

## WHO/Unicef Congress

**By Claire Allcutt, ALCI Representative with BFLGI (April 2023-April 2024)**

I attended the full three days of the WHO/Unicef Congress on the Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes at WHO headquarters in Geneva from 20th-22nd June - [Global Congress on Implementation of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes](#)

The Congress was attended by more than 400 International representatives from Government, health, and advocacy representatives. I gather that over 120 countries were represented.



Picture of Claire Allcutt (Baby Feeding Law Group Ireland) between Maria Herron (Code Monitoring Northern Ireland) and Patti Rundall (Baby Milk Action) with many of the female representatives from Europe.

Here is Patti Rundall's blog with other pictures and comments - <https://www.babymilkaction.org/archives/38841>

It was a most successful trip, networking with many international advocates - Dr Laurence Grummer-Strawn (Technical Advisor at WHO) and Dr Gráinne Moloney (Senior Nutrition Advisor at Unicef), Dr Constance Ching from Malaysia, Dr Julie Smith from Australia, Dr Adriano Cattaneo from Italy and Dr Arun Gupta from India - and many other contacts from the Americas, Africa and Asia-Pacific regions.



An Irish grouping at the Congress: Dr Maria Herron, Malvina Walsh, Dr Mike Ryan of WHO, Claire Allcutt, Dr Gráinne Moloney of UNICEF

On the final day, we even got to meet Dr Mike Ryan and spoke to him about a range of issues - the Covid-pandemic, the proposal to the for an all-island forum on IYCF, protecting breastfeeding, the Milk Bank and the research to develop an emergency preparedness plan + the significance of the OSMR Bill.

You may have seen that there are several new resources available to coincide with the Congress via the Global Breastfeeding Collective and from Unicef - e.g. [https://www.globalbreastfeedingcollective.org/what-i-should-know-about-code?fbclid=IwAR3s4-oWT1veKdCW-BODF9cE-9JWDx\\_LjRfoBxTBRZUGbVNMBu2BqHwQDyq](https://www.globalbreastfeedingcollective.org/what-i-should-know-about-code?fbclid=IwAR3s4-oWT1veKdCW-BODF9cE-9JWDx_LjRfoBxTBRZUGbVNMBu2BqHwQDyq).

Marion Nestle spoke on the topic of the food industry's marketing "playbook"— strategies and tactics and she summarised the main points as being:

- \*Breastfeeding is the superior method for feeding human babies.
- \*Successful breastfeeding requires support from families, society, and government.
- \*It is quite easy to undermine confidence in the ability to breastfeed.
- \*Formula companies do all they can to undermine confidence in breastfeeding.
- \*Formula companies' main goal is to sell more formula.
- \*Formula companies promote their products as normal and superior.
- \*Breastfeeding is easier when formula marketing is controlled.

Please do ask if you would like any other information about the Congress.

### **Green Feeding Tool**

I'm sure that you're already aware that there has been the launch of the [Green Feeding Tool](#) too in the last few days.

### **New Film**

On June 26th was the launch of "[Breastfeeding: Not on the Agenda](#)" - I gather that the film will be on YouTube soon

### **Video**

I also posted to ALCI's members' Facebook about the new video for parents of premature and sick babies from NI's Public Health Agency + the Neonatal Network NI - [www.pha.site/Neonatalbreastfeeding](http://www.pha.site/Neonatalbreastfeeding).

**Claire Allcutt,**

**ALCI Representative with BFLGI (April 2023-April 2024)**

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