

Why Aphekom?

Much has been done in recent years to reduce air pollution and its harmful effects on the health of Europeans. Yet pressing gaps remain in stakeholders' knowledge and understanding of this continuing threat, thus impeding progress in the planning and implementation of measures that protect public health.

To address the problem, the Aphekom project develops and delivers new, reliable and actionable information and tools so decision makers can set more effective local and European policies; health professionals can better advise vulnerable groups; and individuals can make better-informed decisions.

In specific, during the project's two and a half years the tasks of Aphekom's more than 60 scientists and specialists working in 25 cities across Europe include: developing new health-impact indicators with a special focus on traffic given the latest findings on the dangers of living near roads. Reporting on health impacts and related costs. Evaluating strategies designed to reduce air pollution. Stimulating dialogue between stakeholders. And providing guidance to health professionals on helping patients reduce their exposure to air pollution.

In all these ways the project hopes to contribute to the development and evolution of local and European Union policies aimed at reducing both air pollution and its impact on respiratory and cardiovascular morbidity and mortality across Europe.

Aphekom (Improving Knowledge and Communication for Decision Making on Air Pollution and Health in Europe) is a multicountry project whose cities extend from Stockholm in the north of Europe to Athens in the south, and from Dublin in the west to Bucharest in the east.

Aphekom builds on the firm foundation of the earlier Apehis project (www.apheis.net) by adding new research, interaction with stakeholders, and more effective communication on HIAs (health impact assessments) to those who need to know in Europe.

Formally launched at a meeting on 1-2 July, 2008 in Paris hosted by the project's coordinator, the French Institute of Public Health Surveillance (InVS), Aphekom is co-funded by the European Commission's Programme on Community Action in the Field of Public Health (2003-2008), under Grant Agreement No. 2007105, and by the institutions participating in the project.

For further information

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