

# Aphekom

Improving Knowledge and Communication for Decision Making on Air Pollution and Health in Europe

Haluza D (1), Moshammer H (1), Medina S (2), Perez L (3), Forsberg B (4)\*

(1) Medical University of Vienna, (2) InVS Paris, (3) Swiss TPH, Basel, (4) Umea University  
\* on behalf of the Aphekom network

The health impact of current levels of air pollution is well established through epidemiological studies from all over the world and supported by mechanistic studies conducted in laboratories.

Short-term effects have been consistently shown in time-series and panel studies. Long-term effects, studied mostly in cohort studies and underpinned by cross-sectional studies, are stronger, although in Europe, robust studies are rare.

Reliable, easy-to-understand information for decision makers, health professionals, and the general public is vital to encourage sound policy, albeit not easy to achieve. Communication should neither evoke unreasonable fears, nor neglect real risks, thus uncertainties on all levels should clearly be explained.

Building on the experiences gained in the former Apehis project ([www.apheis.net](http://www.apheis.net)), Aphekom adds novel approaches for more specific health impact assessments (HIAs) of traffic-related exposures including chronic and acute diseases.

Aphekom will also evaluate strategies designed to reduce air pollution in Europe, evaluate the HIAs related monetary costs, and promote dialog between stakeholders on the new knowledge and on the uncertainties in the HIA process (Figure 1).

During the project's 2.5 years until November 2010, more than 60 scientists in 25 European cities participate in the Aphekom project (Figure 2) funded by the European Commission (Public Health Program EC Grant Agreement No.2007105).

## Aphekom network

■ French Public Health Surveillance, InVS, Saint-Maurice, France ■ Umeå University, Umeå, Sweden ■ Barcelona Public Health Agency, Spain ■ Centre for Research in Environmental Epidemiology, CREAL, Barcelona, Spain, and Institute for Social and Preventive Medicine-Swiss Tropical Institute, Basel, Switzerland ■ Dublin Institute of Technology, Ireland ■ St. George's, University of London, United Kingdom ■ Department of Hygiene, Epidemiology and Medical Statistics, Medical School, University of Athens, Greece ■ Centre of Economics and Ethics for the Environment and Development, C3ED, University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, UVSQ, France

## More information about Aphekom can be found at:

- Medina S., Ung A., Moshammer H. (for the Aphekom network), 2008. Aphekom tackles air pollution in Europe. WHO Newsletter No. 42, Dec, 2008, p. 14-15, Germany.
- Medina S., Ung A., Moshammer H. (for the Aphekom network), 2009. The Aphekom Project. Aphekom General Brochure (order: k.eshal@invs.sante.fr), France.
- Aphekom Website <http://www.aphekom.org/>.

Figure 1: Aphekom organisational chart

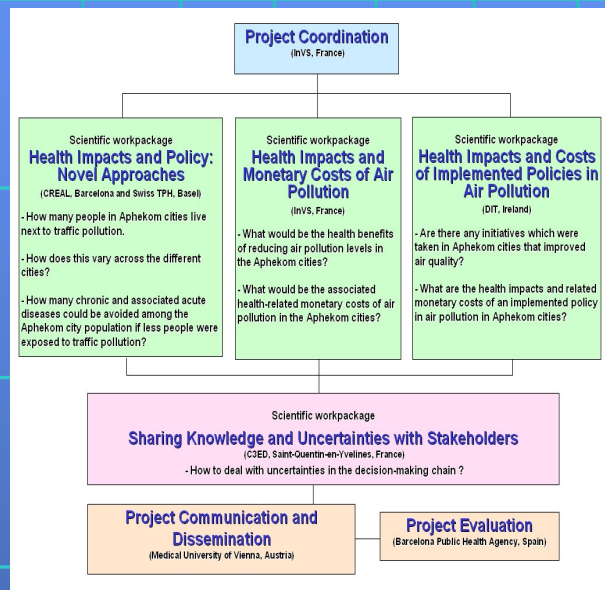
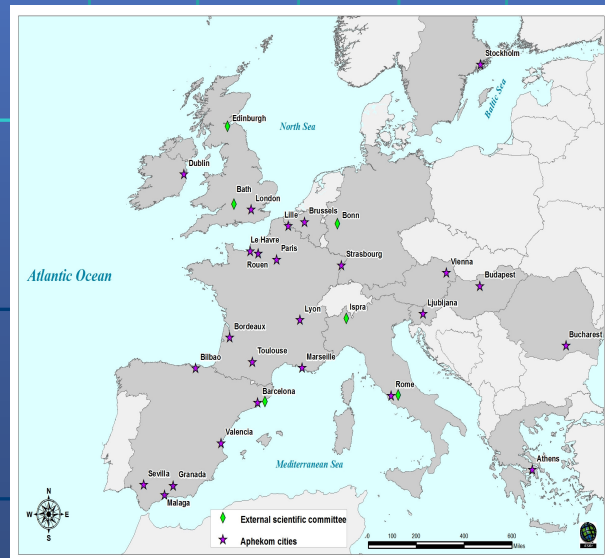


Figure 2: Aphekom partner cities



- Valencian School for Health Studies, EVES, and Centre for Research on Public Health, CSISP, Valencia, Spain
- Brussels Institute for the Management of the Environment, Belgium
- Basque Foundation for Health Innovation and Research, Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain
- Andalusian School of Public Health, EASP, Granada, Spain
- Institute of Public Health, Bucharest, Romania
- Institute of Public Health of the Republic of Slovenia, Ljubljana, Slovenia
- National Institute of Environmental Health, Budapest, Hungary
- Rome E Health Authority, Italy