



## **ASPHER and EUPHA thank the public health community**

*18 March 2022*

The World has now bypassed two years since the World Health Organization (WHO) raised the alarm on COVID-19 as a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC)<sup>1</sup> and later characterized it as a pandemic.<sup>2</sup>

ASPHER and EUPHA would like to express our gratitude to everyone in the public health community who tirelessly committed time and energy to combat COVID-19 lessening its impact on the population and saving innumerable lives.

The pandemic has thrown challenge after challenge and wave after wave into our paths and the public health community has responded with agility and commitment to find the best evidence-based ways forward – often under difficult circumstances and in negotiation with government, political and local actors. While at the same time, never losing sight of the broader implications of how the pandemic has impacted vulnerable populations and other ongoing health and planetary concerns.

The pandemic has not ended and it has already left a legacy of worsening health inequalities, long-COVID, and neglect of other serious conditions. The skills and expertise of public health professionals will be required to face these difficult problems and we trust that you will be ready to do what you do best to shine a light on them, leading the way to transcend boundaries and reach for solutions.

We reiterate here, what we said in the ASPHER-EUPHA joint statement last year: 'Moving forward, it is of utmost importance that public health is strengthened at its core, to ensure that it can respond to pandemics and other potential future health threats.'<sup>3</sup> The work of public health is ongoing and we must ensure sufficient capacity to allow the time and space for public health professionals to tend to your own personal wellbeing so you may go on to meet tomorrow's challenges for the health of the public.

The work of the public health community over the course of the past two years has been exceptional and inspiring. ASPHER and EUPHA are proud to represent and stand with you all!

John Middleton  
ASPHER President

Iveta Nagyova  
EUPHA President

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.who.int/news/item/30-01-2020-statement-on-the-second-meeting-of-the-international-health-regulations-\(2005\)-emergency-committee-regarding-the-outbreak-of-novel-coronavirus-\(2019-ncov\)](https://www.who.int/news/item/30-01-2020-statement-on-the-second-meeting-of-the-international-health-regulations-(2005)-emergency-committee-regarding-the-outbreak-of-novel-coronavirus-(2019-ncov))

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-the-media-briefing-on-covid-19---11-march-2020>

<sup>3</sup> <https://eupha.org/repository/advocacy/Statement%20EUPHA ASPHER Strong%20leadership%20for%20public%20health.pdf>

## ABOUT US

The **Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region** (ASPHER) is the key independent European organisation dedicated to strengthening the role of public health by improving education and training of public health professionals for both practice and research. The main functions of the Association are to support the professionalisation of the public health workforce in Europe, whilst respecting the diversity of national and regional contexts in which each school of public health operates, and thus: to sustain capacity building in public health, so that it balances with national and European population health challenges and threats, and is supported by best standards of public health education and training, scientific research, and practice.

**[www.aspher.org](http://www.aspher.org)** inquiries to **[office@aspher.org](mailto:office@aspher.org)**



The **European Public Health Association**, or EUPHA in short, is an umbrella organisation for public health associations in Europe. Our network of national associations of public health represents around 25'000 public health professionals. Our mission is to facilitate and activate a strong voice of the public health network by enhancing visibility of the evidence and by strengthening the capacity of public health professionals. EUPHA contributes to the preservation and improvement of public health in the European region through capacity and knowledge building. We are committed to creating a more inclusive Europe, narrowing all health inequalities among Europeans, by facilitating, activating, and disseminating strong evidence-based voices from the public health community and by strengthening the capacity of public health professionals to achieve evidence-based change.

**[www.eupha.org](http://www.eupha.org)** inquiries to **[office@eupha.org](mailto:office@eupha.org)**

