



Connecting minds
for healthy lives

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the winter edition of the NDPHS newsletter.

This has been a tumultuous year, but hopefully you share our feeling at the Secretariat that the end of the year is not as grim as its beginning.

The events that started on 24 February hit our Partnership hard. Continuation of activities with one Partner became impossible. Among its consequences was that a large amount of funding that was supposed to finance most of the practical activities of the Partnership in 2022-2023 became unavailable. In addition, travel remained limited for the first part of the year, so we had to rely on electronic means of communication to address this crisis and in parallel continue doing our regular work.

But we persevered. And, as it starts to emerge now, this year has given us the impetus to find a fresh start, regenerate and grow.

We have just adopted the new NDPHS Strategy that will guide the Partnership's work in 2023-2025. Change is the underlying theme of the Strategy. This Partnership will become better in providing useful outcomes, communicating more efficiently, and engaging new stakeholders. Looking back at the year, we see that this change is already happening.

Striving to deliver more practical outcomes, our Partnership engaged in the new "Arts on Prescription" project, which over the coming three years will develop a guide for establishing Arts on Prescription schemes that is adaptable to the local and regional circumstances. In addition, we are developing and soon submitting for funding an NDPHS project that will produce tailored solutions for improving the capacity of occupational safety and health professionals and SME owners and managers to deal with psychosocial risks at the workplace.

We have also worked to upscale our storytelling and communication. The NDPHS website, our main tool for communication, has been remade and is launched in its new form. We have started the podcast "Tune in Health," to give voice to the various storytellers of our region and beyond, and especially the stakeholders not represented in the Partnership's formal constellations.

In the second part of the year, after two years of seeing each other only online, our Expert Groups and governing bodies resumed in person meetings. The Committee of Senior Representatives met in Stockholm on 8-9 September, to discuss issues such as the future of the Partnership, the new NDPHS Strategy and the pressing themes of antimicrobial resistance and mental health.

Meeting the familiar faces in person was not only more enjoyable, but also more productive than online meetings. However, we need to be careful not to become a closed club and therefore engagement of new stakeholders has been high on our agenda this year and will continue in the future. Among this year's achievements was the establishment of a network for cooperation of municipalities in the Baltic Sea region. Initially the network will focus on issues related to alcohol and substance use, and eventually the thematic scope can be expanded. We also appreciate that our role as Health Policy Area Coordinator in the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region has provided us with a perfect forum for engaging with other sectors and promoting the Health in All Policies approach.

As we close this year, we look forward to the next one with anticipation - what can we make this Partnership become? And we hope for your strong engagement and support in building the reinvigorated Partnership together.

NEWS

Mental Health Matters - OSH EG's project on psychosocial risks at work

This Autumn, the NDPHS [Expert Group on Occupational Safety and Health](#) (OSH EG) has been working hard on developing a new project that addresses an acute challenge in modern workplaces: the psychosocial risk factors in the society and how to create mentally healthy workplaces. The “Mental Health Matters” - project strives to improve the preparedness of occupational safety and health professionals as well as owners and managers of small-to-medium-sized enterprises to deal with psychosocial risks at work. Psychosocial risks in the society and at work are affecting the mental health of employees in all sectors. Work-related stress, burnout and depression are endangering people's work ability in times when the promotion of sustainable working lives in light of societal, technological and demographic changes are acutely needed. To be economically and societally resilient, we need a mentally resilient workforce.

The OSH EG and the NDPHS Secretariat are applying for project funding during the 2nd call of the Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme 2021/27. We wish the project good luck in this endeavour!

Establishment of a network of local communities for collaboration on preventive work to reduce the harm caused by alcohol and drugs

On the initiative of the NDPHS [Expert Group for Alcohol and Drug Use](#), the new network cooperation for municipalities in the Baltic Sea region was established in Oslo on 9 November this year.

Around 30 representatives from the municipalities of Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden, and Norway, together with the representatives of the Expert Group, gathered in Oslo to present to each other how they work, challenges they face, and to discuss how to cooperate transnationally to achieve more effective results in their work.

The network is aiming to become a platform for sharing knowledge, learning from each other, and building capacity in strengthening community actions in health promotion and alcohol prevention.



[Find Out More](#)



To become a thought leader for cross-sectoral cooperation for the Economy of Wellbeing for people in the Baltic Sea region

NDPHS new steering group for EUSBSR Policy Area Health (PA Health SG) has adopted the work program 2022-2024.

In our last newsletter, we talked about the initiative for our new priority, the promotion of the Economy for Wellbeing, and why awareness is growing that GDP cannot be the only measure of growth and success. The new work plan now envisages the establishment of a co-creative, cross-sectoral cooperation format between EUSBSR's policy areas to promote the concept of Economy of Wellbeing.

By bringing together the various stakeholders of the Baltic Sea region (BSR) in such an innovative, co-creative and cross sectoral cooperation format, the Steering Group wants to achieve the long-term goal that the policy area Health becomes a leading voice in BSR that promotes and drives the transition to an Economy for Wellbeing for all people and for sustainable growth and development in EUSBSR area.

The main activities set out in the work plan are therefore that the secretariat initiates and engages the NDPHS and the network within PA Health in relevant and cross-sectoral policy dialogues with other policy areas, as well as initiates thematic events, seminars and workshops in current topics related to health. It is particularly emphasized in the plan to carry out a regional needs assessment in the area of mental health, as well as to strengthen cooperation with the cultural sector to contribute to the implementation of the Art on Prescription program in the Baltic Sea region. A specific task is also to develop a strategic concept to better reach out to new stakeholder groups, as well as to promote the generation of project ideas that contribute to PA Health actions.

In order to achieve this, documentation and facts must be produced that are needed in joint applications together with PA Education for project funds from Interreg and other possible funding sources for a large-scale and long-term

flagship process concerning cross-sectoral cooperation within EUSBSR for the development of the wellbeing economy as standard.

PA Health in the EUSBSR Annual Forum

The 13th Annual Forum **Putting Plans Into Practice, a prosperous, connected and green Baltic Sea Region** took place from 28th to 29th of September in Lappeenranta, Finland. It brought together over four hundred participants - the stakeholders implementing the EUSBSR as well as other participants who would like to contribute to addressing the common challenges in the Baltic Sea Region.



[Event website](#)

The participants of the forum were invited to join numerous webinars, seminars, workshops, and plenary sessions. Dr Ülla-Karin Nurm, the Director of the NDPHS Secretariat, represented the NDPHS as the PA Health coordinator in the EUSBSR and joined the parallel session ["Recovery after shocks"](#) about how the Strategy can help Baltic Sea Region communities become more resilient, stronger and sustainable.

We have created policies with the intention of increasing GDP but not with the intention of increasing peoples' health, well-being and resilience (..). The strategy is a perfect setting for advancing collective well-being in the region.

#PAHEALTH

DR. ÜLLA-KARIN NURM, DIRECTOR, NDPHS SECRETARIAT
EUSBSR ANNUAL FORUM 2022



From good ideas to concrete solutions

The cross-sectorial cooperation between the health and culture sectors in our region is flourishing, taking shape and becoming more concrete. The past two years have heightened our awareness of the need to work closer with others to find innovative approaches to improving health and social well-being.

The cooperation with our colleagues from the Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture (NDPC) has resulted in an exciting process of exploring commonalities and differences, discovering joint values, negotiating boundaries and learning to understand and speak each other's language. A main driver behind this process was the [CultureForHealth](#) initiative, a project responding to the EU preparatory action on bottom-up policy development for culture & well-being in the EU. With the project entering its final phase, a scoping review has been published.

Our work on this topic will not end with our engagement in the CultureForHealth project, but is heading towards focussing on making the great benefits of artistic and cultural interventions accessible to more people in the Baltic Sea Region. In our capacity as the PA Health Coordinator, NDPHS is becoming a partner in the Interreg Baltic Sea Region 2021-2027-funded project “Arts on Prescription in the Baltic Sea Region”, which is led by Odense Municipality in Denmark and kicking-off in January 2023. The project aims to develop a practical guide for establishing Arts on Prescription schemes that is adaptable to the local and regional circumstances in our Partner Countries, hoping that in the future more patients, especially those struggling with mental health issues, will profit from the great contribution the cultural sector can make to health and well-being. We

are excited to start the project and to keep you updated on its progress over the next three years.

Scoping review of culture, well-being, and health interventions and their evidence, impacts, challenges and policy recommendations for Europe

Website launch

Being connected with our stakeholders and sharing our knowledge are some of the top priorities of the NDPHS. This year Secretariat continued to invest efforts in boosting the NDPHS Communication capacity and one of the outcomes we are happy to celebrate is the recently launched website.

We have combined creativity with strategic vision and past success to create a website that mirrors our values, represents our geographic region, tells our stories, and introduces our thematic work. The new website is easy to navigate and its design speaks in the NDPHS recently developed visual language. It uncovers our history, provides you with the latest news about the NDPHS activities, and gives insights about the work of the Expert Groups.

By creating a modern yet thematically focused website we aim at maximising the value of our work and increasing the visibility of the NDPHS in today's saturated information world.



Explore it yourself!

www.ndphs.org

Podcast

To expand the reach and stimulate the discussion about the NDPHS thematic work, we have started a podcast series. From Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis to

Economy of Well-being and Ageism, the podcast increases the awareness and knowledge about health and well-being related topics with expert guests from our region.

The next episode on challenges with alcohol and drug use prevention work in our region and what opportunities a transnational collaboration can bring is in the making. The new episode will be released in January, stay tuned!



Listen on Spotify

Funding opportunities 2023: Get prepared

While we are winding down and closing the year, it is also good to look ahead and see which opportunities are coming up next year. We are expecting two major funding calls in 2023 that are very relevant for our Partnership:

1. Swedish Institute (SI) Baltic Sea Neighbourhood Programme: SI is launching a call for projects in which Swedish organisations work on cross-border challenges and opportunities together with organisations from the EU countries around the Baltic Sea and countries in the EU's Eastern Partnership. The call will be open to seed funding (SEK 400,000, 15 months) and cooperation (SEK 1,000,000, 24 months) projects between 20 December 2022 and 2 March 2023. More information is still to be published. Keep an eye on the [SI website](#) for updates and registration to information seminars.
2. Interreg Baltic Sea Region Programme 2021-2027: The second call of the Interreg BSR Programme is currently open for small and core projects with deadlines in January and February 2023. Those not already in the midst of preparation for this call can start preparing for the expected third (and potentially last!) call in autumn 2023. If you have a project idea for the upcoming call, now is a good time to familiarise yourself with the procedures and documents available on the [Interreg BSR website](#).

Secretariat will help you with your project applications. If you are planning to submit an application in 2023, please get in touch with us as soon as possible.

See you in 2023!



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