

2015 ASPHER General Assembly
Tuesday, June 2nd, 09:30-16:00 (lunch 12:30-13:30)
Venue: Hotel Yehuda, Jerusalem

Minutes

Opening of the meeting

Meeting opened by Vesna Bjegovic-Mikanovic. Yehuda Neumark welcomed delegates and provided practical information. Vesna Bjegovic-Mikanovic paid thanks to the host School and its staff that helped organise the event, as well as to ASPHER Secretariat.

Jadranka Bozиков made a short announcement about the sudden death of L. Kovacic, former director of the Andrija Stampar School of Public Health and a great friend of the Association. 2015 ASPHER AGA delegates honoured the memory of L. Kovacic with a minute of silence.

Approval of agenda

Agenda approved unanimously.

Approval of minutes from the 2014 ASPHER General Assembly

Minutes approved unanimously.

Acceptance of new members

Joana Camilo presented application of the Institute of Health Sciences, Portuguese Catholic University, Lisbon, Portugal. Application approved unanimously.

Mihajlo Jakovljevic presented application of the Graduate Programme in Health Economics & Pharmacoeconomics, University of Kragujevac, Serbia. Questions and comments from the audience followed. Application approved; Aarhus SPH represented by Anders Foldspang against; Debrecen SPH represented by Margit Balazs and Roza Adany abstained.

Francisco Guillen Grima presented application of the Master in Public Health, Public University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain. Application approved unanimously.

Margaret Coffey presented application of the School of Health Sciences, University of Salford, Salford, United Kingdom. Application approved unanimously.

Gaetano Privitera presented application (for associate membership) of the Board of Directors of the Italian Postgraduate Schools of Hygiene and Public Health, Italy. Application approved unanimously.

Suzanne Selig presented application (for associate membership) of the Department of Public Health and Health Sciences, University of Michigan-Flint, United States. Application approved unanimously.

John Middleton presented application (for associate membership) of the Faculty of Public Health, United Kingdom. Application approved unanimously.

Vesna Bjegovic-Mikanovic presented applications on behalf of the Institute of Public Health, Podgorica, Montenegro. Application approved unanimously.

Vesna Bjegovic-Mikanovic presented application (for associate membership) on behalf of the School of Health Sciences, Private University of Casablanca, Casablanca, Morocco. Questions and comments from the audience followed. Application approved; 2 member schools against.

Vesna Bjegovic-Mikanovic presented application (for associate membership) on behalf of the Department of Medical Law, Danylo Halytskyi Lviv National Medical University, Lviv, Ukraine. Application approved unanimously.

Report of the Treasurer

Jacqueline Müller-Nordhorn presented the report, starting from an overview 2010-2014, i.e. complexity of accounts, liquidity issue/limited reserves, increasing administrative burden and understaffed secretariat. Income from membership fees increased in that period from 60,000 to 90,000 EUR (n=70 to 105); with a significant increase of income from project income (50,000 to 210,000 EUR). On average, only 80% of the total volume of membership fees were collected annually, and funding from projects usually required 40% self-contribution. Income in 2014 was recorded from membership fees, EU operating grant, OSF funded HRPC project and APHEA fees; used to balance the expenditure side with the fixed and the operational costs linked to individual project activities (c.a. 300,000 EUR). Liquidity issue was explained based on the projected cash flow 2015. Finally, budget 2016 overview with key ideas to strengthen the Association's financial standing was presented. The latter include: revised membership fee structure and policy, members' projects instead of operating grants, (small) dedicated projects to support ASPHER 2020.

Report of the treasurer was approved unanimously.

- Members requested from the Executive Board to develop a plan for strengthening administration/secretariat capacity (addressed by the 5th objective of ASPHER2020).
- Aarhus SPH represented by Anders Foldspang requested the official accounts to be provided as annex to General Assembly files. Robert Otok explained that the official accounts document is established later in the year only and can be circulated accordingly.
- Cardiff SPH represented by Christopher Potter requested the fee structure to correspond clearly to benefits of ASPHER membership. Robert Otok explained that this is one of the core ideas behind the planned revision of the relevant membership policies.

Report of the President

Vesna Bjegovic-Mikanovic presented the report, going through the five areas of focus of her presidency term 2014-2015, i.e.

1. Opening the consultation process, supporting development and adoption of the ASPHER Strategy 2016-2020 with special attention to the close cooperation with WHO and the responsibility ASPHER accepted for EPHO7.
2. Promoting CPD based on blended learning as ASPHER online course and developing common tools and mechanisms for the accreditation of Continuing Public Health Education by APHEA to be available from the beginning of 2015.
3. Contributing to strong recognition of public health professionals in the context of ASPHER's lead on EPHO7.
4. Exploring the possibilities of the European labour market for public health professionals by a Delphi process as follow-up of the ASPHER survey on European employers.
5. Building a supportive environment for all ASPHER working groups to complement and enhance close cooperation and collaboration amongst all ASPHER members in education, training, research and practice.

A comprehensive detailed report was submitted in writing indicating the great work done over 2014-2015 and outlining the relevant advancements and deficits in the five areas of focus. Vesna Bjegovic-Mikanovic concluded her report stating that "(...) our capacities may be limited but your [ASPHER members] engagement for public health education and training is so encouraging", further thanking all members and some key individuals for their support.

Report of the president was approved unanimously.

News from ASPHER Working Groups

Two working groups presented shortly:

Louise Stjernberg presented on behalf of the Working Group on Undergraduate Programmes in Public Health referring to: (i) working group meetings 2014-2015; (ii) APHEA context; (iii) EPHO7 context; and (iv) collaboration with ECDC. She also indicated publications and conference presentations resulted from the group work over the period in focus.

Miguel Angel Royo Bordonada presented on behalf of the Working Group on Ethics and Values in Public Health, starting from a series of publications developed for the Public Health Reviews issue on teaching public health ethics. He further concentrated on WHO Europe's EPHOs framework underlining the role of public health ethics in the EAP/Health2020.

Report of the Honours' Committee

Anders Foldspang presented the report from the Honours' Committee, and also from the relevant developments as regards ASPHER's European Public Health Reference Framework (EPHRF) and EPHO7 Working Group. All three structures met twice over the course of 2014, in Zagreb (May 2014; deans' retreat) and Glasgow (November 2014; EPH conference).

The Honours' Committee discussions concentrated on: (i) shaping of an authorised public health professional; (ii) criteria for eligibility for ASPHER presidency (agreement reached about "the need for high profile leadership experience but not quality indicators"); (iii) ambassador function.

The EPHRF's Council advanced on further development of the lists of competences and assignment of competences to EPHOs. Anders Foldspang reported also from the 4-country study and the development of EPHRF's IT tool (for system capacity and individual career planning), carried out under the framework of ASPHER's operating grant programme 2014.

ASPHER-WHO EPHO7 working group continued on to relevant discussions, including contributions to WHO's Self-assessment tool for Public Health Capacities and Services.

Anders Foldspang thanked everyone involved, supporting relevant development.

Report of the president was approved unanimously.

- Elke Jakubowski from WHO's Europe echoed Anders Foldspang's presentation indicating productive partnership between ASPHER and WHO Europe. She also referred to the issue of 2-3 schools obtaining collaborating centre status of WHO Europe on public health workforce development as possible way forward to strengthen the EPHO7 related work and ASPHER-WHO Europe joint work.

Report from the Human Rights in Patient Project (HRPC) Project

[After lunch] Judy Overall presented the report. ASPHER Core Network on HRPC was set up providing for a strong basis/platform to develop relevant activities: (i) annual summer school/HRPC training; (ii) junior faculty scholars/fellowship programme; (iii) HRPC practitioners' guides; (iv) online community of practice, including HRPC film repository.

Report of the president was approved unanimously.

Report from the Public Health Reviews

Laurent Chambaud presented the report. He reported on the established arrangement with BioMed Central and outlined the list of thematic issues currently under development. The journal is expected to become financially self sustainable from 2017.

He thanked everyone involved in its development and encouraged all members to get involved.

Report of the president was approved unanimously.

Report from the Secretariat

Robert Otok presented shortly, underlining increase administrative burden in recent years and heavy workload with understaffed secretariat requiring further consolidation. Overall though, he summarized the current situation as requiring “multitasking” – rewarding and bringing ample satisfaction. Targets for 2015/2016 focusing purely on secretariat context are: (i) ASPHER closure in France; (ii) full independence of APHEA (admin/financial); and (iii) strengthened capacity of the secretariat: 2 staff members in Brussels, legal and tax/accounting services subcontracted; consultants providing specialized expertise; permanent internship programme. Finally, he also outlined the relevant planning as regards the online and social media visibility of the Association. He thanked everyone for support and commitment.

Report from the Secretariat was approved unanimously.

Videolink with APHEA site visit team (in mission)

Due to technical problems it was impossible to establish a stable connection with APHEA group. Julien Goodman recorded a short message to send greetings from the Agency.

Elections of Executive Board members 2016-2018: Candidates manifestos

Vesna Bjegovic-Mikanovic thanked Maksut Kulzhanov (I term: 2012-2015) and Fred Paccaud (II terms: 2009-2015) for their work in the Executive Board.

Robert Buckingham - nominated by Kaunas SPH and Jerusalem SPH
Professor of Public Health, University of Michigan-Flint, United States

Nino Künzli - nominated by Berlin SPH and Rennes SPH
Director, Swiss School of Public Health+, Zuerich, Switzerland
Manifesto presented by Fred Paccaud

Jutta Lindert - nominated by Belgrade SPH and Porto SPH
Professor of Public Health, University of Emden, Emden, Germany

Louise Stjernberg - nominated by Berlin SPH and Porto SPH
Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, Blekinge Institute of Technology, Karlskrona, Sweden

Mirosław Wysocki - nominated by Maastricht SPH and Belgrade SPH
Director, National Institute of Public Health, Warsaw, Poland

Following the voting by 2015 ASPHER AGA delegates Robert Buckingham and Nino Künzli were elected to serve on the board for their first term, and Louise Stjernberg was re-elected for her second term; 2015-2018.

ASPHER2020: presentation / adoption of the strategy

ASPHER2020 presentation followed the 5 strategic objectives sequence:

Katarzyna Czabanowska presented strategic objective 1: Improving quality of academic programmes and CPD for public health:

1. Promote harmonization of high quality education and training for public health: develop and pilot model curricula, advocate and implement as standard for all European schools of public health, and evaluate public health education and training programmes at all three Bologna levels;
2. Enhance continuing professional development (CPD) through blended learning modules offered to all public health professionals by the European school of public health (business model of excellence);
3. Increase mobility in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and develop joint models for education and training together with the exchange of best practices.

Jacqueline Müller-Nordhorn presented strategic objective 2: Strengthening research capacity among all members:

1. Support joint research of the main public health problems and emerging challenges;
2. Develop platform of research expertise among members;
3. Encourage the open access interface and sharing of knowledge between academia and practice of public health.

Jacqueline Müller-Nordhorn reported also on behalf of the Working Group on Doctoral Programmes and Research Capacities focusing on the following points: (i) quality of supervision; (ii) accreditation of PhD programmes in Public Health; and (iii) fostering cooperation in PhD training.

Anders Foldspang presented strategic objective 3: Setting up a public health profession for public health services in Europe:

1. Shape a public health profession in European countries by developing a European Public Health Reference Framework (EPHRF) and its online repository for individual career as well as services planning;
2. Lead on the work of WHO Europe's Essential Public Health Operation 7 (EPHO 7) working group established under the framework of the European Action Plan on Strengthening Public Health Capacities and Services – a key pillar of the overarching regional policy framework, Health 2020, to ensure a sufficient and competent public health workforce in the region;
3. Advocate for the public health profession based on the code of conduct (professionalization).

Ulrich Laaser presented strategic objective 4: Developing the global dimension of education and training for public health:

1. Develop a model curriculum on global health at the MPH level and an adapted version for CPD, advocate and implement it as standard for all European schools of public health;
2. Establish a think tank on global and regional health governance focusing on the implementation and evaluation of interventions, within the capacity of the membership network and in partnerships;
3. Investigate the options for a Global ASPHER Alumni Association accounting for alumni mobility.

Ulrich Laaser underlined the importance of the “Charter on the Global Dimension of Education and Training for Public Health in the 21st Century in Europe and in the World” published by the Association at the EPH Conference – Brussels 2013 (November).

Robert Otok presented strategic objective 5: Strengthening governance, management and sustainable development of ASPHER:

1. Enlarge membership and promote engagement of members into association activities;
2. Develop capacity of the ASPHER secretariat;
3. Build up strategic partnerships with national, European and global associations/institutions.

Vesna Bjegovic-Mikanovic wrapped-up the presentation of the Strategy. ASPHER 2020 strategy was unanimously adopted by 2015 ASPHER AGA.

Communications

Elpida Pavi delivered a brief presentation about the National School of Public Health, Athens, host of the Retreat 2016, while Jeffrey Levett shared his reflections over celebrating 50 years of ASPHER in Athens next year, also on behalf of Dean Vatopoulos and Elpida Pavi. All delegates welcomed both presentations.

Vesna Bjegovic-Mikanovic presented a profile of 2015 Andrija Stampar Medallist – Jean Rochon. She also outlined the Association's plans regarding EPH Conference – Milan 2015 and thanks to Gaetano Privitera for his commitment and support in bringing the community of Italian schools into ASPHER.

Yehuda Neumark presented the agenda of this year's Retreat and some additional practical information. He invited all delegates of 2015 ASPHER AGA to evening reception.

Closing of the meeting

Vesna Bjegovic-Mikanovic thanked all delegates for participation and officially closed the meeting.