

# Tackling Childhood Obesity in Europe through Awareness and Prevention



**Thursday 12th October 2017**

Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre,  
Brussels



# Tackling Childhood Obesity in Europe through Awareness and Prevention

## Overview

Childhood obesity has become a major public health concern in Europe, with around one-third of 11-years-olds overweight or obese according to the WHO. Obesity can cause severe emotional difficulties for the children affected, resulting in with lower self-esteem and increased chances of underachievement in school. The health consequences of obesity are moreover significant, with children suffering from conditions most prevalently experienced in adulthood such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and orthopaedic problems. More than 60% of overweight children will stay overweight into adulthood, imposing a major burden on public spending. Indeed, around 7% of the national health budgets across the EU are spent each year on diseases linked to obesity.

The European Union has made a concerted effort, in partnership with international organisations, to tackle this challenge. In 2014, the European Commission launched the EU Action Plan on Childhood Obesity 2014-2020 with the overarching objective to halting the rise in overweight and obesity in children and young people by 2020. It sets out priority areas for action and possible measurement tools and provides a basis for the Member States to develop policy on childhood obesity. In the same year, the WHO adopted the new European Food and Action Plan 2015-2020, signalling a renewed effort to improve food system governance and the overall quality of the European population's diet and nutritional status.

Despite these measures, the number of obese children is constantly rising. This development is brought by a number of elements, among them socioeconomic factors; family as a driving force for unhealthy behaviour; children being exposed to a sedentary environment; the high media consumption and the consequent exposure to food advertisement. Urgent action is needed to raise awareness of the consequences of obesity, to promote healthy diets and physical activities whilst improving access to adequate and accessible treatment. The food and beverage industry is moreover obliged to market and label products responsibly and proactively support Governments to decrease the alarming number of obese children across the EU.

This symposium will provide a timely and invaluable opportunity to engage with the EU Action Plan on Childhood Obesity 2014-2020 and the WHO European Food and Nutrition Action Plan 2015-2020. It will also enable attendees to examine the factors underpinning childhood obesity and discuss the current strategies for prevention and treatment. The symposium will further offer delegates a platform to share ideas and best practice from across Europe.

**“The economic burden of treating adult obesity is just too great for the European region and priorities need to change quickly. With growing evidence of the link between early nutrition and obesity, as well as digestive health in general, we must prioritise research and focus our resources on prevention strategies, educating policy makers and members of the public on the importance of healthy nutrition from a young age.”**

Professor Herbert Tilg, United European Gastroenterology, May 2016

## Venue and Accommodation

Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre  
Avenue du Boulevard 17  
1210 Brussels  
Belgium



## Why Attend?

- ✓ Discuss current EU policy initiatives and priorities, and the need for a European framework for breaking the cycle of obesity in Europe
- ✓ Examine the progress, challenges and next steps in tackling obesity and explore ways to encourage healthy lifestyle habits in every child
- ✓ Highlight the importance of physical activity and community-based approaches to combating obesity
- ✓ Analyse and learn from examples of best practice in different Member States and establish recommendations for future actions
- ✓ Evaluate the accessibility of healthy diets and protect children from unhealthy food advertising
- ✓ Determine how to improve the accessibility of existing support services
- ✓ Build strong partnerships with relevant stakeholders in the public and private sector

## Who Should Attend?

- Public Health Practitioners
- Health Promotion Practitioners
- Ministries of Health
- Local, Regional and National Health Services
- Health Treatment/Advisory Services
- Campaigning Organisations
- Psychotherapists
- Health and Safety Teams
- Child Health Visitors
- Family Nurses
- 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
- NHS Training Departments
- Parent Participation Teams
- Parental Engagement Teams
- Pediatricians
- Local Pregnancy Advisory Services
- Play Groups
- Social Workers
- Social Services Officers
- Local Education Authorities
- Safeguarding Children Teams and Local Safeguarding Boards
- Voluntary and Community Organisations
- Third Sector Practitioners and Organisations
- NGO's
- 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** **Strengthening the EU Framework on Childhood Obesity**
- Discussing the EU Action Plan on Childhood Obesity 2014-2020
  - Insights from the WHO European Food and Nutrition Action Plan 2015-2020
  - Current Trends in Diet and Physical Activity: Collecting and Analysing Data Across Europe
  - Future Challenges and Solutions: Tackling Childhood Obesity at EU Level
- 10:40** **First Round of Discussions**
- 11:10** Morning Coffee Break
- 11:30** **Examining Causes, Raising Awareness: Early Prevention of Childhood Obesity**
- Driving Forces for Childhood Obesity in Europe: Examining Socioeconomic Aspects
  - Assessing the Role of the Family in Driving Unhealthy Behaviours
  - Raising Awareness about Childhood Obesity: Promoting Good Practices and Education Campaigns
  - Focussing on Prevention in Schools: Learning Healthy Diets and Lifestyle Habits
- 12:00** **Second Round of Discussions**
- 12:30** Networking Lunch
- 13:30** **Fighting Childhood Obesity through Healthy Diets, Physical Activity, and Effective Treatments**
- Providing Accessible, Adequate and Affordable Treatment Services
  - Exploring Beneficial Physiological Effects of Physical Activity in Obese Children and Adolescents
  - Strengthening Partnership and Cooperation Between Different Actors
  - Increasing the Attractiveness of Sports and Healthy Lifestyles through Innovative Solutions and Digital Technologies
- 14:00** **Third Round of Discussions**
- 14:30** Afternoon Coffee Break
- 14:50** **Promoting Responsible Food Marketing for Children**
- Understanding the Impact of Food Advertising on Children's Food Choices
  - Implementing Responsible Food Marketing and Advertising for Children
  - Promoting Healthy Food and Physical Activity through Advertising – Example of Successful Project
  - Conclusions and Recommendations
- 15:20** **Fourth Round of Discussions**
- 15:50** Chair's Summary and Closing Comments
- 16:00** Networking Reception
- 16:30** Close

*\* Please note that the programme is subject to change without notice \**

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## Event Details

- Date:** Thursday 12th October 2017  
**Time:** 10:00am – 4:30pm  
**Venue:** Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre, Brussels



## Speakers Include:

**Birgitta Sacrédeus**  
County Counselor in the region of Dalarna, Sweden; Committee of the Regions

## Forthcoming Events

Eliminating Energy Poverty Across Europe: Monitoring Progress for an Inclusive Energy Union

**5th September 2017**

Cross-border Healthcare in Europe: Promoting Patients' Rights and Boosting Cooperation

**12th September 2017**

Promoting Migrant Integration for a Powerful, Diverse and Multicultural Europe

**14th September 2017**

Boosting the Electric Vehicle Market in Europe: Plugging the Sustainability Gap

**19th September 2017**

Rethinking the Urban Environment: The EU Transition Towards Smart Cities

**28th September 2017**

Updating the European Cyber Security Strategy: Partnerships for Prevention and Preparedness

**3rd October 2017**

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