

## Final meeting of the ACCEPTED project

BELSPO, Friday 23 October [9 am - 4 pm]

Introductory address by Mr Frank Monteny, General Director, Research and Space - Belgian Scientific Policy

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*Address delivered by Ms Anne Fierens, coordinator of the SSD and BRAIN-be research programmes*

Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me first of all to excuse Mr Frank Monteny, General Director of the Research and Space Department of BELSPO, who was scheduled to open this meeting. Frank had other obligations at a ministerial conference, so I will replace him for a brief introduction.

Today, we are pleased to host the final conference of the ACCEPTED project financed in the framework of the second call for proposals of ERA\_ENVHEALTH, the ERANET in environment/health initiated in 2008 in the context of FP7 of the European Commission.

BELSPO, the Belgian Federal Science Policy Office, has an ongoing research programme in "Health & Environment" under the umbrella of a vast programme devoted to science for sustainable development (SSD), which will ultimately generate 113 research projects in multidisciplinary networks, most often for a period of four years.

This thematic programme, which itself appears alongside seven others ranging from Mobility to Climate and including Biodiversity, Terrestrial and Marine Ecosystems, Energy and Agro-food and Transversal Research, will encourage the affiliation of BELSPO with this ERANET and thus offer opportunities for collaboration at the European level in this field. Similar prior experience of BELSPO in other European research areas such as BIODIVERSA, CIRCLE, MARINERA, AMPERA, SKEP, etc., has also led it to participation in ERA\_ENVHEALTH.

The "Health & Environment" thematic programme of BELSPO has financed projects on indoor/outdoor pollution and thus supported the activities of ERA\_ENVHEALTH, in particular the development of its

"research" and "experts" databases, as it is the "Task leader", but also its second call for proposals, by providing funding support. With its Swedish, French and German partners, BELSPO contributes to financing the ACCEPTED project, more precisely the three Belgian teams involved, namely

- Prof. Tim Nawrot, leader of WP3 of the project. Prof. Nawrot is associate professor of environmental epidemiology at the Centre for Environmental Sciences at Hasselt University and has a considerable number of publications in the field of environmental epidemiology.
- Dr Andy Delcloo, Dr Rafiq Hamdi of the Royal Meteorological Institute (RMI). The RMI is active in European meteorological observation programs (WMO, EUMETNET) and carries out research in many areas.
- Dr. Suzanne Remy of the Institut Scientifique de Service Public (ISSeP), Liège will perform indoor measurements in the Belgian birth cohort study.

Moreover, ACCEPTED is also the only project selected from the second ERA\_ENVHEALTH call for proposals, with the theme "Air pollution in urban areas: health impacts on vulnerable groups under changing conditions", the key features of which can be stated briefly. With a second call for proposals, the partner organisations in ERA-ENVHEALTH have aimed to:

- solve environmental and health issues of European and national concern by promoting and supporting scientifically excellent research;
- promote transnational, collaborative research projects of international excellence at the European scale and scope;
- create new funding opportunities in Europe for advanced environmental and health science,
- complement existing schemes at the European and national levels;
- disseminate research findings and encourage their use and application; and contribute to effective and lasting linkages between relevant actors in European environmental and health science and policy-based organisations in support of evidence-based policy and practice;
- support policy implementation.

The call was open to proposals for transnational scientific research projects that:

- link scientific advancement to challenges in environmental and health research, policy and practice,
- generate new knowledge and insights;
- generate added value by linking expertise and efforts across national borders, leading to research projects designed at the appropriate scale and scope.
- provide a transnational vision to support policy-making.

So the objective of the final conference of the ACCEPTED project is firmly in line with the spirit of this call, aiming to summarize the state of investigation and to assess how future urban exposure situations are estimated to have an impact on health. Keynote speakers and members of the Accepted Project will present and discuss recent reports and new results.

I will end here by thanking you for your attention. I give the floor to Prof. Forsberg, the project coordinator, and wish you fruitful discussions on the topic in advance.