



PRESS RELEASE

EMBARGO: 00.01am BST Tuesday 20th May

Tackling adult obesity: World Obesity launches new Atlas of European initiatives

A new interactive Atlas showing nearly 80 national and community initiatives in Europe to tackle obesity has been launched by the World Obesity Federation this week.

The Atlas shows details of initiatives being taken in 24 countries in the European region, with links to the project websites and details of the interventions and the target populations. It focuses on interventions in the community aimed at adults, and also lower-income and disadvantaged groups.

The new Atlas forms part of the SPOTLIGHT project, supported by a €3m grant from the European Union's FP7 Research Programme and coordinated by the VU University Medical Center, Amsterdam. The data were collected by researchers at Maastricht University and Bergen University.

'It is encouraging to see so many approaches to tackling obesity and promoting health among adults in European Member States,' said Dr Tim Lobstein, Policy Director at the World Obesity Federation. 'We know there are many interventions in schools and health services targeting children, but it is in adulthood that people are at most risk of becoming overweight and obese.'

'We have spent over a year collecting this information and we are very pleased to be able to publish the results in the form of an interactive Atlas,' said Professor Oddrun Samdal, University of Bergen, coordinator of the data-acquisition team. 'There are no other central registries of collected databases of these types of initiative, often organised by local authorities or community charitable groups. The Atlas will be a valuable resource for many years to come.'

Dr Jessica Gubbels, of Maastricht University, said 'Our research teams contacted well over 500 health professionals, voluntary groups, charities and government departments in the hunt for information. Many projects have few resources and do not publicise themselves, so we are delighted we have found so many, and that we can help to give them the publicity they deserve.'

‘This new Atlas is one of the flagship products from our SPOTLIGHT project,’ said Dr Jeroen Lakerveld, coordinator of the SPOTLIGHT project at the VU University Medical Center, Amsterdam. ‘While various studies have looked at controlled interventions in academic projects, this is the first attempt to collect and provide an overview of data “from the street” and assess the key elements of interventions that focus on individuals in their context.’

The Spotlight Atlas can be found here: <http://www.worldobesity.org/what-we-do/policy-prevention/projects/spotlight/intervention-atlas/>

Contact details

Professor Oddrun Samdal Oddrun.Samdal@uib.no +47 9707 0904

Jessica Gubbels jessica.gubbels@maastrichtuniversity.nl +31 (0)43 38 82182.

Tim Lobstein tlobstein@worldobesity.org +44 (0)207 685 2580

Jeroen Lakerveld je.lakerveld@vumc.nl +31 (0)204 448 395

SPOTLIGHT website: www.spotlight-project.eu



The SPOTLIGHT project is part-funded by the European Community's Seventh Framework Programme. The European Commission is not responsible for the use that may be made of any material arising from this project.

The SPOTLIGHT project is a cross-European research project and stands for *sustainable prevention of obesity through integrated strategies*. Partners in the research consortium include

- VU University Medical Center (The Netherlands)
- The University of Lisbon (Portugal)
- The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (United Kingdom)
- The European Association for the Study of Obesity
- The University of Bergen (Norway)
- The University of Oxford (United Kingdom)
- Ghent University (Belgium)
- Metropolitan University College Copenhagen (Denmark)
- Maastricht University (The Netherlands)
- The Nutrition Epidemiology Unit (France)
- University of Debrecen (Hungary)
- Blox Group (The Netherlands)
- The World Obesity Federation

World Obesity Federation is the new name for the International Association for the Study of Obesity (IASO) and International Obesity TaskForce (IOTF). We represent professional members of the scientific, medical and research communities from over 50 regional and national obesity associations. Through this global community we work to alert the world to the growing crisis caused by soaring levels of obesity and to drive global efforts to reduce, prevent and treat obesity.

Details at www.worldobesity.org.