health world unites to help push for it. The upcoming talks to revise the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) are an opportunity to rethink the inadequate WTO system on food standards as a whole, and on food safety in particular. The UN’s Codex Alimentarius Commission which arbitrates on health and safety food disputes under the GATT’s Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards agreement is long overdue for reform. Europe too needs to put its own house in order. Food policy ever since the BSE débacle has needed to be reformed. There has never, for instance, been a public health assessment of the Common Agricultural Policy. No wonder ‘productionism’ still holds sway. The Scientific Committees, too, need an overhaul. They could begin by exploring how to apply the precautionary principle. If they don’t, the schism between public and private regulation will continue to widen and it will be public pressure without public health that will be in the driving seat.

REFERENCES

EDITORIAL NOTE
International child health
STAFFAN JANSON, Editor

With this issue the journal is pleased to present a section on international child health. The response from our recent call for papers was most gratifying. Many excellent contributions were reviewed and those articles which did not complete the review and editorial processes in time for inclusion in this issue will be considered for publication in subsequent issues. In this issue, you will find three contributions from the Netherlands and one from Spain (Mallorca). The four papers all reflect current paediatric issues of modern Europe, such as the need to develop early diagnostic tools for psychosocial problems and low back pain in school children as well as valid instruments for measuring health-related quality of life in children. The paper of van Steenbergen et al. points to the obvious higher mortality of children from some immigrant groups in Holland, not only depending on socio-economic differences and where a battery of preventive measures ranging from genetic counselling in consanguinity to road safety lessons and early swimming lessons should be of great importance.

REFERENCES