



Southern Public Administration Education Foundation



PAQ



GVER



IJED



JHSA



PAM



GPS



PFM



Search



RSS

Public Health in the EU: Is Europe subject to Americanization?

Author: PAULETTE KURZER

Published in GPS, Vol. 4 No. 1

This paper examines where the European Commission obtains its ideas, validity, and legitimacy to move into areas that receive only minimal support from national political leaders and societal forces. Public health is not a major priority for European politicians and voters alike yet the EU has moved into several highly visible areas of intervention such as tobacco control and nutrition. This paper argues that the Commission took its own initiative to politicize smoking and obesity and that it received support, scientific validity, and political credibility by cooperating with the World Health Organization. In turn, the World Health Organization is highly susceptible to American definitions of public health because it relies on outside experts for information, language, and scientific input. The success of a 'global advocacy coalition' fighting against smoking and unhealthy diets mirrors the widespread influence of American federal and non-profit institutions, granting agencies, pharmaceutical industry, and research communities in the area of public health. In a circuitous way, US public health research, reports, policy, and rhetoric contribute to the growing global alarm about lifestyle diseases.

[Download PDF](#)