

# BIRTH

NEWSLETTER  
SEPTEMBER  
2008

OPEN DAYS 2008  
BIRTH Bringing Innovative Regions Together for Health



## European Week of Regions and Cities Brussels 6-9 October 2008

Editorial by Richard Tuffs

### Dear readers,

Our first consortium meeting was in mid January – and now we are in the final planning stages of our seminars. The BIRTH team has worked well together and this second newsletter illustrates the fact that the BIRTH consortium has organised three excellent seminars with top-level speakers and we are looking forward to the 8th October when our seminars take place. But this year, it is not just the seminars as the BIRTH consortium will also have stands at the Investors' Cafe to increase the profile of our regions.

This year's Open Days promises to be bigger and better with over 5,400 participants having already registered. Participants have requested (but not always achieved as some of you may be aware) over 26,000 seminar registrations and 84% of the seats at the Open Days are already booked.

Health is becoming a key debate in the European Union in terms of patient mobility

as exemplified by the Commission's Communication on patients' rights in cross-border healthcare in July; in terms of research and innovation with the recent publication of the Health 2009 Work Programme in FP7 and the first call for proposals from the Joint Technology Initiative – Innovative Medicines Initiative; and increasingly in terms of health becoming a key input to regeneration strategies and the fight against increasing inequality within the EU.

All the above initiatives require the sharing of best practice and learning across Europe and it is here that Open Days can add value at the regional level by involving a wide range of participants in key debates and enabling contacts to be made for possible future projects and partnerships.

Our role in the BIRTH consortium is to provide our regional stakeholders with the platform to share their ideas and to learn from others – experts from 27 EU countries in an area of less than 2 square kilometres in the centre of Brussels.

It is difficult to believe that there could be a better opportunity to network, to benchmark, to gain new ideas and contacts. If you are still not convinced, why not come over and find out!

*Richard Tuffs, the EU Policy Manager  
West Midlands in Europe  
Coordinator of BIRTH Conglomerate*

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### BIRTH conglomerate

Bringing Innovative Regions  
Together for Health

OPEN DAYS 2008

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## Seminar 1

# Maximising health gain: new financial models and use of Structural Funds

**08.10.2008 09h00-12h30**

Organisers: BIRTH Conglomerate  
Veneto Region

Venue: West Midlands in Europe  
Avenue d'Auderghem 22-28, 1040 Brussels 1

### BIRTH speakers

**Badura, Tibor** - Crystal Consulting Ltd., Trencin, Slovakia  
**Bedrunka, Karina** - Marshal's Office of Opolskie Region, Poland  
**Jimenez-Cantos, Eloy** - Catalonia Regional Government, Spain  
**Ruscitti, GianCarlo** - Veneto Regional Government, Italy  
**Rýznar, Václav** - Regional Authority of the Olomouc Region, Czech Republic  
**Sandri, Sandro** - Veneto Regional Government, Italy  
**Stefikova, Elena** - Regional Authority of Trencin Region, Slovakia  
**Suhrcke, Marc** - WHO European Office for Investment in Health, Italy  
**Walsh, John** - Deputy Head of Unit D2, DG REGIO, European Commission

## Veneto Region

### ... about Open Days 2008

It is widely accepted that the role of regions is crucial to achieve the majority of the goals set by the European Union. Besides representing the ideal interface between communities and European institutions, regional authorities make intelligible to their citizens the actions and policies undertaken by the EU. This strategic role is even emphasised when it comes to pursuing the highest attainable standard of health by putting into place equal and sustainable health systems reflecting the needs and demands of citizens. In fact, the health system management and the financial allocation of resources are key factors embedded in the political agenda of an increasing number of regions. Here lies the importance of involving regions so as to ensure the fulfilment of the objectives set by the Lisbon Strategy.

To ensure vital principles such as universality of care, equity, quality and accessibility, regions need to re-think and re-invent themselves in order to design and implement cost-efficient measures that meet the demands of their citizens. Being regions accountable to their citizens, dialogue with local and regional decision-makers is needed so as to align actions between regions and avoid trade-offs between resources allocated to health and health outcomes. Last but not least, regions and European institutions need to speak with one voice to raise awareness on the economic benefits of a healthy population.

The seminars organised within the framework of the Open Days respond to this way of thinking. Health, conceived in its broadest sense, is explored in the three seminars organised within the BIRTH Conglomerate. During these seminars, regional decision-makers, public health experts, academics, high-profile representatives from EU institutions would have the opportunity to confront on the various ways that regions can innovate their regional health systems through the use of new financial models and a new conception of hospitals and delivery care services.

One of the guiding principles of the European Commission states that a "high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the definition and implementation of all Community policies and activities". This workshop will discuss the positive impact that investment in health can have on the economic growth of territories and review how Structural Funds can be used to foster investment in health promotion. Best practices for investment in health promotion will be presented by representatives of European Regions.



BIRTH team, organisational meeting  
9th September 2008, West Midlands in Europe

## Seminar 2

### Regional Innovation for a Healthier Europe

**08.10.2008 14h30-16h15**

Organisers: BIRTH Conglomerate, West Midlands in Europe

Venue: [West Midlands in Europe](#)

Avenue d'Auderghem 22-28, 1040 Brussels 1



# BIRTH

**Be innovative  
and healthy!**

The EU Health Strategy has the objective of fostering good health in an ageing Europe and developing a dynamic healthcare system. Without significant reforms, health expenditure is expected to increase from 9% of GDP to about 16% by 2020. New approaches – in particular the application of information and communication technologies, as foreseen in the eHealth strategy – will embrace all functions in the healthcare sector, from doctors to hospital managers, from data processing to social security administrators and patients.

The tasks of identifying challenges, benchmarking performance and sharing best practices can best be undertaken at the regional level, while trans-regional cooperation can make a substantial contribution to enhanced healthcare standards.

## Content

Partner regions will each present a project that could be realised at the EU level: Picardie (FR): the 'ANIMEX' research

network evaluates chemical product impact on patient health, while reducing the level of animal experimentation during clinical trials (REACH Directive). West Midlands (UK): the 'i-health' project for houses/apartments equipped with new technology for assisted living. This demonstration project is helping create a demand-led market for innovative technologies. Zlin (CZ): The research activities in innovative production and use of polymers for medicine, by the Polymer Centre, Tomas Bata University, classified second in Europe in the field of research of polymer processes. Eszak-Alföld (HU): the 'Healing Water' project which uses thermal water in hospitals/healthcare for both heating and patient treatment purposes. Brussels-Capital (BE): a 'Telediagnosis' project combining telemonitoring and diagnostics facilities to collect, organise and share clinical information for evaluating patient condition, posing diagnoses and establishing treatments.

A panel and networking session will then examine the potential of health-linked innovation, obstacles to be overcome and the possibilities for future cooperation.

## BIRTH speakers

**Bore, Albert** - Councillor and CoR Member, Birmingham, United Kingdom

**Chesters, Rob** - Medilink West Midlands Region, United Kingdom

**Ferreira, Anne** - MEP and Vice president of the Regional Council of Picardie, France

**Lamy, Pierre** - Health Business Unit Manager, Brussels Enterprise Agency (BEA)

**Lemazurier, Emmanuel** - Scientific Director, INERIS, France

**Saha, Petr** - Head of Polymer Centre, Tomas Bata University, Zlín, Czech Republic

**Szekanecz, Zoltán** - Head of Institute for Internal Medicine, University of Debrecen, HU

## BIRTH in Brussels

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08.10.2008

16h45-18h30

Innovation in healthcare offers much more than new treatments for patients.

The way we organise healthcare is now coming under scrutiny.

BIRTH partners, in close cooperation with EUREGHA - European Regional and Local Health Authorities network and the European Commission, is organising also a technical workshop devoted to the hospitals of the future.

## Re-engineering the hospitals

The position of hospitals in the wider sphere of healthcare provision is rapidly changing as an increasing number of clinic interventions take place outside hospital settings.

The workshop will examine the principal challenges that hospitals have to face in modern societies, their present and future role of in the regional healthcare system, the issues that competent policy-makers need to deal with in future perspective.

The exchange of local and regional experiences from all over the European in the field of hospital management and changing hospital structures is also part of the program.

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## ... and many other events within the official programme

### Opening session 06.10.2008 at 16h00

The European Week of Regions and Cities will be officially opened by senior political representatives of the main partners. As usual, these keynote session aims to define the overall frame for OPEN DAYS debates and identify the key topics to be discussed.

Special attention will be devoted to the Commission's Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion, which adoption is expected for autumn 2008. Representatives from the EU Member States and the European Regions will animate the exchange of views about the renewed concept of "territorial cohesion".

High level European speakers are expected to participate, including, among the others:

- François Fillon, Prime Minister of France, on behalf of the EU Presidency
- José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission
- Luc Van den Brande, President to the Committee of the Regions
- Danuta Hübner, European Commissioner for Regional Policy.

The final programme for these sessions will be published on the OPEN DAYS website once speakers confirm their participation.

### Closing session 09.10.2008 at 14h00

As tradition, the closing session of the OPEN DAYS will occur in the Hemicycle of the European Parliament.

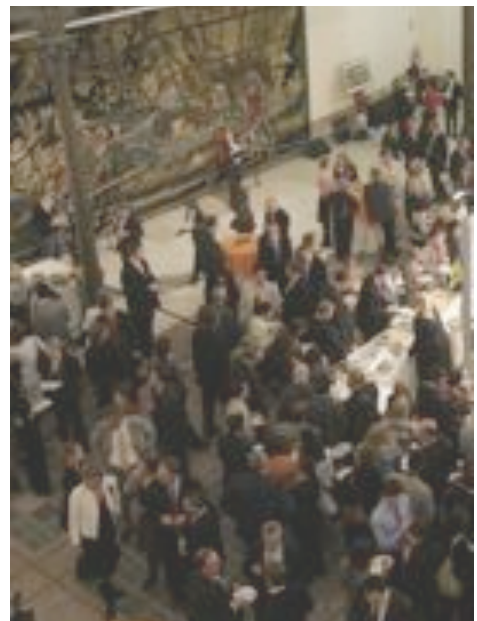
Chairman of the event is named Mr. Gerardo Quecedo Galeote, President of the Parliament's Regional Development Committee. The list of the other participants include senior representatives of the European institutions, of the participating administrations and businesses, as well as experts from all over Europe.

The speakers will summarise the discussions on the OPEN DAYS' themes and a public round table will follow.

Expected guests are, not to cite that some of them:

- Hans-Gert Pöttering, President of the European Parliament
- Jean-Pierre Jouyet, Secretary of State for European Affairs of the French Government for the Presidency of the EU Council
- Günter Verheugen, Vice-President of the European Commission
- Michel Delebarre, First Vice-President of the Committee of the Regions

The event will be followed also by a wide number of representatives of the EU and international press.



### Official reception 08.10.2008 at 19h00

On the occasion of the OPEN DAYS, Committee of the Regions organises in its premises a formal reception for the high political delegations and their partners. The aims is double: to provide the opportunity for a wide promotion of the regional products of Europe and for an additional networking among all participants.

## Lunch and receptions organised by BIRTH partners

On the **7th of October 2008**, as part of the tradition in the OPEN DAYS, the Representations of the Olomouc and Zlin Regions in Brussels invite all their EU partners for an informal **reception** at their seat, **the Rose House**. Arrived at its fourth edition, this event is one of the most successful appointments of the entire week. The day after, **8th of October 2008**, partners of **BIRTH** join their forces for a **working lunch** hosted within the premises of West Midlands in Europe, for an exchange of opinions between one seminar and the other. Finally, the **Veneto Region** in Brussels hosts a **reception** that officially closes the program of events organised by the BIRTH conglomerate for the OPEN DAYS 2008.