



The Joint Action EHLEIS (2011-2014)

European Health and Life Expectancy Information System



The **European Health Expectancy Monitoring Unit, EHEMU**, (www.ehemu.eu) will begin the third phase of European work to monitor and promote healthy active longevity throughout Europe through the **Joint Action European Health and Life Expectancy Information System** (JA EHLEIS). Joint Actions enable the competent authorities of the Member States and the European Commission to continue their action in specific areas agreed in common. The two previous phases were conducted in the framework of the European **Lisbon Strategy** (2000-2010) and provided a Structural Indicator, the **Healthy Life Years (HLY)**, as well as an Information System to monitor health trends and gaps in Europe.¹

Context

During the first phase (2004-7) EHEMU developed several **summary measures of population health (SMPH)** indicating the quality of the remaining years that a person is expected to live (i.e. free of chronic disease, free of disability and in good perceived health). In the second phase (2007-2010) the **EHLEIS project** began to systematically monitor health trends and gaps among the European countries and to identify their determinants through the survey instruments developed by EHEMU and included in the new European survey **SILC** (European Statistics on Incomes and Living Conditions) and **SHARE** (Survey on Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe).

In the framework of the new **Europe 2020 Strategy** (2010-2020), the **JA EHLEIS** (2011-2014) aims to increase the utility of the SMPH through consolidation and further development of the EHLEIS Information System, increased comparability with SMPH for the United States and Japan and greater use by Member States in national policy-making. In particular the JA EHLEIS will contribute to the **first partnership of Innovation Union**, which focuses on **active and healthy ageing** and with the target of increasing by 2 years the average number of **healthy life years** by 2020. The JA EHLEIS will firstly enable the first partnership to be properly monitored by the previously developed SMPH. Secondly the JA EHLEIS will contribute towards identifying the main determinants of healthy life in Europe, thus offering new avenues for policies targeting the expected increase in HLY. The first results of the JA EHLEIS will be ready for **2012**, designated as the **European Year for Active Ageing**.

Participating countries

The JA EHLEIS brings together **21 Member States** with the **European Commission** and with invited participation of the **United States** (USA) and **Japan**, as well as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Aims of the JA EHLEIS

The aims of the JA EHEIS are to:

- Consolidate the existing information system** (EHLEIS) by calculation and dissemination (online information system, annual country reports) of SMPH (including the HLY) and analysis of trends and gaps in life and health expectancies at the EU level (macro-level determinants);
- Continue developing EHLEIS** by analysis of micro-level health determinants using the new European Health Interview Survey and analysis of SMPH gaps between socio-economic groups;
- Propose a common international measure** to ensure an improvement in measuring SMPH and undertake research to develop an alternative SMPH in the future, in collaboration with the US, Japan and OECD;
- Integrate the European Task Force on Health Expectancies** into an annual meeting to further engage Member States and promote SMPH use in policy-making.

Expected outcomes

The main outcomes will be:

- an Information System** allowing online calculation of a variety of health indicators (prevalence, life and health expectancies) for European comparisons with an extension to permit Member States to undertake regional comparisons with their own data;
- annual Country reports on health expectancy** translated into national languages;
- proceedings of the annual meetings** to replace the Task Force on Health Expectancies;
- improved statistical tools for attributing disability** and poor health to specific diseases and/or lifestyle factors **and for decomposing gaps** between countries, socio-demographic groups and over time into the relative contributions of mortality and morbidity/disability;
- technical reports and scientific papers on key methodological advances and substantive results** on inequalities in healthy active ageing between Member States and their potential drivers;
- a blueprint for an internationally harmonized SMPH**.

The JA EHLEIS will contribute directly to two of the three objectives of the Second European Programme of Community Action in the Field of Health 2008-2013: to promote health, including the reduction of health inequalities – **specifically increasing healthy life years and promoting healthy ageing**; and to generate and disseminate health information and knowledge.

Target audience

The JA EHLEIS will aim to disseminate its findings as widely as possible and specifically to: Member States in general, health and non-health policy makers at national, European and OECD level, health professionals and researchers, and the media and general public.

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¹ Project EHEMU (European Health Expectancy Monitoring Unit), 2004-2007, First European Programme of Public Health and Project EHLEIS (European Health and Life Expectancy Information System), 2007-2010, Second European Programme of Public Health.