



**PRESS RELEASE:**

## Launch of 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Diabetes Policy Puzzle Not enough progress has been made in Europe

14 November 2011 - Across **Europe more than 52.8 million people have diabetes**. By 2030 this figure will rise to 64 million - which is equal to 9.5% of the adult population. **Europe is home to the highest prevalence of children living with type 1 diabetes.**

The International Diabetes Federation-European Region (IDF Europe), the Foundation of European Nurses in Diabetes (FEND), Primary Care Diabetes Europe (PCDE) and the Alliance for European Diabetes Research (EURADIA) have produced an audit - which now covers 47 countries - to further document the diabetes epidemic and the disparate national policies and practices that currently exist across the European region.

*"As this publication shows, progress has been registered by European policymakers. But if we are to fight diabetes effectively we need to put our heads together and increase efforts at the EU level to adopt a concerted strategy for diabetes. We have called on the European Commission to develop such a strategy"* **MEP Simon Busuttil, Co-chair EU Diabetes Working Group.**

According to the report, the developments in diabetes services are still too slow. This audit provides strong evidence for the urgent need to address diabetes through targeted policy action. The research carried out reveals a number of compelling trends including a growing cost burden of diabetes equal to 9% of the country's total healthcare expenditure, a low uptake of National Diabetes Plans (NDPs) with only 25 countries out of the 47 countries having a NDP put in place and restricted and insufficient access to care.

Furthermore, in the low to middle income European countries, economic problems are often compounded by the instability of government institutions and governance which lead to inadequate provision of health care, access and availability of essential medicines and basic services for people with diabetes. In this time of financial turmoil, European governments cannot afford to cut back on access to essential care. Insufficient or inadequate diabetes care inevitably leads to costly complications and poorer health outcomes that negatively impact those individuals directly affected, as well as their surroundings and society as a whole.

The report makes numerous conclusions and recommendations and calls upon national governments and international institutions to acknowledge the findings of the Policy Puzzle, take action and help improve the lives of millions of people with diabetes across Europe.



*"The third edition of the Policy Puzzle survey indicates the increasing prevalence of diabetes amongst European citizens, the disparity of services and deficiency of national plans for diabetes. This is a final call for solidarity and leadership."* **Anne Marie Felton, President of the Foundation of Nurses in Diabetes and Co-Chair of the European Coalition for Diabetes.**

The authoring organisations share the conviction that providing sustained and comparative documentary evidence on the epidemic levels and diabetes care across the European region will help provide the necessary basis for governments and health providers to deal with this epidemic urgently.

*"Since the first policy puzzle in 2005 there has been some progress by European policy makers in addressing the diabetes epidemic but nevertheless, the numbers of people with diabetes have continued to rise and further urgent action is needed."* **Chris J. Delicata, President of IDF Europe and Co-Chair of the European Coalition for Diabetes.**

**-ENDS-**

**Note to editors:**

**What is Diabetes?**

Diabetes is a chronic disease that occurs when the pancreas does not produce enough insulin (the hormone that regulates blood glucose), or when the body cannot effectively use the insulin it produces. Poorly managed diabetes results in hyperglycaemia (raised blood glucose), which over time causes damage to blood vessels, nerves and other tissues. Diabetes related complications include cardiovascular disease, retinopathy (impaired vision and blindness), nephropathy (kidney disease) and amputations.

**More information about the authoring organisations:**

**EURADIA:** As a unique alliance of NGOs and pharmaceutical companies, **EURADIA's** mission is to improve the lives of people affected by diabetes both now and in the future, through advocacy of diabetes research in Europe and by shaping the allocation of resources for diabetes research through increased awareness. [www.euradia.org/](http://www.euradia.org/)

**FEND** is a non-governmental organisation which has established a unique voice for nurses working in the field of diabetes care, research and education in Europe. [www.fend.org/](http://www.fend.org/)

**IDF Europe** is a non-governmental organisation advocating for people with diabetes and their healthcare providers. We work together with our member associations to promote diabetes prevention and care. [www.idf.org/regions/europe](http://www.idf.org/regions/europe)

**PCDE** is a non-governmental organization which provides a focal point for primary care clinicians and their people with diabetes. Its purpose is to promote high standards of care for people living with diabetes throughout Europe. Emphasis is placed on incorporating evidence-based medicine into daily practice as well as promoting diabetes education and research in primary care. [www.pcdeurope.org/](http://www.pcdeurope.org/)

**For further information or a hard copy of the Diabetes Policy Puzzle** contact the International Diabetes Federation European Region | IDF Europe at [idfeurope@idf-europe.org](mailto:idfeurope@idf-europe.org)  
**Electronic copies** may be downloaded from [www.idf.org/regions/europe](http://www.idf.org/regions/europe)