EDITORIAL

Dear friends, colleagues and Members of the European Childhood Obesity Group,

I am honored to address this letter to you as the new President of the European Childhood Obesity Group (ECOG). I am inheriting a very healthy organization and I can’t wait to build on what Andrea Vania, our former President, and its board have achieved over the past three years. For the next four years, I would like ECOG to maintain its spirit, its roots and its vision, which makes our group very special.

NEW ECOG BOARD AND MEMBERS

New Board

The General Assembly elected in Liverpool a new Board for the next four years (2014-2017). The new Board includes seven members representing six European countries. The new President is Prof. Artur Mazur, from Poland.

18 new members

18 new members joined the group and enlarged the network.

H2020

On the 11th of December, the European Commission presented Horizon 2020 (H2020) a new funding programme for research & innovation.

H2020 includes former FP7 (Seventh Framework Programme), CIP (Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme) and EIP (Entrepreneurship and Innovation Programme).

One of the three H2020 key pillars is “Societal challenges”, which include “Health, demographic change and wellbeing”. This area has been allocated €7.5 billion over the years 2014 and 2015.

You can have a look at the calls for proposals on the European Commission’s Research and Innovation Participant Portal.

EVENTS

23rd Annual Congress

In Liverpool the Congress brought together childhood obesity experts and scientists from 20 countries.

24th Annual Congress

The 24th Annual Congress will be held in Salzburg, Austria, from the 12th to the 15th of November 2014.

Plenary session in Liverpool

Prof Daniel Weghuber (right), President elect ECOG2014
The next four years will be also an opportunity to consolidate and develop our membership to create a more cooperative and influential community. This work will be done on solid ground, a 25 years old community connecting professionals from different fields of expertise. I would like to work towards a more efficient and effective communication inside and outside the group.

Another priority for the next four years will be exploring possibilities to develop projects and partnerships where ECOG can add scientific value and the experience of the very high profile group of people that it brings together.

I look forward to a fruitful collaboration with the new Board, composed by Daniel Weghuber (Vice President), Eva Erhardt (Scientific Advisor), Grace O’Malley (Secretary), Paulina Nowicka (Treasurer), Claudio Maffeis and Andrea Vania.

We also count on the support of all our members and will welcome ideas and suggestions.

All together we can give an important contribution to tackle childhood obesity and reduce its devastating impact on health, society and economy.

Best wishes and healthy 2014!

Artur Mazur

President
NEW ECOG BOARD AND MEMBERS

New ECOG Board
2014-2017

Prof Artur Mazur (Poland)
Medical Faculty University of Rzeszow
President

Dr Paulina Nowicka (Sweden)
Karolinska Institute
Treasurer

BAECK Nele, Belgium
BRZEZINSKI Michal, Poland
CULLUM Adriene, UK
DIMITRIOU Susanne Ring, Austria
FREUDENTHALER Thomas, Austria
JANKOWSKI Marek, Poland
JANSEN Pauline, Netherlands
LENGA Emmanuel, Belgium
LLEWELLYN Clare, UK
NEGRE Veronique, France
PROKOPOWICZ Zofia, Poland
RADHAKISHUN Nalini, Netherlands
SAHOTA Pinkie, UK
VELARDI Giuseppe, Italy
VERVOORT Leentje, Belgium
WATSON Paula, UK
WRIGHT Charlotte, UK
ZACHUROZOK Agnieszka, Poland

New members

ECOG membership is open to researchers, practitioners and other professionals working on childhood obesity. To apply for membership please visit: http://www.ecog-obesity.eu/index.php/Entries_for_membership_in_ECOG/

ECOG membership extended to 20 countries

Austria
Belgium
Cyprus
Denmark
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Ireland
Italy
Malta
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
United Kingdom

ECOG membership is extended to 20 countries:
Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom.

To get in contact with the ECOG Board please send an e-mail to info@ecog-obesity.eu

Prof Daniel Weghuber (Austria)
Parcelsus Medical School
Vice President

Grace O’Malley (Ireland)
University College Cork
Secretary

Prof Maria Hassapidou (Greece)
ATEI of Thessaloniki

Prof Andrea Vania (Italy)
“Sapienza” University of Rome

Prof Claudio Maffeis (Italy)
University Medical School of Verona

Prof Eva Erhardt (Hungary)
“Sapienza” University of Rome

Scientific Advisor
Liverpool hosted the 23rd ECOG Congress from the 13th to the 15th of November 2013. The congress brought together 30 speakers and childhood obesity experts and young scientists from over 20 countries.

The first day of the congress hosted a joint and high-level session with the UK Association for the Study of Obesity (ASO): *Childhood Obesity in 2013: Developments in Science, Policy and Practice*.

The key topics of the Congress were:

1. Public health and public health policies: designing a healthy environment
2. Psychology in the spotlight and its role in prevention and treatment
3. Learning to eat: critical periods in development
4. Novel ideas and new developments

The plenary lectures were followed by workshops to discuss and develop ideas for policy and action.

Proceedings from the workshops discussions will be published on the website (www.ecog-obesity.eu) in the following weeks.

Workshops highlights

1. Public health and public health policies: experts should do their best to inform politicians but also society about the problem of obesity prevention it to become a priority for all.
2. Psychology in the spotlight and its role in prevention and treatment: even if genetics play an important role, psychology can work on important factors such as self-esteem and behaviours, positive reinforcement and modelling.
3. Learning to eat: critical periods in development: A proposal to provide parents with simple tools like a growth chart on an app was mentioned.
4. Novel ideas and new developments: discussion about several issues such as why obesity is a multifactorial disease and which fields are useful to explore.

Tell us your story

Are you an ECOG member and have participated in an event recently?

If you have participated in an event related to childhood obesity, let us know and tell us your story. We will talk about the event and your participation.

Contact us at: info@ecog-obesity.eu

The abstracts presented during the 23rd Congress will be published on *Appetite* in February 2014.
**24**th **ECOG Congress to be held in Salzburg**

ECOG2014 will take place in Salzburg from November 12th to 15th. Salzburg is a city rich of history, UNESCO World Heritage site, where music culture and baroque style create a unique atmosphere.

The scientific programme for the Congress includes:

1. Two workshops (November 13):
   - The psychological approach of the eating behaviour of obese children
   - Physical aptitudes of obese children

2. A symposium on bariatric surgery for morbidly obese adolescents – irresponsible or imperative? (November 13). The symposium will be organized jointly with the International Federation of Surgery of Obesity and Metabolic Disorder (IFSO).

3. Four sessions (November 14 and 15) with keynotes, oral presentations and working groups on early prevention of childhood obesity in pregnancy, infancy and toddlerhood.

4. A training course designed to address the obesity topic based on recent evidences and dedicated to German speaking experts (November 12 and 13).

The call for abstracts will be launched in the following weeks, as well as the portal to register to the Congress. If you are willing to participate please follow the news of the Congress through ECOG website (www.ecog-obesity.eu) or follow the European Childhood Obesity Group on LinkedIn. We look forward to welcoming you in Salzburg next November.
Funding for Research and Innovation

On the 11th of December, the European Commission unveiled the Horizon 2020 (H2020) Work Programme for 2014-2015. This new programme has been allocated a €15 billion budget for the first two years.

Calls for proposals cover three key pillars: Excellence in Science, Industrial Leadership and Societal Challenges. This last pillar is the one including “health, demographic change and wellbeing” and has a €7.5 billion budget to cover 2014-2015.

The societal challenges to be addressed within the “health, demographic change and wellbeing” are:

- Translating science to benefit citizens
- Improve health outcomes
- Support competitive health & care sector
- Test and demonstrate new health & care models, approaches and tools
- Promote healthy and active ageing

Change of rules: simpler process

Besides having a new name and structure, the funding process and rules for accessing funding within H2020 programme have been simplified. The European Commission wants the submission and evaluation processes to happen faster by having:

- lighter bureaucracy
- a single set of participation rules
- two funding rates for different beneficiaries and activities
- single flat rates to calculate overhead or “indirect costs”

and most importantly by ensuring:

- time to grant of 8 months

This last rule implies that only 8 months will pass between the submission of the proposal and the grant agreement signature. Specifically, 5 months between the submission and the publication of results and 3 months to finish negotiations and sign the grant agreement with the European Commission.

Find your call in the Research & Innovation Participant Portal

Most of the funding for health related Research & Innovation is located in the pillar of societal challenges, in “health, demographic change and wellbeing”. However, make sure you check other financing opportunities inside Horizon 2020 as it is a very broad program and some research can fit calls outside this challenge.

To search among the funding opportunities of Horizon 2020 go to the Research and Innovation Participant Portal, click on “Funding Opportunities” then click on “Calls” and make an advanced search to find the most suitable calls for you.

You can access the call search engine from this direct link: http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/index.html.

SUBMISSION CALENDAR 2014

The deadlines to submit two-stage proposals are:

March 11 - 1st submission
August 19 - 2nd submission

The deadline to submit one-stage proposals is:

15th of April
ECOG Members participate in ebook about childhood obesity

ECOG is involved in the development of a major piece of work on childhood obesity written by 57 authors from 13 countries. Authors include WHO, IOTF and a broad range of acknowledged specialists into their respective fields. Most of them belong to Universities, Research Organizations or to International Health Organisations. The ebook, which is intended for health care workers from doctors to anyone interested on the topic, covers twelve major fields:

1. epidemiology
2. society communication and environment
3. biology
4. growth charts and body composition
5. food choices and eating behavior
6. nutrition and food intakes
7. psychological assessment and disturbances
8. clinics,
9. complications
10. energy expenditure and physical activity,
11. treatment
12. prevention across Europe.

The book will be launched in November 2014 during the ECOG Congress in Salzburg.

The Bonduelle Foundation is supporting the process.

A new position paper from ECOG

A new position paper drafted by ECOG members has been accepted for publishing and will appear in one of the next issues of the scientific journal “Obesity Facts”. The title of the paper is “The assessment of eating behaviour in the absence of hunger in children who are obese: a psychological approach.

European Parliament event postponed

In our last newsletter we launched a call for abstracts for an event organised by ECOG at the European Parliament. Due to the imminent end of the European Parliament term and elections in may 2014, we have decided to postpone the initiative. We will keep you informed about the new date.
ECOG is a pan-European group of professionals dealing with childhood obesity and overweight. ECOG brings together experts from across the board including: paediatricians, psychologists, nutritionists, geneticists, physical activity experts, economists and many more. The group was founded in 1991 and its mission is to help the European community at large to understand fully the health, social, psychological and economic impacts of childhood obesity, and work together to take this growing problem off the menu in Europe.

ECOG BOARD 2014-2017

Artur Mazur, President – Poland
Daniel Weghuber, Vice President – Austria
Grace O’Malley, Secretary – Ireland
Eva Erhardt, Scientific advisor – Hungary
Paulina Nowicka, Treasurer – Sweden
Claudio Maffeis, Member – Italy
Andrea Vania, Member – Italy

EUROPEAN CHILDHOOD OBESITY GROUP ASBL

Avenue Milcamps 41
1030 Brussels, Belgium
telephone: +32 2 894 9627
fax: +32 2 894 9628
website: www.ecog-obesity.eu
e-mail adress: info@ecog-obesity.eu
TAKING CHILDHOOD OBESITY OFF THE MENU