



ERA-ENVHEALTH

MONTHLY NEWSFLASH



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WISHING YOU A HAPPY EASTER

BUONA PASQUA

REMINDER:

NEXT DEADLINES

- **15 March 2010: deadline for the M13-M18 financial reports and time spent on the project and its deliverables**
- **April 2010: deadline for the report on new potential partners**
- **June 2010: deadline for the 1st evaluation report on the management and scientific evaluation issues during the 1st call**

WP1 – OVERVIEW OF THE EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS – FINAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

In March 2010 the **Final Report “Overview of environment and health programmes and projects including synthesis and recommendations”** – the result of task 1.2 of the first ERA-ENVHEALTH workpackage (WP) – was sent to the European Commission.

The main aim of this Final Report was to give an overview of the European environment and health (E&H) landscape based on the description of programmes and their related projects owned or managed by the ERA-ENVHEALTH partners and in a wider scope within the Member States. Further goals were to describe the structures available for funding of transnational research among the countries participating within the ERA-ENVHEALTH project, to identify the main authorities in the field of E&H, to obtain information on programme managing practices and to provide recommendations for effective funding of E&H research and effective arrangements for cooperation.

To reach these aims two questionnaires were developed: a first one on “Research Programmes – National programmes and projects related to E&H within the partner countries” (answered by the ERA-ENVHEALTH partners and other relevant organisations) and a second one on the “Framework for joint activities relating to E&H research within the partner countries” (intended for the ERA-ENVHEALTH partners only).

By September 2009, 38 organisations (including the 16 ERA-ENVHEALTH partners) from 11 countries had gathered and entered information on 49 E&H funding programmes and 461 associated projects in the ERA-ENVHEALTH database (see <http://www.era-envhealth.eu>). This information was a strong basis for analysing the research in the field of E&H. It reflects the diversity of the participating countries, their different cultures and structures for research and administration as well as their similarities.

We would like to thank all partners and the other non-ERA-ENVHEALTH organisations for their collaboration in collecting information on the E&H programmes and projects in Europe and would like to remind partners that **the database is not closed and that we should continue our endeavour to collect as much data as possible.**

The final report is available at: <http://www.era-envhealth.eu>



FROHE OSTERN



WP1 – RESULTS OF THE FINAL REPORT

E&H funding programmes

The general objectives of the E&H funding programmes indicate that most of the programmes have the aim to support scientific research with the intention to provide support for policy-makers, to protect the environment and human health, to improve cooperation among experts and authorities as well as to exchange information and inform the public.

The most frequently stated programme topics are “outdoor air quality”, “biological agents & microorganisms”, “other chemical agents”, as well as “exposure assessment” and “health impact assessment”. These topics can be considered as being the most important and/or most established ones for the majority of the programme managing organisations. They are likely to include cross-national overlap. Further analysis has to reveal the concrete overlap as well as the possible gaps for these topics.

Some topics were only selected a few times, e.g. “green space”, “transport” and “electromagnetic fields”. This might be due to different reasons: They fall outside the remit of the majority of the programme management organisations, they are considered to be not important for most of the involved organisations or they are quite old or just upcoming.

The near future priorities of the E&H programmes most often relate to “climate change”, “indoor air quality”, “outdoor air quality”, “nanomaterials”, “endocrine disruptors”, “epidemiological studies”, “exposure assessment” and “human biomonitoring”.

E&H projects

Considering the topics of the 461 E&H projects, it can be stated that the distribution of the selected themes is generally very similar to that of the programmes. This is not surprising as the projects entered in the database were mostly selected as being representative of their funding programme.

National E&H activities

When looking at the national priorities of E&H activities the following topics were indicated by all participating countries as being current governmental priorities: “outdoor air quality”, “chemical agents”, “particulate matter”, “asthma”, “respiratory diseases” as well as “modelling”, “health impact assessment” and “epidemiological studies”. In addition, roughly three quarters of the topics were stated by more than half of the countries as being of priority, e.g. “climate change”, “indoor air quality”, “biological agents & microorganisms”, “exposure assessment”

and “vulnerable groups”.

Regarding the planned and most important E&H research activities of the ERA-ENVHEALTH partner organisations most partners recorded “indoor air quality”, “climate change”, “outdoor air quality”, “nanomaterials”, “particulate matter”, “respiratory diseases”, “allergies”, “cardiovascular diseases”, “cancer”, “human biomonitoring”, “health impact assessment”, “children’s health” and “vulnerable groups”.

Funding structures

The funding structures of the ERA-ENVHEALTH partner organisations show a large heterogeneity. This is probably due to the various budget and funding laws within the different countries. The main challenge for future common calls consists in reducing this heterogeneity, especially by increasing the possibilities for the participation in a common financing instrument, as it is the reason for the difficulties and barriers for funding international research.

The drivers for national E&H activities and priorities

The drivers for national E&H activities and priorities are very similar in the ERA-ENVHEALTH partner countries. All countries are driven by legislation and policy objectives and most of them by international commitments. Differences are likely to occur in the different structures and ways of formal and informal actions of the relevant driving forces. Surprisingly and, to some extent unlikely, the role of “NGO/public/media” as a driver is apparently negligible in most of the countries.

Programme management

Concerning the programme management in the partner countries there are a lot of similarities, e.g. in nearly every country the competent authorities for the initiation and prioritisation of E&H research are ministries together with their agencies.

Regarding the preparation and implementation of E&H research the answers vary a lot, probably due to the diverse research and administrative structures in the countries. With respect to quality assurance and to communication, dissemination and reporting mainly similarities could be identified. It can be highlighted that at all levels – organisations, programmes and projects – a big effort is done not only to communicate scientific results to the scientific community and policy-makers but also to a broader public. Therefore in the future it could be helpful to exchange information on how exactly the outputs of E&H research are communicated publicly (e.g. which different target groups are addressed).



WP1 – CONCLUSION

All in all the Final Report – together with the ERA-ENVHEALTH research database – gives a very good overview of the E&H research activities of the participating organisations. The analysis realised in the report shows that a lot of research is done in similar E&H fields. Therefore it is necessary to intensify the exchange of results, knowledge and experience between the partners in order to avoid double work and to save money. Also bridging the gap between science and policy is still required. Partners should exchange experience and

ideas on how research results are or might be better implemented into policy.

The large amount of gathered programme and project information can be read as an indicator for the high interest in further cooperation and also the need for future collaboration. Nevertheless it is still desirable to carry on feeding into the database and completing it with new programmes and projects also from other countries in the future in order to link stakeholders in the field of E&H.

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WP4 – EVALUATION OF THE FIRST ERA-ENVHEALTH CALL

As it was mentioned during the last general Assembly meeting, ERA-ENVHEALTH have chosen an external evaluator to evaluate the first ERA-ENVHEALTH call and the Evaluation Steering Committee (ESC) was created. This committee is composed of the 3 funding partners for ERA-ENVHEALTH's first call (AFSSET, NERC and VROM), 2 members of the External Advisory Committee (Richard Owen and Marco Martuzzi), 3 members of the non-funding partners of ERA-ENVHEALTH (UBA, BelSPO and EA), and the MEEDDM as leader of the task. The role of this ESC is to supervise the evaluation and guide and assist the evaluator in understanding the stakes, constraints and functioning rules, and finally to provide feedback on the relevance and feasibility of the formulated recommendations. The first ESC meeting, to determine the framework of the evaluation took place on the 24th of February 2010 at AFSSET in Paris. The aim of this first meeting was to meet with the subcontractor and define the

scope and terms of reference for the evaluation to make sure all ERA-ENVHEALTH partners and stakeholders benefit from this evaluation. A number of questions, designed to guide the evaluation, were defined and discussed. The questions were prioritised and showed that questions related to the process (i.e. funding schemes, selection and contracting) as well as those related to relevance (transnationality and expectations, needs and objectives met) were highly important. The list of interviewees was also discussed and defined in order to represent the diversity of possible perceptions of the process of the first call. This first meeting was very fruitful as we got a good overview of what is an evaluation and in particular what we want from this evaluation. It is very important to get started on common terms of reference. The minutes and annexes of this meeting are available on CIRCA.

WP5 – COMMUNICATION & DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

For the dissemination and communication of the project, a poster was presented and 350 leaflets were distributed during the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, organised by WHO/Europe and hosted by Italy, 10-12 March 2010. The event brought together over 800 participants from countries across the European Region, including ministers of health and of the environment, representatives of intergovernmental and nongovernmental stakeholders, scientists and youth delegates. Governments of countries in the EU and other parts of the WHO European Region adopted a declaration reinforcing their commitment to reducing major environmental risk factors (including unsafe water and sanitation, contaminated air and dangerous chemicals) and emerging global threats (such as climate change). The declaration, signed on 12 March 2010, will commit governments to achieve clear goals in the next 10 years.



ERA-ENVHEALTH Poster

More info about this event is available at: <http://www.euro.who.int/parma2010>



OTHER NEWS

Report from the NEW OSH ERA final conference

The NEW OSH ERA: "New and Emerging Risks in Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) - Anticipating and dealing with change in the workplace through coordination of OSH risk research" final conference took place in Berlin on 25-26 February 2010. NEW OSH ERA aims to increase the overall scale, effectiveness and quality of research into new and emerging risks through coordination of OSH research in Europe, in particular by developing a joint research programme involving common priorities, coordinated implementation and joint evaluation. This ERA-NET is coming to an end in April 2010 and this conference provided an opportunity to evaluate the achievements of the ERA-NET and discuss the future of the network. Two main activities can be highlighted: a *Forum on new and emerging risks at work* and the launch of a *joint call for research project proposals* on psychosocial risks at work.

Report from the Annual ERA-NET event

The Annual ERA-NET event 2010 took place on the 23rd and 24th of March in Brussels: <http://www.eranets-onstage2010.eu/>
Around 230 participants attended the event whose aim was to bring new and old ERA stakeholders together. The latest policy thinking was presented and the progress for ERA-NETs reviewed. Through the many workshops, participants were able to contribute their views on future activities. The latest developments of the NETWATCH platform and the ERA-LEARN toolbox were presented and feedback provided to influence their continued development. The event put a strong emphasis on interaction and mutual learning by offering eight different workshops dealing with issues at the heart of the current discussion on the coordination and cooperation of national and regional research programmes.

The slides of the presentations and workshops can be found on the netwatch website: http://netwatch.jrc.ec.europa.eu/nw/index.cfm/static/event_1.html

Conference proceedings now available

The proceedings of the conference : "**Governing uncertainty: The contribution of social sciences to the governance of risks in environmental health**" organised by AFSSET and the risk and society network in July 2009 are now available in English on AFSSETs website at:

<http://www.afsset.fr/index.php?pageid=2505&parentid=949>

GLAD PASK

UPCOMING MEETINGS

**23-24 MARCH 2010:
ANNUAL ERA-NET EVENT IN
BRUSSELS**

**14-15 APRIL 2010:
HENVINET FINAL
CONFERENCE BRUSSELS**

**22 APRIL 2010: 2ND
EVALUATION STEERING
COMMITTEE MEETING**

**11 MAY 2010: 7TH WP
LEADER CONFERENCE CALL**

**27 MAY 2010: FINAL
EVALUATION STEERING
COMMITTEE MEETING**

**SEPTEMBER 2010: GA
MEETING IN THE
NETHERLANDS**

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