



Letter sent to the Health Attaches (Permanent Representations of the Member States to the EU) the on 14th December 2005, before the EU Summit where the Heads of Government and State would discuss the UK Presidency proposal for a EU budget 2007-2013

Dear colleagues,

The **European Public Health Alliance** is the largest network of not-for-profit, non-governmental organisations working on health in Europe. With more than 105 member organisations across the European region, EPHA is committed to improving the health of people living in Europe and increasing their participation in decision-making.

Budget heading 3 of the Financial Perspectives for 2007-2013 is entitled '**Citizenship, freedom, security and justice**'. In the Commission's original proposal, this budget line received the smallest overall allocation (560 million Euros) of the 5 budget lines. Under budget 3b we find the allocations for the Youth, Culture, **Health** and Consumer Protection programmes. The European Parliament has specifically called for a balanced approach with larger financial allocations for the programmes under this budget heading.

We were therefore profoundly disappointed to see the Budget proposal made by the UK presidency for the financial perspectives, under heading 3b. This proposal for a flat 520 million EUR per year can only be interpreted as a **significant step backwards**.

This is a derisory proposal on the part of the UK presidency which takes no account of the pressing issues and concerns widely shared by thousands of citizens across Europe. This is the budget line that will have direct impact on **quality of life for citizens**. It represents what 'Europe does for me'.

Good health for all people living in Europe is a fundamental right. Public health means working towards societies are equitable, inclusive and responsive to the needs of all individuals. In Europe today, there are significant health inequalities. Ill health and premature death causes suffering and undermines Europe's competitiveness. Health is also a critically economic and social sector for Europe, representing 10 % of all employment and 8-10 % of GDP. Most EU policies have a direct or indirect impact on the health of citizens, yet this is rarely addressed in policy-making and the financial resources allocated to public health at EU level are inadequate.

Despite the pressures for implementation of a timely budget, and concerns about implementation of the programmes themselves, we urge you to reject the budget of the UK presidency and restore

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financial balance in Heading 3 in favour of the policy areas that are closest to citizens. **An annual increase of at least 20 % over 2006 figures is needed for Budget Heading 3 b.**

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