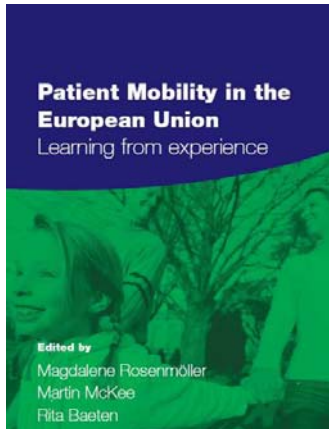




**FP6 - SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT TO
POLICIES: HEALTH**



Forthcoming Publication on Patient Mobility and associated event 29 May 2006

“Patient Mobility in the European Union: Learning from Experience” – resulting from the ‘Europe for Patients’ project, supported under the health domain of the Scientific Support to Policies (SSP) activity of the 6th Framework Programme for Research.

May 29 at 18.30h – Members Salon European Parliament

On 29 May at 18.30 the official book launch will take place at the European Parliament, hosted by John Bowis, MEP and Rapporteur on patient mobility and healthcare developments in the European Union (April 2005). The book, one of the products resulting from the European research project, ‘Europe for Patients’, provides evidence on patient mobility, thus contributing to the ongoing policy discussions.

“The book’s case studies provide a wealth of material on the current nature of patient mobility across national frontiers within the EU”, Octavi Quintana Trias, Director of the Health in DG Research is convinced that the book will be an essential contribution to the lively discussion on patient mobility, and the High Level Group on Health Services and Medical Care, coordinated by the European Commission’s DG Health and Consumer Protection. As stated by Robert Madelin, Director General DG Health and Consumer Protection, “These case studies provide an invaluable account of real experience of both the benefits and challenges arising from patient mobility in Europe. They show cases where Member States are keen to collaborate in capacity sharing and in the creation of centres of reference, for example. So if the conditions are right, there does seem to be scope for more cooperation at European level to bring benefits to all patients throughout the Union”,

The book ‘*Patient Mobility in the European Union: Learning from Experience*’, edited by *Rosenmöller, M., M. McKee, and Rita Baeten* and published by the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies has been elaborated under the ‘*Europe for Patients*’ (e4p) a FP6 policy project, one of the first to be supported under the “*Scientific*



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support to policies” (SSP) activity of the Sixth Framework Programme. This SSP project initiative aims to provide scientific underpinning and the evidence base needed by European Union (EU) policymakers to take concerted and coordinated action to allow Europe’s citizens/ patients to benefit from enhanced mobility in Europe.

These first results of the Europe for Patients project represent a continuation of a series of research publications developed under the EU Framework Programmes, including the BIOMED 2 project “*Impact of the Single European Market on Member States*” that substantially contributed to the health policy process at European level. The patient mobility issue was brought to the fore through findings that identified four main areas that required attention. These were: waiting lists and free capacities; centres of excellence/reference centres; closer cooperation in border regions; and health care for persons undergoing long-term stays. The project also builds on earlier work by the high-level reflection process on patient mobility and health care developments in the European Union and its follow-up by the European Commission.

While the case studies do not claim to be comprehensive, they paint a very broad picture of contemporary developments. Each case study describes the extent of patient mobility between the featured countries, the scale and nature of mobility, the reasons why mobility exists, the factors that either facilitate or hinder it, and the potential impact on the health care systems concerned. The book concludes by drawing lessons learnt and giving practical recommendations on patient mobility, particularly that it needs to be managed in an overall well defined European framework. Based on trust and transparency, specific arrangements for cooperation and integration and defined benefit packages and eligibility criteria could minimize incentives and distortions of the market for the benefit of health systems and above all the patients.

The lessons learnt from the practical experiences comes at an interesting moment in the policy debate over health care and the role of the European Union, particularly in the light of the Lisbon Agenda and the discussion on the social implications of the EU internal market. It brings together the rich cross-border experiences in different areas, and these practical accounts will help to better shape policies in the area of patient mobility, and health systems and health care services in general. Thus, Europe for Patients is proving to be a value-added resource for policy-makers, demonstrating the importance of a coherent policy oriented research effort at European level in the field of public health and health systems.

Looking to the future, the Commission presented proposals last year for research on ‘*Optimizing the delivery of health care*’ under the health theme of the proposed Seventh Framework Programme for Research. This research will focus on practical and



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implementation aspects, such as translating clinical outcome into clinical practice, quality, efficiency and solidarity of health systems, health promotion and disease prevention, evidence-based medicines and better and appropriate use of new health therapies and technologies. All this will contribute towards strengthening policy research at EU level.

The Europe for Patients project results and their policy relevance highlight the strong link between research and policy, being both responsive and coherent. We believe this book will provide policy players throughout the EU with better insight and evidence for enhancing policy decisions – ultimately for the benefit of all European citizens. It should also demonstrate that first class research leads to high-quality policies. The patient mobility issue is an issue that will remain on Europe's agenda for some years to come, and will increase in importance. EU research funding is ideally placed to serve the needs of policy-makers in this domain and we look forward to further results and policy contributions from the SSP activity and under the new direction provided for in the Seventh Framework Programme.

The official Book launch will take place on Monday 29 April 2006 18h30 at the European Parliament (Members Salon), hosted by John Bowis, MEP, in presence of representatives of the European Commission and followed by a small reception.. Please confirm your attendance by May 17th¹. Registration and more information: www.europe4patients.org or email mlluch@iese.edu

More information

The Europe for Patients (e4p) project (www.europe4patients.org), launched in February 2004, studies the benefits and challenges of patient mobility in Europe with the objective to provide the evidence needed to maximize the benefits that can be achieved with enhanced patient mobility in Europe. The objective is to enable policy makers at EU and national level to take concerted and coordinated action to allow Europe's citizens/patients to benefit from enhanced mobility in Europe through actions at different levels (regional, national, European) employing legal, organizational and regulatory approaches, building on earlier work developed for the Ghent conference of December 2001 under the Belgian Presidency.

The project brings together a multidisciplinary team drawing on legal, health policy, health services research and health management perspectives, covering the European Union, including the new Member States. The team, led by IESE Business School (Spain), is formed by the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (United Kingdom), the London School of Economics and Political Science (United Kingdom), the Observatoire Social Européen (Belgium), the Faculty of Law of Ghent University (Belgium), the Centre for Cross-Border Studies (Ireland), the Institute of Public Health (Slovenia), Praxis (Estonia), the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, the Veneto Region (Italy) and the Association

¹ EP security accreditation: visitors without an EP access pass need to provide name & data of birth



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Internationale de Mutualité (AIM). A **conference** on the discussion of the results is foreseen on **26 October 2006 in Ghent**.

The European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies (www.observatory.dk) supports and promotes evidence-based health policy-making through comprehensive and rigorous analysis of health care systems in Europe. It brings together a wide range of policy-makers, academics and practitioners to analyse trends in health care reform, drawing on experience from across Europe to illuminate policy issues.

The European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies is a partnership between the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, the Governments of Belgium, Finland, Greece, Norway, Spain and Sweden, the Veneto Region of Italy, the European Investment Bank, the Open Society Institute, the World Bank, the London School of Economics and Political Science, and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

More information on www.europe4patients.org and www.observatory.dk.