



# Health Reporter Training

Summer 2012



Calling health journalists, working journalists, journalism students, editors and publishers.

*Top up your specialist skills and knowledge!*

- **Seven pilot courses in seven partner countries**

- Flexible training packages varying from ½ day sessions, to 1 or 2 day sessions
- Workplace training by arrangement tailored to your needs

- **Online resources**



Education and Culture DG  
Lifelong Learning Programme

On offer in SEVEN partner countries:

**Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Romania, Spain, and United Kingdom**

**Free of charge!**

For specific details on the seminars that will take place in your country please contact:

### Greece

**Institute of Preventive Medicine Environmental & Occupational Health, Prolepsis**

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### UK

**Coventry University**

T: +44 7774 264112 | E: j.lister@coventry.ac.uk

### Estonia

**University of Tartu**

T: +3727374198 | E: eda.merisalu@ut.ee

### Finland

**Finnish Institute of Occupational Health**

T: +35830 474 2559 | E: sari.virta@ttl.fi

### Germany

**University of Applied Sciences Düsseldorf**

T: +49 211 4351-201 /254 | E: fhd@uwejreinhardt.de

### Romania

**Center for Independent Journalism**

T: +4021 311 1375 | E: mihaela@cji.ro

### Spain

**Asociación Nacional de Informadores de la Salud**

T: +34911123491 | E: heartprojectspain@gmail.com

HeaRT, a 2-year Leonardo da Vinci, Grundvig and Dissemination project co-funded by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, was officially launched in November 2010 and aims to develop **vocational training on health reporting for journalists.**

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## Health Reporting Training in Europe

HeaRT research resulted in **77 seminars and courses** focusing on health reporting and health journalism. In relation to other fields of studies and academic research in Europe, this number is extremely low. Distinctive tertiary education and training programs, as BA and MA level study programs, were only found in **Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Portugal, Romania, Spain** and the **UK**. An electronic database of all identified courses can be found at [www.project-heart.eu](http://www.project-heart.eu).

## Health Journalists' Survey Results

HeaRT researchers also surveyed **176 European health journalists** in the seven participating countries. Even though **66.5%** of the journalists responded that they have never had any specialized training on reporting health topics, **51.7%** considered specialized training as necessary, while **47.1%** as good to have.

Journalists identified the topics on which they would welcome additional training opportunities. Based on these findings, training packages tailored to the needs of journalists in each participating country will be offered on topics, such as:

### Specialist Knowledge:

*In each country selected courses from the list below will be offered:*

#### • Medical research and science

The topic on which health journalists welcomed most support in. An overview of basic methodological issues and criteria to critically reading medical research.

#### • The business/economics of health care

The business of health care is not always consistent with the provision of health care based on the need or the access to healthcare as a human right. Economic/business priorities will be examined in regards to issues such as social equity, efficiency and effectiveness.

#### • Health care quality and performance

The varying ways of explaining quality and measuring performance – e.g. from the standpoint of cost-saving “economy” or from a wider view of efficiency and effectiveness – will be discussed, including the challenge of popularizing these issues. The session will look at the different points of view of private and public healthcare providers, advocates of market competition and the patient.

#### • Health policy

A definition of the scope of health policy and the different levels on which health policy operates (global, international, national and local level) is provided, including the distinction between health policy based on the **clinical – curative approach** and on the **public health approach**, which often is poorly understood but can have a long-term impact of reducing dependence on curative medicine.

#### • Global health

Competing interests, conflicting ideology and different political approaches need to be discussed when looking at the focus of global health coverage. Significant differences of approaches also exist between some of the key global bodies, as well as between countries with socioeconomic discrepancies.

#### • Consumer/Lifestyle health

The focus is on public health issues, such as diet and obesity, smoking, drug and alcohol abuse, as well as human interest stories and the impact of health treatment and illness on individuals and their families. Ethical issues related to commercial interests, difficulties when approaching the medical community, as well as the risks linked to the public's limited awareness of some issues are also discussed.

#### • The politics of health care

With health being inevitably political on many levels, the politics in relation to health and health care systems look at issues, such as the social determinants of health, the priority setting of resources allocated to different diseases, the political decisions and debates in the country and the local politics of health reforms, access and affordability of health care.

#### • Health disparities

Frequently discussed in terms of “equity” in access to and allocation of health services and resources, disparities can apply to localities and whole areas (rural versus urban populations, national minorities, etc.) or to various social groups (such as social class, ethnicity, culture, etc.).

#### • The workings of publicly financed health programs

With the extent of public provision of health care and the adequacy of its resources varying between different European countries, an overview of the country's specific public health care system is provided. The way the private sector can affect the health system of the country is also discussed.

### Skills:

*In each country selected courses from the list below will be offered:*

#### • Evaluating conflicts of interest

Conflicts of interest are discussed on the different levels they operate at, such as financial or political interests affecting sources and expert commentators, or advertisement interests influencing editors and news media, with a very frequent source of such conflicts being the pharmaceutical industry.

#### • Interpreting medical research reports

This session aims to enhance understanding of the basic principles for interpreting medical research, with useful sources and links provided.

#### • Understanding statistics

Even though published information and advice is often available, this is a face to face session in which statistics for non statisticians are explained, questions can be asked and points can be further elaborated.

#### • Understanding hospital and other financial reports

Despite some common rules, the structure of health services and the organisation of hospitals and other service providers varies enormously from one European country to another. We discuss your situation.

#### • Multimedia reporting

Re-purposing stories from broadcast media to websites and podcasts, revamping print articles into web features, and using social media.

