2016.

National Food Agency (Sweden) Veronica Öhrvik

The National Food Agency assesses, manages and communicates risk and benefits in food – in order to enable healthy eating habits, safe food and fair practices in the food trade.

They integrate environmental aspects in their activities in order to contribute to a sustainable society. The NFA also works with prevention and management of threats and risks in the society.

In 2019 they focussed on:

1. Healthy eating habits for elderly
2. Focused more on sustainability
3. National dietary survey on youths
4. New version of food composition database

For 2020 they will implement the results from focus sustainability, they will renew their dietary advice during pregnancy and breastfeeding, start a national dietary survey on youths and a dietary survey on small children.

Their biggest challenges at the moment are the excessive consumption of salt, sugar and the overconsumption in general.

Presentation on Nutri-Score by Pauline Ducrot (Santé Publique France)

The EPHNA invited Pauline Ducrot from Santé Publique France (SPF) for a presentation on Nutri-Score. As front-of-pack (FOP)-labelling is a subject very relevant in most of the countries. All EPHNA members introduce themselves briefly. Pauline Ducrot introduces herself, she works on the implementation of Nutri-Score in France and did her PhD on this specific topic.

The reason France started investigating FOP systems is because nutritional information on products isn't very easy to understand for consumers. On the 31st of October 2017 they introduced the Nutri-Score label in France.

This FOP label allows consumers to compare similar product in the same food group or from different brands.

What is expected of the label:

- Improve consumer choices
- Stimulate industry reformulation (since no one wants their products to have a red score)

After investigating several FOP labels Nutri-Score turned out to be the most effective label for France. Different studies demonstrated that it is easy to read and understand and a real life experiment (RCT) showed that the Nutri-Score label lead to the highest increase of the nutritional quality of the shopping cart.

Anna Fijałkowska (Poland) wants to know if they noticed any changes in eating habits. Pauline Ducrot mentions that it is very difficult to monitor the evaluation of eating habits and if they changed after the introduction of Nutri-Score. It is very complicated to monitor, so no they don't know if eating habits have changed. However, studies can be performed to measure changes on food purchases.

Grunert and Wills (FLABEL research) showed that all labels improve understanding of the product in some way, compared to no label at all. EREN (Research Team in Nutritional Epidemiology) conducted a study over 12 countries using five FOP logo's and found Nutri-Score was associated with the highest improvement in participants ability to correctly rank nutritional quality of products. The study also showed that colour coded labels are easier to understand than monochromatic labels.

The role of SPF in Nutri-Score:

- They created the graphic design and the name
- Drafted the graphic character and designed a collective EU trademark and its regulations
- Ensure the promotion of the label

Currently there are more than 180 food brands who are committed in the Nutri-Score process in France.

Brands that commit have to put the FOP logo on all their products that carry their brand logo. As soon as they commit, they have two year to put the logo on all of their products.

Vesselka Duleva (Bulgaria) asks who controls the calculation. Pauline Ducrot mentions that there is no control yet, but SPF is looking in to this and they will start controlling the calculations. So at this point, the producers are responsible for this themselves.

Besides Nutri-Score on products in supermarkets, it is also used in several food apps and on the products of several online supermarkets.

At this point there is a growing number of products with the Nutri-Score label on them in France, from 122 in 2017 to 5451 by the end of 2019 in the supermarkets.

It is on roughly 25% of the packaged foods (in supermarkets and online supermarkets).

Also the overall awareness of consumers has grown over the past years from 54% in April of 2018 to 81% in May of 2019.

Discussion

Jovanka Vis (The Netherlands) has a question on communication. Since in the Netherlands the Nutri-Score doesn't always match our dietary guidelines, she wants to know how do you justify this difference to the consumers?

Pauline comments that there is not a good answer for the issue that sometimes white bread can get a A or B label. SPF are still working on this issue. They have recently made an adaptation in the algorithm in order to change the score of olive and nuts oils, which consumption is recommended. Veronica Ohrvik (Sweden) want to know why this hasn't been done for other oils, e.g. linseed oil. Pauline Ducrot says she will need to check this with her colleagues before answering it.

Alison Tedstone (UK) is afraid that consumers might interpret A (and B) wrongly, since a product with this label is not necessarily a healthy product. She would like to see some consumer research.

Gerda Feunekes (The Netherlands) and others find it difficult to understand why the algorithm is cross-category, but the communication is all about 'helping to make choices within product categories. Pauline Ducrot mentions that this is because it could be interesting to compare products of different categories but consumed for the same occasion (e.g. breakfast: cereals, biscuits, pastries)

Loes Neven (Belgium) shares some experiences with Nutri-Score in Belgium. The federal government of Belgium adopted Nutri-Score at the beginning of 2019 so they were forced in a way to make sure that the communication around Nutri-Score and their dietary guidelines was correct. The Nutri-Score label doesn't always match their guidelines, but they try to always communicate in a way that the Nutri-Score on a product is always subordinate to the Belgium guidelines.

Loes Neven (Belgium) would like to know if SPF has any plans on how to pursue research further. Pauline Ducrot says that in France they mainly focus on the awareness and the use of the label.

Bernadette Burger (Austria) wants to know how they control the label, if you can check as a consumer if a product indeed is an A-category for instance. Pauline Ducrot says that consumers can use apps to compare the Nutri-Score given by the app and on pack. In addition, the algorithm is public. However, some data (% fruit/veg and fibres) are not mandatory. So there is a certain level of trust that needs to be put in the industry on this level.

Pauline Ducrot is open for discussion in case any one of the countries is interested in adapting Nutri-Score.

When Nutri-Score was introduced in 2017, the planning was already then to revise the algorithm in 2020/2021.

At the moment there is a group of countries who want to have Nutri-Score rolled out as the official European FOP logo. They had their first meeting in September and will have a second meeting in the first quarter of 2020.

Veronica Ohrvik (Sweden) wants to know if she understood it correctly that some national adaptations will be made on country levels. E.g. Spain mentioned there are negotiations regarding olive oil? Pauline Ducrot answers that SPF prefers no national adaptations. Most of the EPHNA members however feel that differences of implementation in the countries would be interesting to get an insight in since diets differ and products differ from country to country.

The group concludes that it may be an interesting opportunity to move to a European logo, but wants to see how it works out in practice first. We do not want unintended effects.

Presentation on the experience with sugar tax and structures reformulation policy by Alison Tedstone (Public Health England)

In 2015 a scientific advisory committee on nutrition published a couple of key findings on carbohydrates and health:

- Sugar consumption increases energy intake
- Sugar consumption is associated with increased risk of tooth decay
- Sugar sweetened beverages associated with increased risk of type 2 diabetes and linked to higher BMI

These key findings led to three recommendations:

- A definition for ‘free sugars’* should be adopted in the UK.
- The Dietary Reference Value for free sugars should be set at a population average of around 5% dietary energy for age groups from 2 years upwards.
- Consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, by children and adults, should be minimised.

**Sugars added to food, and naturally present in honey, syrups, etc. and fruit juice*

The sugar intake has significantly increased amongst young children during the past years.

In August 2016 they published a HM Government childhood obesity plan for action which contained 14 deliverables covering actions around food and drinks, advertising, labelling, physical activity, schools and early years settings. This included the Soft Drinks Industry levy. The reformulation deliverables included:

- Taking out 20% of sugar in products that contribute most to intakes of children up to 18 years by 2020, commitment to publish guidelines in March 2017
- Achieving 2017 salt targets
- Reducing calories in a wider range of products contributing to children’s intakes
- Government programme, no sponsorship

In the UK they have had successes with reformulation on salt in the past, reducing the salt intake about 11% a day since the voluntary salt reduction programme began.

The sugar reduction program was built to achieve a 20% reduction of sugar. In 2018 May they have published the first sugar progress report and in September 2019 they published the second progress report. The results so far are an overall reduction between 2015 – 2018 of 2,9%. The progress is very mixed, highly variable depending on brands and on products. Although 2,9% reduction sounds little, it is in fact a good reduction in three years.

There is some improvement in products, however, there are more products (e.g. cookies and chocolate) sold, which results in total 0,5% more sugar being purchased per person despite of the sugar reduction in products.

In the soft drink area it is a different story. The total sugar content decreased by 28,8% per 100 mills for retailers and manufacturers between 2015 and 2018.

The amount of soft drinks that has been sold increased, but due to the sugar reductions the sugar sold in soft drinks decreased by 21,6%.

The out of home sector has been growing in the past years enormously (11% per year).

FEEDBACK OF THE WORKING GROUPS

Group 1: Increasing the vegetable intake (Milena Buurman and Hilde de Geeter)

Milena Buurman (The Netherlands) gives an update on the working group. In the past year Germany, together with Belgium and the Netherlands wrote a call for theses on this subject. This call has been spread amongst Universities in all three countries. Hilde de Geeter (Belgium) shares that in Belgium a group of three students applied for the thesis. Margareta Büning-Fesel (Germany) adds that in Germany there also is a group of students interested in applying.

To broaden the scope Milena Buurman (The Netherlands) will share the call for thesis with all the members so that they can share it within their countries.

Action point

- Milena Buurman (The Netherlands) will send an e-mail to all the EPHNA members with the call for thesis.

Group 2: Healthy schools and school meals (Loes Neven)

Loes Neven (Belgium) shares that her colleague Jolien Plaete has been working on this subject, that the alignment throughout the countries has been successful and that relevant EPHNA members know when and how to connect when needed. For now the group decides that this working group has been finalized.

In many countries the lack of teachers is the key problem, which puts the nutritional quality of school meals a bit in the shadow. In Germany the Ministry leads the world coalition on schools meals, together with Brazil and Sri-Lanka.

Group 3: Dietary guidelines (Maria Hassapidou)

Ana Rito (Portugal) and Maria Hassapidou (Greece) worked on this topic.

Nearly all European countries have developed food based dietary guidelines, they are all based on the principle to provide guidance for a healthy balanced diet that will help prevent non-communicable diseases. Some countries have their own guidelines, while other countries have common guidelines such as the Nordic countries.

There are different models all around Europe, but behind these models lie mostly the same guidelines/recommendations:

- Eat plenty fruits and vegetables
- Eat plenty whole grain foods
- Have moderate intake of processed food
- Drink water

Maria Hassapidou (Greece) will be presenting on this subject during EPHNA's FENS symposium on Wednesday the 16th of October.

As EPHNA we still need to make a decision if we find it necessary to create common guidelines (based on those of the WHO) that can be rolled out throughout Europe and can be used as a basis for national guidelines.

FENS SYMPOSIUM

Last year the EPHNA applied for a slot at FENS 2019 and our first EPHNA symposium will be on Wednesday 16th of October. This symposium will be opened by Kremlin Wickramasinghe of the WHO, on behalf of Joao Breda. Gerda Feunekes (the Netherlands) will be the moderator and three EPHNA members will give a presentation on specific point:

- Margareta Büning-Fesel (Germany) will give a presentation on Food & Move Literacy
- Trine Gronlund (Denmark) will give a presentation on Reaching specific target groups
- Maria Hassapidou (Greece) will present on the different European dietary guidelines

This symposium is a great chance for the EPHNA to really show ourselves and connect with other players.

Way forward with EPHNA

Gerda Feunekes (the Netherlands) gives an update on the financial status of EPHNA. We have applied for COST funding twice but unfortunately didn't get the funding. To ensure the existence of EPHNA it is important to keep looking for new funding opportunities. Gerda Feunekes (the Netherlands) suggest presenting ourselves at the EU level, at DG Santé and DG Connect and explore opportunities for funding through them.

Action point

Set up call with WHO to resume discussions on funding opportunities.

Suggestions made: Food2030 call, WHO Action Network; member of EuroHealthNet; around new communication techniques/social media.

All members present at the meeting have expressed their interest in the subject of sustainability. The suggestion is made to host a webinar or to focus on this subject during the next annual meeting.

Action point

Milena Buurman (The Netherlands) will plan a conference call in November or December 2019 for updates and brainstorm on next year's meeting location.

Annex 1 LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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GUESTS

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Pauline Ducrot
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LIST OF APPOLOGIES

Malta

Charmaine Gauci
The Ministry of Health

Portugal

Anna Rito
CEIDSS

Switzerland

Ester Jost
Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Ernährung