Editorial

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The principal tasks of public health are preventing diseases and promoting health and life extension. Therefore it is necessary to identify risk factors (e.g. genetical, clinical, social) and health promoting factors (salutogenesis) and to analyse and evaluate supply structures. Clinical research and evidence-based medicine are essential to find solutions for health-related problems.

The *Journal of Public Health* debates different international public health issues, mainly European affairs.

This issue of the *Journal of Public Health* contains a series of very interesting articles. Alrasheedy et al. present a qualitative study about why type 2 diabetic patients don't want to take insulin shots. The aim was to find out what the perceptions and beliefs about the use of insulin are and also the barriers to initiation of insulin. At first one-on-one in-depth interviews were conducted, followed by an educational intervention. After that patients were again interviewed. The study results show that misconceptions about insulin use and psychological barriers are some of the main reasons for patients to refuse insulin therapy. Also it revealed that a short educational intervention can convince patients to overcome their fears or erroneous beliefs and start insulin therapy.

Ghafoori et al. have been researching the effects of maternal exposure to second-hand smoke on breastfeeding duration. The background of this study was the fact that the rate of exclusive breastfeeding is decreasing in Iran. Different studies have proven that breastfeeding duration up to 6 months is to be encouraged since the milk is very important for the development of the infant, the baby and the family. The prospective cohort study examined the effect of smoke on exclusive breastfeeding. Three follow-up interviews within different

intervals up to 6 months after delivery have been accomplished. The maternal exposure to smoke was assessed by self-reports. An association of exclusive breastfeeding duration and exposure to second-hand smoke could be demonstrated. So it is recommended that second-hand smoke be avoided in general, even at home. This study is another example of the wide range of negative effects of smoking on public health.

Nöhammer et al. set up the thesis that employees often don't participate in the worksite health promotion offered by the employer. The paper gives an overview of discovered barriers from the employee's point of view. It is recommended that these be used for designing and implementing worksite health promotion programmes.

Tumwebaze has been investigating the prevalence and determinants of cleanliness of shared toilets in Kampala slums, Uganda. In a cross-sectional study they have interviewed 1,500 respondents using a semi-structured questionnaire. One thousand nineteen study participants have found that less than 12 % toilets are not very clean. Reasons for these conditions are the number of households which are using the same toilet, the resulting difficulty to keep them clean and also the attitude of the dwellers to cleanliness. Tumwebaze concludes that most of the shared toilets in the slums are not hygienic.

An epidemic of Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* caused by Fenugreek sprouts broke out in Hesse, Germany in 2011; 50 % of these cases were linked to six clusters. To stop the outbreak it was necessary to identify the vehicles in a timely manner. Thereupon Uphoff et al. conducted a retrospective cohort study to find shortcomings and obstacles which led to a delay of identification of outbreak sources. The findings of the study showed several but not sufficiently known deficits such as need for earlier mobilization of additional laboratory capacities, better documentation and sharing information.

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Alcohol consumption and abuse is always a recurring issue in public health. The next two articles of this issue deal with alcohol consumption.

Silva-Fonseca et al. investigated the prevalence and socio-demographic characteristics of Brazilian never-drinkers aged over 18. One question was if socio-demographic characteristics would be different when compared to drinkers of any severity. Data were used from the first Brazilian National Alcohol Survey. Associations between lifetime abstinence and socio-demographics were found for gender, age group and religious affiliation. The study also showed a growing indication of abstinence as age rises.

Söllner et al. have been researching juvenile alcohol use in 25 European countries. To design and implement prevention programmes it is indispensable to develop cross-national monitoring studies. Data from the Second International Self-Report Delinquency Study (ISRD-2), the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD) and the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Study (HBSC) were compared. It could be demonstrated that adolescents in North and Eastern Europe have a higher alcohol affinity than adolescents from West and Southern Europe.

The following three articles thematize dental care. Gadde et al. researched the public priorities for government spending on dental health care by conducting a cross-sectional study. A random sample of 512 individuals aged 18+ was asked to rank

five priorities in terms of preferences for government spending. The result showed that dental care stands as fourth choice among the other spending areas. Gadde et al. recommend further promotion of public dental care policies targeting population subgroups.

The oral health status of elderly people in nursing homes is the next issue investigated by Mitov et al. They examined the nursing home inhabitant's perceptions towards oral health care and the level of treatment needs in the Saarland, Germany. One hundred seventy inhabitants have been questioned about their attitude and satisfaction with their oral health. A large discrepancy between perceived and actual treatment needs has been discovered. Hence, the development of a systematic dental care programme for elderly people should be considered.

Nassar et al. report about the effectiveness of two modalities of treatment through clinical periodontal parameters in glycaemic control of patients with diabetes mellitus and periodontal disease. The selected study participants were divided into two groups. One group got the conventional periodontal treatment with scaling and root planning and the other group got a periodontal treatment and mechanical control. It could be shown that after a period of 6 months the basic periodontal treatment was more efficient for glycaemic control in patients with type 2 diabetes with periodontal disease.

I hope the collection of the selected articles adds up to an interesting, informative and inspiring journal volume.