



Health and Consumer Intergroup

Terms of Reference

The European Parliament has had a strong interest in health and consumer issues and a Health Intergroup, with EPHA as the Secretariat, has existed since 1994. A Consumer Intergroup, assisted by BEUC has been active since 1989. For the new Parliamentary session (2004-2009) a joint Health and Consumer Intergroup has been established. The Secretariat will be provided jointly by EPHA and BEUC which are the leading European health and consumer NGOs.

Objectives of the Intergroup:

- ✓ The Health and Consumer Intergroup aims to establish an informal cross-party forum in order to promote an diverse perspective on consumer and health issues.
- ✓ It provides regular opportunities for MEPs to exchange views with public health and consumer experts, Commission officials, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders.
- ✓ The intergroup is designed to raise awareness about the health and consumer interests of all people living in Europe and to strengthen the dialogue between the EU institutions, citizens and NGOs in support of health and consumer-oriented public policies.

Rules:

- ✓ The Health and Consumer Intergroup is governed by the Rules for the Establishment of an Intergroup, adopted by the European Parliament on the 23rd of September 2004 and undertakes to abide by them.
- ✓ As such, this intergroup is not an organ of Parliament and may not express the opinion of the European Parliament.
- ✓ It will not use neither the name, nor the the logo of the European

Parliament, nor any name which might lead to confusion with the official bodies of the European Parliament.

- ✓ It will not undertake any activities which might result in confusion with the official activities of the European Parliament.

Co-chairing and the bureau:

The creation of the Health and Consumer Intergroup was supported by more than 100 MEPs from across the political spectrum and the EU. The EPP-ED, the PES and the Greens/EFA political groups provided formal endorsement for the establishment of the Intergroup.

- ✓ Membership is restricted to elected Members of the European Parliament.
- ✓ The Intergroup will be co-chaired by 2 MEPs (co-presidents).
- ✓ The two co-presidents liaise with the Parliament administration and other EU institutions on behalf of the Intergroup.
- ✓ A panel of 10-12 MEPs constitutes the Bureau of Vice-Presidents which identifies topics for Intergroup meetings.
- ✓ The co-presidents and the Bureau of Vice-Presidents are elected by the Members of the Intergroup, during the first meeting.

The secretariat:

- ✓ The secretariat of the Intergroup is provided by BEUC (www.beuc.org) and EPHA (www.eph.org).
- ✓ The secretariat is responsible for the logistics of meetings, arranging speakers for meetings, publicising the Intergroup and supporting the co-chairs and the Bureau.
- ✓ The secretariat is committed to act in an objective manner and facilitate access for MEPs to a range of expertise.

Meetings:

- ✓ According to the rules established by the European Parliament, Intergroup meetings will take place in Strasbourg during part-sessions. The intergroup will not meet at voting time during plenary sittings of the European Parliament.
- ✓ Additional ad-hoc meetings may be organised in Brussels.
- ✓ The meetings will be approximately 1 hour and will feature 1 or 2 formal

speakers and time for debate by MEPs.

- ✓ Speakers are suggested by the secretariat and approved by the co-chairs.
- ✓ Officials from the European Commission or other institutions will be invited to participate in Intergroup meetings.
- ✓ Intergroup meetings are organised by and for MEPs. Parliamentarians and their assistants will receive priority seats. External attendance will therefore be limited to the capacity of the EP conference rooms.

Communication – Dissemination of information:

- ✓ The Intergroup will work in a transparent and accountable manner.
- ✓ A publicly accessible website for the Intergroup will be designed and maintained by the secretariat. It will feature all relevant information such as lists of members, dates of forthcoming meetings and minutes of meetings.