

Food and Nutrition Section annual report 2012

2012

Section president Christopher Birt
Vice-president Enni Mertanen
Secretary Arja Lyytikäinen

2013

Section president Christopher Birt
Vice-president Enni Mertanen
Secretary Lise Justesen

Actions 2012:

1. Workshop on developing policies and tools for an integrated food policy 1 March 2012 European Public Health Alliance, rue de Treves 49 - 51, Brussels

Health and well-being is a main priority for Europe. Food production and consumption are among the main determinants of health. Potential synergies exist between food related policies such as food safety legislation, trade, public procurement, environment, climate change and agricultural policy. A more integrated food policy is necessary to meet the challenges of chronic disease, climate change, loss of biodiversity, resource efficiency and food security.

The aims of the workshop were to identify:

- the essential elements necessary for an integrated food policy;
- knowledge gaps in the necessary evidence to support discussion and arguments concerning an integrated food policy at European level;
- future research needs.

The workshop resulted a proposal for a joint workshop of Food and Nutrition Section, with the European Public Health and Agriculture Consortium (EPHAC), and the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA). The workshop was organised as a lunch meeting during the 2012 EPH.

2. Food and Nutrition section organised a preconference workshop before the 2012 EPH conference on the topic **“Results and experiences from European food and nutrition projects in eating out”**. In the first session **“Foodscapes variety in eating out – institutional eating out”**, which was chaired by Christopher Birt, UK and Eva Roos, Finland, the following presentations were heard:

- Bent E Mikkelsen, Denmark, “Foodscape studies in Europe – applicability as an analytical tool”
- Emma Pattersson, Sweden, “School lunch programs in Sweden”;
- Susanna Raulio, Finland, “Eating out in workplace canteens – nutritional significance for Finnish employees”;
- Lise Justesen, Denmark, “Nonrepresentational theory and institutional hospital as tools to understand eating out in hospitals”.

The second session “**Healthy and enjoyable eating out**” was chaired by Carl Lachat, Belgium and Enni Mertanen, Finland, and it contained the following presentations:

- Carl Lachat, Belgium, “Is eating out as a challenge to healthy nutrition?”;
- Heinz Freisling, France, “Assessing eating out of home – the Epic-Soft experience”;
- Johanna Mäkelä, Finland, “Pleasure, necessity or habit? Cultural and social aspects of eating out”.

The final part of the workshop consisted of a panel discussion on “Future visions and common challenges in European food and nutrition projects concerning eating out”.

Food and Nutrition Section had an annual meeting during the EPH. A steering committee was nominated:

Christopher Birt, United Kingdom

Enni Mertanen, Finland

Mark Stein, United Kingdom

Bent E Mikkelsen, Denmark

Lise Justesen, Denmark

The Section has been preparing a member survey designed with the purpose of activating members. It will be sent to members of the Section during the first months of 2013 and the results may be ready to present by next conference.

Planned actions 2013:

1) The member survey will be conducted during the first two months of 2013. The results will be available in time for the 2013 annual conference.

2) The Section suggests two separate activities at next year`s conference in Brussels:

a) Pre-conference:

Work will continue, as started in 2012, on a statement (designed primarily to advise the EU Institutions) to make the case for higher priority to be given to an integrated food and nutrition policy for Europe, within the context of overall policy development.

The Section will organise a pre-conference, which will facilitate promotion of this statement, by inviting relevant organisations, including some based in Brussels, which work on sustainable nutrition, health, and food policies, to participate and to present at this event. **Mark Stein** will coordinate the arrangements for this pre-conference.

The Section will prepare a draft of the statement (see above) in advance of this event. **Chris Birt** will lead on this work.

A possible draft title for the pre-conference was suggested for consideration: “**A Healthy, Responsible and Sustainable Food and Nutrition Policy**”.

b) A workshop on school food policy and school food interventions:

This workshop would aim to discuss and to initiate a project on school food and school food interventions, also highlighting the significant impact that these could have on health in Europe. This could provide further evidence suited towards informing EU policy development in the area of food and nutrition. **Bent Mikkelsen** and **Enni Mertanen** will write an abstract on the purpose, aims and objectives for a future research project to be based on the subject of this workshop. The first requirement is a mapping project to provide an overview of school food interventions in Europe, and of best practices in this field.

Other activities: a food hygiene group have asked if they may join the Section; this was welcomed by Section members. It may operate as a sub group, but this will be determined in 2013.