

HIGH LEVEL CONFERENCE ON NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (ATHENS, 25-26 February 2014)

The High Level Conference on Nutrition and Physical Activity, jointly organized by the Ministry of Health and the European Commission which was held in Zappeion Megaron under the auspices of the Greek Presidency aspires, through the formation of **recommendations – conclusions**, to contribute to the shaping of good food choices as well as to promote the adoption of mild intensity sports throughout the life cycle, so that citizens will achieve good health and longevity.

The presentation of beneficial for health dietary patterns, such as the environmentally friendly Mediterranean Diet, the adjustment of physical activity in daily life and the improvement of modern life in the EU are also parameters which were discussed as they have a substantial positive impact on health.

The formulation of **recommendations – conclusions** to the Member - States and the European Commission include the following:

- ✚ Adoption of a healthy diet and sports as a top priority in conjunction with the promotion of effective policies that can contribute to the reduction of chronic diseases in the coming years.
- ✚ Availability of healthy food choices and sporting facilities that are accessible to all citizens.
- ✚ Existence of policies and actions where senior citizens remain active participants in sports programs of mild intensity according to their needs.
- ✚ Schools and kindergartens which ensure the provision of healthy food choices based on quality standards/specifications, such as non-sweetened beverages, products without salt and lack of unhealthy convenience food so as to encourage children and adolescents to be physically active.
- ✚ Programs by health professionals in order to provide prevention, advice and support to citizens in terms of nutrition and physical activity for the treatment of obesity especially in childhood and among the elderly.
- ✚ Engaging in inter-sectoral actions and policies involving overweight and obese citizens, across all age groups and all socio - economic strata.
- ✚ Protecting citizens and consumers from being misled by ads which promote goods or types of foods high in saturated fats, trans-fatty acids, added sugar and salt.
- ✚ Collaboration with stakeholders such as food producers, retailers and caterers, food retailers, associations of consumers, health professionals and academia

to effectively promote the redefinition of types of food as well as the minimization of trans fatty acids, saturated fats, sugar or salt in foods and the limitation of portion sizes.

- ✚ Incentives to promote the Mediterranean Diet.
- ✚ Prioritization of research that deals with the eating behaviors of vulnerable subgroups including children and the elderly.
- ✚ Finally, evaluation of the relation of the cost - effectiveness of activities and policies oriented to promote healthy eating and physical activity in different socio - economic and socio - demographic population groups.

The Congress was co-funded by the European Commission.