



Official Participant

## Rapporteur Template for Scientific Events

Event Title :	International Pediatric Conference	Date:	25-26 June 2015
Event Organiser:	Pianeta Nutrizione, with EU support		
Event Target Group:	Paediatricians, public health academics and policymakers, and other stakeholders in public health		
Rapporteurs:	Stefan Storcksdieck genannt Bonsmann, Petros Maragkoudakis		
<b>1. Which research themes are concerned? (Tick all relevant areas)</b>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A: Improve public health through nutrition – healthy and sustainable consumption <input type="checkbox"/> B: Increase food safety and quality <input type="checkbox"/> C: Reduce losses and waste – more efficient food chain <input type="checkbox"/> D: Manage the land for all ecosystem services – sustainable rural development <input type="checkbox"/> E: Increase agricultural outputs sustainably – sustainable intensification <input type="checkbox"/> F: Understand food markets in an increasingly globalised food system <input type="checkbox"/> G: Increase equity in the food system			
<b>2. What is the challenge and why does it exist?</b>			
<p>The challenge may be summarised as "Adequate nutrition and physical activity for infants and children to achieve optimal development, health and well-being." The future mother's nutrition and health status as well as the child's exposure to nutrients and metabolic stimuli in the womb and the diet over the first years of life affect a child's health and disease risk acutely and in the long term. Similarly, adequate nutrition and physical activity can promote bone health and reduce the risk of osteoporosis later in life. Currently, infants often exceed recommendations for intake of energy, protein, sodium, sugar and fat and do not meet requirements for iron, vitamin D and iodine. Physical activity recommendations are often not met either. Knowledge on optimal feeding practices is evolving only slowly, and its communication to target audiences may be ineffective. Furthermore, a variety of factors such as food traditions, cultural beliefs, socio-economic status, and the agricultural economy shape food environments as well as dietary and lifestyle habits.</p>			
<b>3. What will happen if the challenge is not addressed?</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Short Term Consequences</li> <li>- Long Term Consequences</li> </ul>			
<p>In the short term, the current generation of children may miss its window of opportunity for the best possible start in life.</p> <p>In the long term, the risk for non-communicable diseases (diabetes, obesity, heart disease, osteoporosis, etc) may remain unnecessarily high, thus compromising individual and population health as well as potentially burdening health care systems beyond breaking point.</p>			
<b>5. What were the suggested solutions, research insights and/or policy proposals? Were specific new research or development actions identified?</b>			
<p>Paediatricians were seen as having a key role in instructing parents and children about healthy diet and lifestyle behaviours. The period of 4-24 months of age was identified as a window of opportunity for introducing complementary foods and for establishing favourable food preferences.</p> <p>Experts called for a change in EU economic and agriculture policies, which were claimed to have driven food</p>			

supply towards high fat/sugar and meat-based diets (thus eroding Mediterranean diet). They also voiced the need to monitor the impact of the economic crisis on people's diets.

Characteristics of the Mediterranean diet were suggested to be included in healthy eating recommendations.

The importance of physical activity was stressed, not only as a means to expend energy, but also regarding bone health as well as its potential application against deviant behaviour in adolescence. M- and e-based applications combining physical activity monitoring with dietary intake and nutrition coaching, for both healthy individuals and those with specific conditions, are already in use and in constant development. Seeing the heavy ICT involvement in the daily life of this generation of digital-savvy children, such applications could be an important tool in future policy options.

**6. What are the expected benefits and risks of such initiatives?**

The main expected benefit is that providing optimal nutrition and adequate physical activity during early life helps support the best possible start and sets the course for healthy development and long-term well-being.

**7. Does this event address research challenges others than those in the discussion document?**

Not really different, just more specific to the target group of infants, children, adolescents and their caretakers (parents, paediatricians, etc.).

**8. Did this event point out gaps in the private and public research infrastructure/systems which should be addressed?**

No, the sessions we followed reviewed mainly state-of-the-art knowledge.

**9. What best practices were mentioned at this event?**

(Exclusive) breastfeeding for the first 4-6 months of life was recommended as best practice.

**10. What follow-up actions emerged from this event?**

None; this event was informative in nature, aimed at presenting state-of-the-art knowledge to paediatricians and other experts in child and adolescent health, and did not include discussions on policy options or follow-up actions.