

HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT: EXPERTS' EXPECTATIONS AND VIEWS IN THE APHEKOM PROJECT

Hanns Moshhammer, *Medical University Vienna, Austria*
Manel Nebot, *Agència de Salut Pública Barcelona, Spain*

Background and Aims: At the ISEE 2009 conference in Dublin we launched a questionnaire among participants regarding their views on Health Impact Assessments (HIA) with a special focus on air pollution. Afterwards other epidemiologists and public health experts were also contacted by e-mail and the questionnaire was made available on the internet.

Methods: Respondents were asked about their expectations and needs regarding HIA, what in their opinion were the weakest parts of a HIA, and how HIA could be improved and the results should be communicated to the different stakeholder groups. In a second questionnaire stakeholders were asked about their perceptions and needs. The responses to both questionnaires will be contrasted.

Results and Conclusions: Twenty-six responses were received from experts. Most of the respondents have already authored a HIA (21 persons) or used it as reviewer or teacher. All are at least acquainted with the principles of HIA because they used HIA in their daily work and have at least read or reviewed examples. Thus, all respondents were scientists with a complete knowledge and understanding of HIA. Most of them have dealt with HIA regarding air pollution.

Answers regarding the weakest part ranged from the underlying model assumptions regarding the exposure-response function and its applicability to the specific setting under discussion, the general lack of appropriately considering lag effects and/or the impact on susceptible subgroups or combined effects and interactions as far as a lack of transparency regarding the assumptions for the economic valuation. Many good proposals were made regarding the presentation of HIA results especially in communicating with the general public.

Among lay stakeholders expectations differ considerably from the experts.