In this number

The new policy implications box

Public health research and policies occur in the same world and both interact with each other. Nevertheless there is a traditional reluctance both by authors and editors to publish the explicit policy implications of the research as seen by the authors. Even in some epidemiology and public health journals considerations on policy implications within the scientific reports are not permitted in the guidelines for authors. The editorial board of *JECH* have a different view, we feel our authors have the right to make explicit the policy implications their findings have. Also this information could be of practical interest for a wide range of our readers. In this issue of *JECH* we publish the first research paper with an additional "policy implications" box. A paper from T Takano and K Nakamura on the health effects of budget distribution within national and local governments gives in the new box a clear idea of the wider implications of their findings. Along this line, we invite all the potential *JECH* authors to reflect the policy implications of their work, if any.

The *JECH* will publish in the papers with relevance for policy a separate box highlighting the policy implications of the results. So you are invited to write them. If you feel that your paper has no policy implications or you don't want to write them your paper will be accepted as well. After being quickly peer reviewed the policy implications box will be published at the end of your paper, signed separately from the paper's authors. Perhaps not all the authors are happy with writing this additional box or perhaps you want to

invite a non-author of the whole paper to participate in this new section. We ask the authors to follow these guidelines:

- Select no more than five bullet points as policy implications and describe them with no more than 50 words each. Please note as well that these are not the key points nor a replication of the abstract of the paper.
- Try not to use technical jargon, be constructive and positive. You should also consider the time scale of the implications (and its costs if possible) in the short, medium and long term.
- Identify clearly factors inhibiting and/or facilitating the changes needed. Specify who or what entity should create/change the policy in question—the national versus local government; a particular ministry, and if possible what kind of entity should/could initiate the change, for example, a particular kind of advocacy group, a profession, an international organisation, a parliamentarian. When naming institutions or associations please do not use acronyms.

We hope that this new section will enhance the right of freedom of speech of the authors and will give the readers the opportunity to consider the applicability of the research and also initiate debate.

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