

Recommendations

To be submitted to EU institutions

A. Enhancing citizen participation in the environment and health field

1. Increase investments in formal and non-formal education focused on active citizenship and participatory politics;
2. Encourage and promote creative ways to promote active citizenship in public spaces;
3. Encourage and require increased use of public consultations;
4. More actively engage citizens in local public issues and increase role and resources for civil society to facilitate this work;
5. Engage more youth in the decision making process;
6. The European Union should focus more on the local level and de-emphasise requirements on EU level;
7. Continue to provide access to information and provide good practice.

B. Urban sustainable development, green spaces and public health

1. Promote a European wide contest/competition for the most ecological town (up to 60.000 inhabitants): The winning town will invest the prize into:
 - creating green spaces, reconvertng vacant spaces into urban gardens and parks, facilitating the citizens with vacant spaces to stimulate urban gardens
 - photography and video contest for citizens about a specific green subject (private gardens, urban gardens, rooftop gardens, hanging gardens, greening and cleaning the city)
2. Stimulate/promote the use of public space for urban gardens (supporting the citizens in this undertaking by providing them with public land and seeds/plants)
3. Introduce classes/educational material for classes in kindergardens, schools, universities (basic knowledge) about:
 - sustainability
 - sustainable urban development
 - growing plants, planting gardens (sensitization towards sustainable urban living, health, quality of life related to nature, food and food production);

4. Stimulate the introduction and use of more ecological cars (subventions for car sharing systems) plus the improvement of public transport (in order to make living in city centers more sustainable, more healthy and more attractive) by supporting the municipalities and citizens' associations directly.

C. Air pollution and public health

1. The implementation of EU standards should foresee:
 - ❑ the setting of a register identifying the regions that do not comply with the terms of the EU directives
 - ❑ a more regulated monitoring process that clearly defines the responsible body in charge and that extends the measurements to all relevant chemical agents;
2. The monitoring process should be organised directly by the European Commission;
3. A new EU body (for instance, EU Monitors of the Environment) should be set to identify environmental violations affecting public health;
4. Raise citizens' awareness on the link between air pollution and public health through formal and non-formal education;
5. Increase investments and further support EU projects promoting improvements in public transport services and tackling the excessive use of private cars;
6. Further promote the use of innovative technologies such as filters and water-based colours;
7. Identify mechanisms to issue fines for environmental violations on individual and not state basis

D. Water pollution and public health

1. Promote more harmonisation of water policies;
2. Promote educational activities and aware raising campaigns on the protection of water sources;
3. Promote civic education for water saving;
4. Promote more transparency on potable water services in terms of water quality analysis, costs and final prices at the market;

5. Promote and support projects on water protection such as an “Award on the most clean water city” might be;
6. Further promote the exchange of best practices on how to tackle the lack of potable water in disadvantaged areas;
7. Water must be a public good and not a commercial item;

E. Agriculture and public health

1. Further include the organic producers in the EU decision making process;
2. Provide more information on the use and abuse of farming products and techniques;
3. Introduce classes/educational material for classes in kindergardens, schools, universities (basic knowledge) on agriculture and health;
4. Acknowledge the added value of local agricultural products for health;
5. Quality regulations should be re-defined in order to include more quality features rather than apparent ones.

E. Waste management and public health – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

1. Promote stricter EU regulations on waste management. Identify the most efficient and effective model of waste management and promote its application in all member states;
2. Promote regulations on the treatment of sludges (domestic waste);
3. Set a EU register of forbidden waste categories ;
4. Promote more transfer of power to national and regional agencies for the monitoring of waste management that can also issue a withdrawal of permit;
5. Promote and support awareness raising campaigns as well as education, information and trainings for citizens on waste management and public health;
6. Promote in-field visits, job shadowing and exchange of good practices (“door to door”);
7. Engage military and other available human resources in waste management processes;



8. Make all pollution data available to public;

9. Environmental studies should be adopted by committees composed of at least 51% of citizens

Adopted in Mesagne, Italy on 15 March 2014.

