

HAI Holds Workshops on EU Medicines Policy & Access to Medicines in Eastern Europe

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Participants at HAI's workshop on EU Medicines Policy discuss advocacy strategies with HAI's executive director, Tim Reed, in Riga, Latvia.

Access to medicines is a key component of the human right to health. Although the European Union (EU) and its Member States are committed to universal and equitable access to healthcare, many patients across Europe still suffer inequalities in medicines availability and affordability. This is particularly the case in Eastern European countries.

At Health Action International (HAI), we recognise that sound and cohesive government policy is a requirement for better access to medicines. We also know that civil society plays an instrumental role in ensuring that strong and effective medicines policy is implemented by governments. That's why, in 2015, we started holding workshops on EU medicines policy and access to medicines for civil society organisations, academics, policymakers and other interested individuals in Eastern European countries.

"These one-day workshops engage key stakeholders in a dialogue on access to medicines, including constructive ways to create policy change at both the national and European levels," explains HAI policy advisor and workshop coordinator, Aliénor Devalière. "By incorporating lectures, group exchanges and interactive discussions, the workshops are informative and lively and result in stakeholders finding 'homegrown' solutions to improve medicines access."

HAI's first one-day workshop was held in Riga, Latvia, last July with the support of Health Projects for Latvia. The next will occur in Bucharest, Romania, this week (Wednesday, 30 September). Additional workshops will be held in other EU countries in 2016.

For more information about HAI's workshops in Eastern Europe, please contact [Aliénor](#), and

see the workshop agenda, below.

AGENDA

EU MEDICINES POLICY & ACCESS TO MEDICINES WORKSHOP

AGENDA

- 9-9:30 a.m.** **Welcome and introduction of participants**
- 9:30-11 a.m.** **EU medicines policy and access to medicines**
- Access to medicines in Europe (situation, inequalities, policy options)
 - Discussion about policy regulations and best practices on pricing and reimbursement (including the role of the EU and Member States)
 - Discussion about HAI recommendations
- 11-11:20 a.m.** **Q&A / Coffee break**
- 11:20 a.m.-12:30 p.m.** **Specific situation in [country] (open discussion)**
- Discussion about the current access to medicines situation in [country]
 - Identification of topics to work on as civil society
- 12.30-2 p.m.** **Lunch**
- 2- 3:30 p.m.** **Advocacy skills set session**
- Why civil society organisations need to be engaged
 - How to achieve a change / What skills are needed?
- 3:30-3:45 p.m.** **Break**
- 3:45-4:45 p.m.** **Next steps (group exercise)**
- What can be done on access to medicines regarding the specificity of the region?
 - Reinforcing and coordination action
- 4:45-5 p.m.** **Conclusion and evaluation**
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