



The Association of Schools of Public Health
in the European Region



.....

Summer 2024 ASPHER Newsletter

Table of Contents

[MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT](#)

[MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT](#)

[ASPHER NEXT GENERATION PLATFORM UPDATES](#)

[CLIMATE AND HEALTH](#)

[ASPHER TASK FORCES AND WORKING GROUPS - JOIN IN!](#)

[Task Force on War and Public Health](#)

[Task Force on Public Health Emergencies](#)

[ASPHER NEWS & EVENTS](#)

[ASPHER PROJECTS](#)

[VAX-ACTION: Tackling Effectively Vaccine Hesitancy in Europe](#)

[EARLY: Evaluating, Identifying & Reducing determinants MHC in Youth](#)

[SEEEPHI: Sharing European Educational Experience in Public Health for Israel](#)

[ASPHER DEANS' & DIRECTORS' RETREAT](#)

[MEMBER NEWS & EVENTS](#)

[PARTNER NEWS](#)

[OPPORTUNITIES](#)

[Share the ASPHER newsletter!](#)

.....

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENTS

A Future for Public Health Knowledge, Education and Training

We are living in a time of great uncertainty. As a global community we truly desire to come to terms with the new reality of a post COVID-19 pandemic world. However, we need to realize and deeply understand that crises, be they sanitary, climatic, geopolitical or demographic in nature, were for a longtime the background to our daily life, regardless of the fact that many of us were not truly aware of it. To a certain extent, the civilizational shock of the pandemic brought to the light and to our consciousness as citizens the urgency to more rapidly adapt to new patterns of living, organization of work, and to differently formulate the means, the methods and the contents of education and learning.

The consequences of what we called the '[new normal](#)', when intending to run our societies through the lens of equity, solidarity and well-being, give a special relevance to public health and the public health workforce. Public health brings together the complex interplay of health determinants – individual, social, commercial and political – into an organized effort of

communities to protect and promote health, prevent disease and organize universal access to care, making the human right to health a respected common ground. Thus, public health has a central role in the response of our societies to most contemporary challenges and threats, and the design of education and training in public health, at the different levels of expertise and responsibility – from individual literacy to professional specialization, are essential. Moreover, there is a growing expectation for programmes and schools of public health to play an expanded role as partners in the construction of a knowledge society, in which citizens are progressively more involved in decisions and better trained professionals respond to increasingly complex and demanding situations, often defined by a feeling of urgency.

ASPHER was a leading voice during the pandemic, providing relevant scientific and professional guidance. The pandemic period saw the launch and implementation of multiple relevant collaborations and projects such as the [continuing collaboration with the World Health Organization \(WHO\) Regional Office for Europe](#) culminating in the [Professionalization Roadmap](#), and the [ASPHER review of a Core Curriculum for Public Health](#). It is time to seize the opportunity and assume the obligation to build upon the gained experience and knowledge inventing a sustainable future.

We face a major structural hurdle: to work out a lifelong education plan able to incorporate the best practices available, be it in terms of educational strategies or curriculum development – one that is bold and adaptable at different local contexts and professional cultures, and to provide professionals with the competences and skills needed to fulfill changing routines as well as to anticipate responses. This structural challenge needs to be fortified by a clear commitment to research excellence as an indelible mark of our schools' strategy. ASPHER members need to be present to take part in the most relevant consortia as major players in every important competitive funding scheme and call in Europe. The role of the Association is to provide clear leadership and to be a catalyst to build coalitions for action so that in a few years ASPHER will be recognized as a central network driving public health research in the global world.

Going forward, some themes are particularly important to the public health community and deserve ASPHER's special attention and effort to trigger the pursuit of new information and evidence-based knowledge: pandemic preparedness; climate change; chronic conditions and emerging or re-emerging infectious disease; with a focus on population mobility and migration; on war; always maintaining attention to the most vulnerable populations and vulnerability contexts – in a word, on human rights. These topics need to feed public health curricula, to model continued professional development, and drive science related knowledge to be carefully translated to curricula and to practice.

Democracy is essential to public health practice, which is why social participation is an essential component of the future of public health. People's views and aspirations need to be at the center of the education and training concerns of public health schools that should strive for environments where people feel empowered to express their voice and provide agency over their own health. Immersing public health schools in the space, the time and the concerns of the lives of populations is our central objective as we envisage to ensure a future that reduces health inequalities and in which public health professionals find the fullness of their vocation and duties, improving and protecting the public's health together with the schools that educated and trained them.

Henrique Barros,
ASPHER President

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT

ASPHER Secretariat

ASPHER Deans' & Directors' Retreat and General Assembly

05 - 08 June 2024, Rectory, University of Porto, Porto, Portugal and Municipal Library, Crystal Palace Gardens, Porto, Portugal



The 2024 ASPHER Deans' & Directors Retreat and ASPHER General Assembly were hosted from 5-8 June by ISPUP, University of Porto at the Municipal Library, Crystal Palace Gardens, Porto, Portugal. It was great to meet with over 150 ASPHER Members and Partners.

We would like to give our tremendous thanks to the local ISPUP organising team, especially to Prof. Henrique Barros and Telma Alves! Please find highlights from the GA and Retreat below. [Click here to learn more about the 2024 Porto Retreat here.](#)

ASPHER General Assembly

05 June 2024 Rectory, University of Porto, Porto, Portugal

The [2024 ASPHER General Assembly](#) was held from 15h-18h on the 5th of June at the Rectory of the University of Porto, Porto Portugal.

Key orders of business included voting for two open seats of the ASPHER Executive Board, acceptance of new members, approval of the new ASPHER logo and the President, Treasurer and Secretariat Reports.

ASPHER Executive Board - new members



The ASPHER General Assembly elected two new members to the Executive Board: [Ramune Kalediene](#) of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, Lithuania and [Tomasz Bochenek](#) of Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland. We warmly welcome Ramune and Tomasz and look forward to working with them to strengthen ASPHER in the years to come.

Ramune and Tomasz replaced seats vacated by Karolina Lyubomirova, Medical University of Sofia, Bulgaria and Mirjana

Kujundžić Tiljak, Andrija Stampar School of Public Health, School of Medicine, University of Zagreb, Croatia. Many thanks to Karolina and Mirjana for their years of service to ASPHER.



New ASPHER Members

Nine new ASPHER members (seven full and two associate) were inducted into ASPHER at the General Assembly. We are proud to be growing the Association and welcome our newest members to the ASPHER community!

Full members:

Erasmus School of Health Policy and Management, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Rotterdam, NETHERLANDS

NpJSC "Astana Medical University", Astana, KAZAKHSTAN

Nazarbayev University School of Medicine, Astana, KAZAKHSTAN

University Institute of Health Sciences – CESPU, Gandra, PORTUGAL

School of Public Health, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv, ISRAEL

Faculty of Public Health, Yerevan State Medical University after Mkhitar Heratsi, Yerevan, ARMENIA

University of Derby, Derby, UNITED KINGDOM

Associate members:

Global Health Program, College of Public Health, National Taiwan University, Taipei City, TAIWAN

Department of Community Health Sciences, Aga Khan University, Medical College, Karachi, PAKISTAN

ASPHER Corporate Rebranding

ASPHER Logo



ASPHER is working on a corporate rebranding of the Association. This includes a new ASPHER logo presented to and accepted by the General Assembly. We hope you agree that it brings a fresh modern look to the ASPHER logo while maintaining connections to the original.

ASPHER website

The website is also undergoing transformations to create not just a static page, but to build a site with a user-centered design that allows all ASPHER members to participate and co-create the site to fully serve the ASPHER community.

The first stage of the website was rolled out in Porto, allowing individuals from ASPHER member schools to create their own personal accounts. These will allow faculty, staff, students and alumni to affiliate with their primary institution as well as ASPHER activities they are connected with (Task Forces, Working Groups, Projects, etc.) and to create and share content through the website.

Further functionalities will be added and rolled out over the course of the coming months. **Be sure to get involved from the start by setting up your personal account at <https://directory.aspher.org/>.**

2024 Andrija Štampar Medalist, Dr. Natasha Azzopardi Muscat



With heartfelt enthusiasm ASPHER awarded the prestigious 2024 Andrija Štampar Medal to Dr.

Natasha Azzopardi Muscat, Director of the Division of Country Health Policies and Systems, WHO Regional Office for Europe.

Dr Natasha Azzopardi-Muscat is a medical doctor, a specialist in public health, and the author of several publications in public health and European health policy.

Following her qualification as a medical doctor from the University of Malta in 1995, Dr Azzopardi-Muscat worked in various areas in the health sector in Malta, including maternal and child health, mental health, and primary care. Her transdisciplinary research bridging health policy, European studies and small states studies led to her PhD entitled “The Europeanisation of health systems: a small state perspective”.

Since 1999, Natasha has been a resident academic at the University of Malta, teaching in the department of health services management and public health. In 2003, she completed her specialisation in public health medicine and obtained her membership in the Faculty of Public Health of the United Kingdom. Between 2001 and 2013, she occupied various senior positions in the Ministry of Health in Malta, including that of Chief Medical Officer.

Before joining WHO, Dr Azzopardi-Muscat served as President of the European Public Health Association (EUPHA) from 2016 to 2020, where she was actively involved in health advocacy at the European level.

Dr Azzopardi-Muscat is married to Dr Conrad Azzopardi, a practicing physician, and has 3 children.

We were honoured to celebrate with Dr. Azzopardi-Muscat in beautiful Porto, Portugal during the ASPHER Deans' & Directors' Retreat hosted by ISPUP | Instituto de Saúde Pública da Universidade do Porto.

ASPHER outgoing President Carlo Signorelli provided the laudatio, acclaiming Natasha who has established herself as a seasoned expert in the field of public health, exemplifying dedication, innovation, and leadership throughout her distinguished career. She is a truly remarkable individual whose unwavering and impactful commitment to public health inspires us all to strive for excellence!

The Štampar medal was conferred by Carlo along with incoming President Henrique Barros.

2024 ASPHER Awards

ASPHER would like to congratulate all our annual award winners. They are an inspiration to us all to strive for excellence!

TEACHING & PRACTICE Excellence Award

**University of
Salford**
MANCHESTER

School of Health and Society, University of Salford

The School of Health and Society at University of Salford offers both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and CPD in public health, allied health professions, nursing and midwifery, social work, policing and social sciences, sport and psychology.

Public Health has been successfully taught at the University of Salford at Master's level for 20 years, and the team have considerable public health expertise, in teaching and research. In the last five years, the University of Salford was part of a national trailblazer group that designed a new Public Health Practitioner (PHP) degree apprenticeship standard, together with employers, and other key stakeholders, such as Health Education England (now merged with NHS England), Public Health England (now the Office for Health Improvement & Disparities [OHID]), and the UK Public Health Register (UKPHR). This has ensured that the University of Salford has played a pivotal role in shaping and trailblazing a new educational pathway in the field of public health.



The Degree Apprenticeship is playing an important role within the UK in relation to the 'professionalising the workforce' agenda and providing a very practical work-based approach to undertaking a degree. On successful completion of the programme, apprentices will achieve a degree qualification and become eligible to register on the UK Public Health Register as a public health practitioner. The Degree Apprenticeship provides a new route for developing and retaining the future public health workforce that is complementary to existing pathways. The programme ensures that graduating apprentices are competent Public Health Practitioners in line with the implementation guidance and able to meet the future needs of employers.

RESEARCH Excellence Award



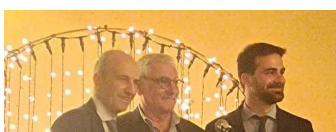
Raquel Lucas, Institute of Public Health, University of Porto

Raquel Lucas was licensed in Pharmaceutical Sciences (2004), master in Epidemiology (2006) and doctorate in Public Society (2012) at the University of Porto

She is currently a researcher at the Faculty of Medicine and the Institute of Public Health, University of Porto. Raquel is dedicated to studying the epidemiology of reumatics and musculoskeletal diseases, with special attention to the experiences of long life and to their interaction with the development of the musculoskeletal system. She is co-Editor-in-Chief of the scientific journal

Public Health Reviews.

EARLY CAREER Excellence Awards



Congratulations to 2024 ASPHER Early Career excellence award winners, pictured from top left to bottom right: Guglielmo Arzilli, Tara Chen, Karl Conyard, Lotan Kraun, Naomi Nathan. We look forward to following your work into the future!



Retreat Programme

The 2024 ASPHER Deans' & Directors Retreat were welcomed to Porto by Joana Carvalho, vice-Rector University of Porto, followed by a warm up session on [Harnessing the power of simulation for public health training](#), led by University of Porto & University of Salford and featuring SEEPHI project and WHO work on

simulations.

The Retreat was held in the days leading up to the important European elections and we had spirited discussion of Geopolitical Health and the role of Schools of Public Health with a high level dialogue between Dr Natasha Azzopardi-Muscat, Director Country Health Policies & Systems, World Health Organization and Prof Luis Eugenio Souza, President, World Federation of Public Health Associations with moderation by Thomas Van Canghai, Cabinet of the Belgian Prime Minister, Belgium; as well as ministerial keynote by Prof Ana Paula Martins, Minister of Health, Portugal introduced by Mayor of Porto Rui Moreira.



The retreat focussed on the themes of Lifelong Learning and the Future of Public Health Research, both of which were discussed in dedicated

Deans' Panels. Key ASPHER agenda areas were highlighted across the two days including, public health workforce professionalisation, ASPHER core curriculum, undergraduate training, accreditation of public health education and professional credentialing. Representatives from APHEA were on hand to specifically take part in the accreditation discussions.

We were pleased to welcome several partners to join us in Porto and held a special Stakeholders' Panel on key partnerships introduced by Prof Nadav Davidovitch, Lead of ASPHER's Public Health Emergencies Task Force. Panellists Charlotte Marchandise, European Public Health Association; Dr Emilia Aragon De Leon, World Health Organization; Dr Maria Cristina Profili, International Organization for Migration; and Dr Eline Vanuytrecht, European Climate and Health Observatory participated with Dr Raquel Lucas, Editor-in-Chief, Public Health Reviews moderating. This was followed by Next Generation Panel reflections with Mays Abu Alkean, Ashkelon Academic College, Israel; Dr Lorenzo Blandi, University of Pavia, Italy; Tara Chen, University of Waterloo, Canada; Karl Conyard, University College Dublin, Ireland; Dr Rok Hrzic, Maastricht University, Netherlands; Julia Nowicka, Medical University of Gdansk, Poland; Dr Brian Wong, Karolinska Institute, Sweden; and moderation by Ines Siepmann - Lead, ASPHER Young Professionals Programme.



Parallel challenge room sessions gave ASPHER members an opportunity to address and discuss experiences and best practices to meet the needs of public health education and training. While posters informed on various ongoing ASPHER projects.

Finally at the closing, Prof Alexandre Tiedtke Quintanilha, Retired, UC Berkeley, LBNL, UPorto, Member of Parliament provided a thought provoking keynote on Public Health as a Pillar of Democracy.



[Click here for the full 2024 ASPHER Deans' & Directors Retreat programme.](#)

Presidency Handover



The ASPHER Retreat closed with the official Presidency handover from Prof Carlo Signorelli, Vita-Salute San Raffaele University, Milan to Prof Henrique Barros, ISPUP, University of Porto. Carlo will continue to serve in the ASPHER Executive Board for the next year as Immediate Past-President and will also join all ASPHER past presidents and Stampar medallists in the ASPHER Honours Platform.

Tremendous thanks to Carlo for leading the Association these past years! We look forward to moving into [Henrique's term](#) ahead!



2025 Deans' & Directors' Retreat - Berlin



Looking ahead, ASPHER and Retreat Chair Nina Adelberger are pleased to announce the 2025 ASPHER Deans' & Directors' Retreat in Berlin, Germany hosted by the Berlin School of Public Health - Charité!

2025 will be a special anniversary year for the MPH programme at BSPH and we look forward to celebrating with them.

Dates will be announced soon, but we expect to hold the Retreat in May or June 2025.

ASPHER NEXT GENERATION PLATFORM UPDATES

ASSETS - ASPHER's Mentoring Summer School

08-11 October, Brussels, Belgium

ASPHER would like to extend an invitation to your senior students, alumni, post-docs and junior faculty to the upcoming [ASSETS - ASPHER Mentoring Summer School Programme](#), a unique mentoring and coaching programme taking place in Brussels from the 11th to the 14th of June.

ASSETS aims at fostering professional development and provides a space where young professionals can network and share their knowledge and experience while receiving guidance and feedback from experts in the field, enhancing their knowledge, skills and networking opportunities.

In addition to dedicated faculty mentors, members of the ASPHER Executive Board and representatives from other Brussels-based public health organisations will be on hand to provide enriched content and contacts.

This year, with more than 40% of the world voting in elections and with ASSETS following directly after the European elections, there will be a particular emphasis on getting public health knowledge and expertise into policy and practice, at local to global levels.

We kindly request you to share the invitation with interested young professionals associated with your programme, your network and with whoever might be interested in taking part in this journey of professional growth.

ASPHER Member discounted fee: 500 EUR (available to senior students, alumni and early career faculty of ASPHER member institutions); Regular Fee: 1000 EUR.

For any inquiries, do not hesitate to contact assets2024@aspher.org and we will make sure to come back to you as soon as possible!

More [information about ASSETS 2024 is available here](#).

We look forward to welcoming a diverse set of motivated young professionals in Brussels.

[Register for ASSETS here](#).

Young Researchers Forum 2024: Call for Abstracts



12 November from 13:30-17:00 in Lisbon, Portugal

The YRF is meant for postgraduate students (MPH, MSc, MRes, PhD, etc) and early career researchers from any field of public health. YRF has been specifically designed to provide you with the

opportunity to present your work in a friendly, supportive forum and to receive feedback from mentors and peers.

The 2024 YRF will be held on 12 November from 13:30-17:00 in Lisbon, Portugal as part of the EPH pre-conferences with networking lunch starting at 12:30.

Please distribute this opportunity through your network: [Download the YRF flyer here](#).

Submit your abstract for YRF

Abstracts may be up to 500 words and should be of performed original research including at least preliminary results.

The deadline for submission is 1 September.

Please send abstract submissions to youngresearchersforum@aspher.org

[Registration for YRF here](#).

.....

CLIMATE AND HEALTH

Climate-health literacy resources for public health



European
Climate and Health
Observatory



European
Environment
Agency

Under the Association's Climate and Health agenda, ASPHER has been partnering with the [European Climate and Health](#)

[Observatory](#). The European Climate and Health Observatory is a partnership between the European Commission, the European Environment Agency (EEA) which aims to support Europe in preparing for and adapting to the impacts of climate change on human health by providing access to relevant information and tools. It also fosters information exchange and cooperation between relevant international, European, national, sub-national and non-governmental actors.

On 21 May, ASPHER kicked off a service contract with the Observatory on Climate-health literacy resources for public health. The overall aim of the project will be to develop additional resources to feed directly into the Observatory. The specific objectives are focussed on tracking and supporting climate-health literacy of public health professionals by developing:

1. An indicator tracking the evolution of climate-health education offered in Europe;
2. A case study on climate-health education for public health professionals in Europe to demonstrate good practices and foster the wider uptake of an implemented response to climate-health impacts;
3. An overview of climate-health educational resources relevant to public health professionals in Europe.

Opening: ASPHER Climate and Health Fellowship

ASPHER created the Climate-Health fellowship, to empower a highly motivated early career public health professional passionate about issues of climate and health to take a leading role on the direction of ASPHER's Climate and Health agenda to build capacity, identify

competencies, and work together with ASPHER Members and partners to develop education and training for public health professionals to confront the gravity of the twin crises of climate and health, the urgency of the threat, awareness about what can be done and the skills to work in their respective fields and within interdisciplinary collaborations. The ASPHER Fellowship Programme aims to support and help build true young public health leaders. Having received training at the schools of public health and identified with the public health community, this would further empower them to participate fully in the professional (academic and practice) happenings in their respective fields of interest. It will assist them in fulfilling their greater vision to develop and progress in their career, as it relates to public health practice and research.

With close mentorship from the ASPHER Climate-Health Lead (Prof. Laurent Chabaud), ASPHER secretariat, ASPHER Climate and Health working group, the fellow will become deeply involved with all activities of the ASPHER Climate-Health agenda, contribute to projects as well as support the ASPHER Young Professionals Programme.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Experience working on and passion for the topic of climate change and health; with particular attention to education and training, competencies, professionalisation and capacity building.
- Early career public health professionals affiliated with or recently graduated from ASPHER Member institutions.
- Available to start in Autumn 2024 with a minimum one-year commitment.

Applications open on 02 July and close on 02 August at 23:59 CEST.

Learn more about the Fellowship and requirements [here](#).

Fill the application form [here](#) and Submit your CV to lore.leighton@aspher.org.

If you have any questions about the ASPHER Climate and Health Fellowship, please email tara.chen@aspher.org.

ASPHER-GCCHE European Climate Change and Health Course

EUROPEAN CLIMATE AND HEALTH RESPONDERS COURSE

FEBRUARY 6TH - APRIL 9TH, 2024 (TUESDAY 12 PM - 1:30 PM CET)
REGISTER FOR FREE | CERTIFICATE BASED

ASPHER
The Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region

COLUMBIA
UNIVERSITY
AMERICAN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH
GLOBAL CONSORTIUM ON CLIMATE AND HEALTH EDUCATION

ASPHER and the [Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education \(GCCHE\)](#) offered a free 10 week online European responders course from February - April. The course was open to all professionals with an interest in climate change and health.

The goal of this course is to act as a flagship initiative to engage and educate the public health, wider health workforce, and other professionals interested in climate change and health to facilitate participation and engagement in policy and advocacy related to climate adaptation and mitigation as well as research that supports decision making across sectors.

It was a huge success with over 3000 participants registered and regular weekly attendance of over 1000. A total of 870 participants, who attended at least 70% of the sessions and successfully completed the final exam, were granted the course certificate.

ASPHER is exploring opportunities to build on this momentum to offer

Recordings of all sessions and course materials are [available here](#).

WHO launches new toolkit empowering health professionals to tackle climate change



Climate change presents one of the most significant global health challenges and is already negatively affecting communities worldwide. Communicating the health risks of climate change and the health benefits of climate solutions is both necessary and helpful. To support this, the World Health Organization (WHO) in collaboration with partners has developed [a new toolkit](#) designed to equip health and care workers with the knowledge and confidence to effectively communicate about climate change and health.

The toolkit aims to fill the gaps in knowledge and action among health and care workers – all those who are engaged in actions with the primary intent of enhancing health, as well as those occupations in academic, management and scientific roles. Despite their recognized trustworthiness and efficacy as health communicators, many health and care workers might not be fully equipped to discuss climate change and its

health implications. This toolkit seeks to change that narrative.

The toolkit provides comprehensive resources to help health and care workers understand the health impacts of climate change and the co-benefits of climate action, build confidence in communication, and engage with various stakeholders effectively. By empowering health and care workers to communicate about climate change and health, it aims to drive collective action towards mitigating climate change, building resilience and safeguarding public health.

Public Health Reviews Call for Papers: Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change: Evidence for Public Health



This special issue aims to provide valuable insights for decision-makers to strengthen resilience and safeguard the health and well-being of people, place and the environment in response to climate change. This is a joint special issue of PHR and IJPH. For PHR, we invite high quality Reviews (all types) and Policy Briefs, and for IJPH we invite original articles (not reviews), on:

- Impacts of climate change on health systems
- Interactive population health effects caused by climate stressors
- Health consequences of conflicts and migration due to climate hazards, ecosystem degradation, and water shortage
- Effectiveness of risk mitigation and adaptation responses
- System reform (e.g. (inter)national networks, climate justice, integrated interventions, One Health education and research)
- Novel conceptual and methodological approaches to investigate the health and wellbeing impacts of climate change

The call is open for submission from November 1st 2023 until October 31st 2024.

[Learn more about the call here.](#)

ASPHER TASK FORCES AND WORKING GROUPS

Join in!

ASPHER Task Forces and Working Groups are a great way for our members to take part in and direct the ASPHER agenda. Below is a list of groups that are meeting regularly. Contact us at office@aspher.org if you or colleagues at your school would like to participate or if you would like to propose a working group.

- Task Force on Public Health Emergencies (formerly the COVID-19 Task Force)
- Task Force on War and Public Health
- ASPHER-WHO Task Force on Professionalising the Public Health Workforce
- Climate and Health Working Group
- Digital Public Health Working Group
- Public Health Undergraduate Education Working Group
- Economic Evaluation in Healthcare in Europe Working Group

Task Force on War and Public Health

Mission to Israel and West Bank

Led by ASPHER Task Force on War Task Force Chair and Executive Board Member Oliver Razum, the ASPHER Task Force on War sent a small delegation including ASPHER Director Robert Otok to Israel and the West Bank to speak with ASPHER members in the region and to better understand the needs of schools of public health and the steps schools are taking to meet the needs of the population.

The delegation met with ASPHER members: Ashkelon Academic College, Al Quds University, Ben Gurion University, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, University of Haifa, as well as Tel Aviv University and the organisation [EcoPeace](#).

In follow up to the mission and in collaboration with the Public Health Emergencies Task Force and the Task Force on War, ASPHER issued two statements: [Statement of the ASPHER Task Force on War and Public Health on the Conflict in Israel/Palestine](#); and [An urgent call for peace and an escalation of humanitarian responses in Gaza](#).

Further Reading

Brake T-M , Razum O. (2024) Prevention of War: A Scoping Review on Primary Preventive Measures in Public Health. Public Health Reviews v44.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/phrs.2023.1606201>

Task Force on Public Health Emergencies

Statement: The COVID-19 Pandemic as a Public Health Teacher - the Lessons We Must Learn

The image shows the cover page of a statement from the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER). The title is "The COVID-19 Pandemic as a Public Health Teacher—the Lessons We Must Learn". It lists several authors and their affiliations, including Sofia Lombardi, Avi Maggid, Nadia Davidovitch, John Middleton, Mohamed Sheik Hassan, Henrique Lopez, Hans Schlemmer, Huzam Agha, Daniel Lopez-Acuña, José Martínez Olmos, Ariane Baptemand, Vladimir Pivovarov, Vera Yonina, Anne Pflanzler, Gábor Papp, Pradyumn Prasad, José Philippe Nicolas, Lore Legrain, Robert Otok, and John Razum. The statement is approved by the Board of ASPHER and published on 12 May 2023. It is available in English and French. The cover also features logos for PHR and SSPH+.

Since 5th May 2023 Covid-19 is no longer considered a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC), rather “an established and ongoing health issue”. But is now the time to forget about it, or the opportunity to learn the deep lessons for future pandemics and for shaping our teaching and our public health systems? Globally, as of 12th October 2023, there were 6,961,014 deaths due to Covid-19 and 771,191,203 confirmed cases reported to WHO. These large-scale numbers, even though they likely seriously underestimate the global burden, nevertheless signify a catastrophe for humanity and signal various global failures. Such failures include inadequate cooperation internationally, insufficient governmental examination of scientific evidence and hesitancy to adopt effective strategies, not ensuring equitable supplies and distribution of funding, technology and tools, and lack of concerned action to face

disinformation and more.

Nevertheless, it is time to learn from the past and act to take advantage of the window of opportunity that is still open before the next large-scale global health emergency. Our 20 key lessons learned and our recommendations draw from three broad sets of influences below, all of which overlap but none of which are sufficient on their own.

1. Findings from seven important international reports from other agencies - Chapter 2 below.
2. Perspectives of ASPHER Task Force members and subgroups who were part of a large number of ASPHER meetings and reviews during the pandemic - Chapter 3 below.
3. Country experiences and perspectives from ASPHER Task Force members - see ASPHER Lessons Learned Report Part 2.

[Read the COVID-19 Lessons Learned statement here.](#)

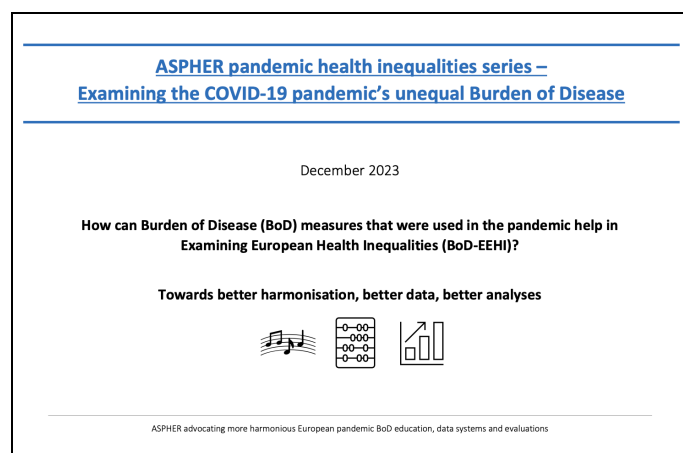
Lombatti S, Magid A, Davidovitch N, et al. (2024) The COVID-19 Pandemic as a Public Health Teacher—the Lessons We Must Learn. Public Health Reviews v45.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/phrs.2024.1607232>

Report: Examining the COVID-19 pandemic's unequal Burden of Disease: How can Burden of Disease (BoD) measures that were used in the pandemic help in Examining European Health Inequalities (BoD-EEHI)?

As societies in Europe seek a return toward normality the pandemic has recently been declared by WHO to no longer represent a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

Work however continues towards dealing with this virus as it remains in circulation and is still damaging health, including those most vulnerable or least protected. This ASPHER review shows ongoing Burden of Disease (BoD) investigations and international collaborations in Europe and globally, that show high promise and contain many insights and pointers to future action. This work is unfinished and needs to be continued until the pandemic whole impacts are more fully understood.



This ASPHER statement/review, and its 40 recommendations, will help us in our key role in looking at and developing our future concepts and competencies. ASPHER will also advocate for better understanding of BoD studies' role in demonstrating health inequalities across Europe and how it has been particularly affecting vulnerable groups, minorities and disadvantaged communities. We would hope that BoD systems and capacity in each country will strengthen so that health losses from this pandemic and future emergency threats can be assessed in an objective and valued way to

guide each country's policy makers, health professionals and also inform their wider populations in a credible and understandable way.

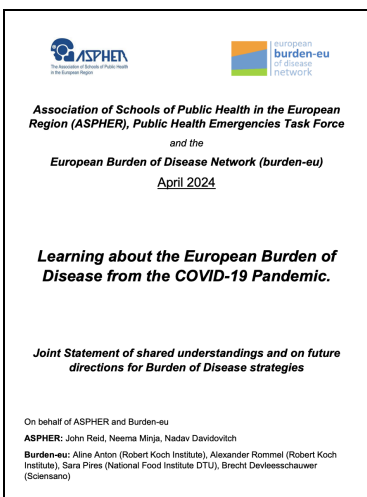
This report helps us look into several issues of importance to ASPHER. Firstly, we wished to identify which Burden of Disease (BoD) methods and metrics have been used in understanding the pandemic so far. Secondly, we wished to examine how BoD is usually measured and what are the strengths and weaknesses of the various metrics/methods. Thirdly, we also are interested in how BoD tools were applied during the COVID-19 pandemic and what initial studies tell us for European populations and vulnerable groups and how BoD evidence can inform us to help with assessing and reducing pandemic health inequalities and promoting equity. Finally, we also consider how BoD approaches might develop in future and what are ASPHER's priorities and recommendations to our members and to our partners, including further developing necessary teaching concepts and public health workforce competencies.

[Download and Read the COVID-19 Unequal Burden of Disease Report here.](#)

Statement: Learning about the European Burden of Disease from the COVID-19 Pandemic: ASPHER and Burden-EU Joint Statement of shared understandings and on future directions for Burden of Disease strategies

These conclusions and recommendations in this statement are based on our recent [Burden of Disease \(BoD\) report](#) from the ASPHER COVID-19/Public Health Emergencies Task Force and

also the reports from the [COVID-19 Task Force of Burden-EU](#).



The ASPHER COVID 19 Task Force (now the Public Health Emergencies Task Force) met throughout the pandemic to issue advice and support the European Schools of Public Health and other partners. Liaison and BoD updates were provided by Burden-EU over the last 12 months through linkages with RKI experts on BoD who led the project '[BoCO-19 - The Burden of COVID-19](#)' during the pandemic, as part of the German government's Global Health Protection Programme (GHPP). Burden-EU and BoCO-19 provided substantial support to advance COVID- 19 BoD work in most countries in Europe.

We developed some general strategic joint recommendations and several more specific ones that are aligned below with the 4 key Lesson Areas from the [ECDC \(2023\) report - Lessons from the Pandemic](#).

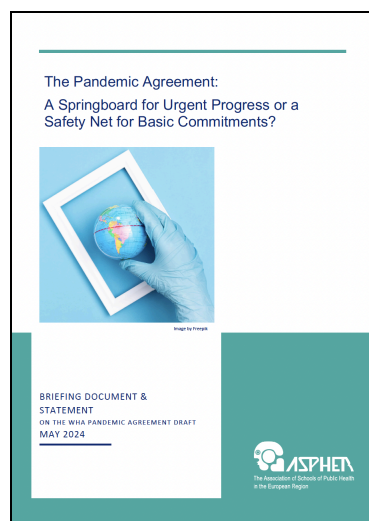
Lesson Area 1: Investment in the public health workforce

Lesson Area 2: Preparing for the next public health crisis

Lesson Area 3: Risk communication and community engagement Lesson Area 4: Collection and analysis of data and evidence.

[Download and read the Joint Burden of Disease statement here.](#)

Briefing Document: The Pandemic Agreement: A Springboard for Urgent Progress or a Safety Net for Basic Commitments?



Ensuring rapid progress in global pandemic preparedness is crucial. The constant global dialogue since the COVID-19 pandemic and recent discussions at the World Health Assembly (WHA) in May 2024 are leading to a proposal for a Pandemic Agreement, which aims to provide a framework for significant advancements by October 2026.

ASPHER advocates for strengthening national and global health systems to enhance preparedness, response, and resilience against future pandemics. This involves substantial investment in healthcare infrastructure, workforce training and resilience, and public health research. Timely implementation of measures is crucial to prevent and mitigate the impacts of future pandemics. Building and maintaining public trust through transparent communication and community engagement is fundamental.

ASPHER underscores the role of public health institutions in fostering trust and compliance with health measures.

The agreement needs to be backed up by concrete Action. Complementarity with International Health Regulations and other WHO treaties is needed, for a cohesive approach to health emergencies. Countries may prioritize pandemic responses based on their needs. WHO provides support but does not override national laws.

Member states must ensure their legislation supports pandemic efforts. Member states need to enhance equity and balance human rights in their pandemic response measures. The Pandemic Agreement could facilitate collaborative efforts during global health crises. Setting expectations and minimum standards is crucial to address lessons from COVID-19 and other outbreaks.

[Download and read The Pandemic Agreement: A Springboard for Urgent Progress or a Safety Net for Basic Commitments?](#)

Enhancing European Public Health Preparedness, Pre-Hospital, and Disaster Medicine Colloquium

25 March 2024, European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium



ASPHER, the World Association for Disaster and Emergency Medicine (WADEM) and the European Council of Disaster Medicine (ECDM), partnered together to gather experts and stakeholders across emergency, medical, political and public health disciplines on 25 March 2024 at the European Parliament for a high-level colloquium to address 'Enhancing European Public Health Preparedness, Pre-Hospital, and Disaster Medicine'.



In an era marked by a #convergence of crises such as rapid global population growth, climate change, violent conflicts and evolving geopolitical landscapes, #publichealth faces unprecedented challenges. These range from managing the aftermath of pandemics and warfare to addressing the impacts of human migration and urbanization on public health systems. This high-profile colloquium will address these challenges by bringing together lead public health experts, academics, community leaders, and citizens to seek consensus to address these evolving challenges

with a fresh look at disaster preparedness for Europe.

The 'Enhancing European Public Health Preparedness, Pre-Hospital, and Disaster Medicine Colloquium' delved into critical areas of in-depth conflict analysis, advanced concepts in #disastermedicine, health security and legal challenges, interdisciplinary and inter-operability collaboration, and innovative research and practice for society resilience. It will be a jumping off point for a new partnership bringing experts together across disciplines to better address dynamic and complex problems and to contribute to an enhanced public health curriculum for current and future challenges threatening the public's health and welfare in Europe.

Read more about the Colloquium [here](#) and [here](#).

Subject specific working groups will be formed and the first follow up workshop was held on 27 June. If you are interested in participating in further consultations and workshops, please contact ASPHER Secretariat at office@aspher.org.



Task Force on Professionalising the Public Health Workforce

The ASPHER-WHO Task Force on Professionalising the Public Health Task Force is currently working on a guide for development of a Code of ethics and professional conduct for public health professionals. It will address public health values and good public health practice, key principles, public health skills/competencies and behaviours.

Further Reading on Professionalisation:

Bürkin BM, Czabanowska K, Babich S, et al. (2024) Competencies for Transformational Leadership in Public Health -an International Delphi Consensus Study. International Journal of

Public Health, vol 69.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/ijph.2024.1606267>

Digital Public Health Working Group

ASPHER's Digital Public Health Working Group aims to support the schools of public health in navigating digital transformations, both in terms of changes to our discipline and how public health education is delivered.

Our mid-term strategy includes four areas of activity: assessing training needs in the existing workforce, mapping existing educational offerings in digital (public health) skills, suggesting updates to public health curricula, and exploring certification.

The DiPH Working group meets monthly. If you are interested in participating, please reach out to the working group chair, Rok Hrzic (r.hrzic@maastrichtuniversity.nl).

EPH Pre-conference: Developing curricula that empower the public health workforce: to lead the digital transformations in health

12 November, from 9:00 to 12:30 Lisbon

ASPHER's Digital Public Health Working Group, in collaboration with EUPHA's and DGPH's Digital Health sections, is organising a pre-conference workshop at this year's European Public Health Conference with the title "Developing curricula that empower the public health workforce to lead the digital transformations in health".

During the workshop, we will learn about best practices in teaching digital public health from colleagues in Germany, Poland, the UK, and France. We will also facilitate hands-on work in groups, during which participants will learn how to use ASPHER's new Core Curriculum tools to introduce digital competencies into their courses.

The pre-conference workshop has been designed for public health educators of all experience levels, and no prior knowledge of digital transformations is required.

The workshop will take place on Tuesday, 12 November, from 9:00 to 12:30 Lisbon time. [More information is available here.](#)

Social Media and Public Health Subgroup - Call for Participation

Social media is a pervasive part of our lives. Billions of people around the world use social media to connect with friends and family and share and consume information. However, social media can also be a source of misinformation and harmful health advice. Influencers, who are often not experts in health, can spread misinformation about topics such as diet, exercise, and medical treatments. This misinformation can have a serious impact on people's health, such as leading to disordered eating, body image issues, vaccine hesitancy, excessive exercise, and the use of untested supplements.

Research on the effects of social media on health has been limited, and most of this research has been conducted in the United States. We believe that it is important to expand this research to Europe to better understand the impact of social media on the health of European individuals.

We propose to create a subgroup under the ASPHER DiPH working group to conduct research on the effects of social media on health. Seeking to better understand the potential, challenges, and the dangers of social media related to health and to help develop strategies to mitigate these dangers and harness them to promote public health, the working group will have the following goals:

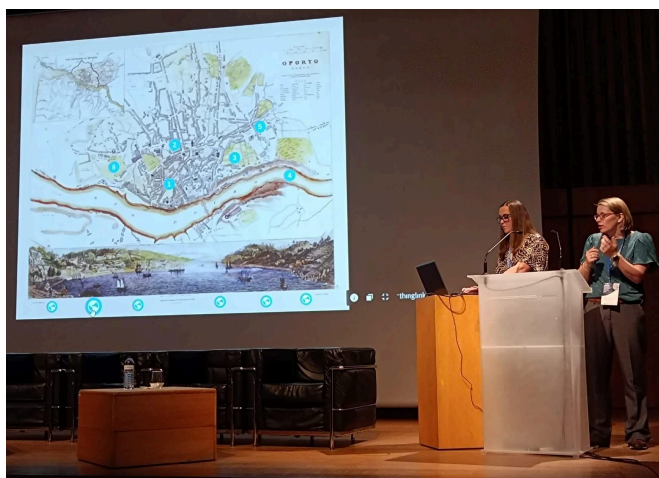
1. Partnership research between stakeholders
2. Organizing relevant discussions and webinars
3. Forming a consortium to submit joint research proposals to the European Union
4. Collaborating in mentoring students and YPs on the topic

If you are interested in joining the Social Media and Public Health subgroup, please contact Keren Dopelt at dopelt@bgu.ac.il and Robert Otok at robert.otok@aspher.org.

See also the [call for papers](#) on the Impact of Social Media on Public Health and Education.

Simulation in Public Health Education and Training Working Group

Many areas of health and social care have utilised simulation-based education to support training of students both in relation to situations and skills. At the Deans' & Directors' Retreat Dr Leah Greene and Dr Anna Cooper-Ryan delivered a presentation entitled: 'Harnessing the power of simulation for public health training'. During the presentation, they provided background on simulation-based education (SBE), discussed how they have been using SBE to enhance Public Health curricula, outlined some methods and tools available to support developments in SBE for Public Health and finally they discussed future collaborations across Europe.



The presentation included a demonstration of a project Leah & Anna had been working on to develop an immersive virtual experience of Eyam, a 17th Century plague village in Derbyshire, England. The virtual experience was developed using artificial intelligence (AI) to generate realistic 360° environments, with added audio to enhance the immersion. Character profiles, scripts and avatars were created and using AI; these were 'brought to life' so you can hear the stories from people who lived in Eyam during the plague outbreak. Users can

navigate around the village, entering traditional houses, the church, green spaces, and graveyard. The experience also allows the user to enter a current version of Eyam to compare and contrast the historical view of Eyam with modern day.

During the presentation at the ASPHER Retreat, further examples of simulation activities were presented by colleagues from the SEEEPHI project & WHO. Leah & Anna also presented the next phase of the project which is working with the Instituto de Saúde Pública da Universidade do Porto (ISPUP) to develop Porto's virtual plague experience, as they too, had a bubonic plague outbreak in 1899. As well as looking at other collaborations which were identified during the retreat.

Building on this and the discussions at the retreat we are looking to build a group of ASPHER members who are interested in all types of simulation to share ideas, look where we can collaborate and also conduct research around this area. The first meeting for this is planned on the 19th July 11:00-12:00 BST/12:00-13:00 CEST, please do get in touch if you would like to join this (email Leah Greene - L.Greene2@salford.ac.uk).

We have also set up a [Padlet](#) to allow the sharing of information and resources.

We would like to explore three main aspects:

1. The use of simulation within public health and how it can support training and professionalisation agendas.
2. The sharing of simulation practices and development of cross-country scenarios and resources, which can be utilised by ASPHER member schools and will become a repository for use by members
3. The development of research around simulation within public health

It is hoped that this would then feed into other working groups within ASPHER, allowing collaborative learning, sharing of materials across member schools and will lead to joint bids and proposals for development and future research.

.....

ASPHER NEWS & EVENTS

ASPHER and WHO-EURO Memorandum of Understanding



ASPHER is proud to announce that on 25 March in Brussels, Belgium, ASPHER signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the World Health Organisation Regional Office For Europe. The MoU which was signed by the Regional Director of WHO-EURO, Dr Hans Kluge and ASPHER President, Prof Carlo Signorelli formalises many years of collaboration between ASPHER and WHO-EURO.

The areas of collaboration outlined in the MoU include:

1. Capacity building in public health from local to European Region and global levels;
2. Advancing on professionalization of the public health workforce;
3. Enabling the next generation of Public Health Professionals to thrive in the public health field and make meaningful contributions; and
4. Joint advocacy on issues of common interest.

ASPHER Brussels Reception



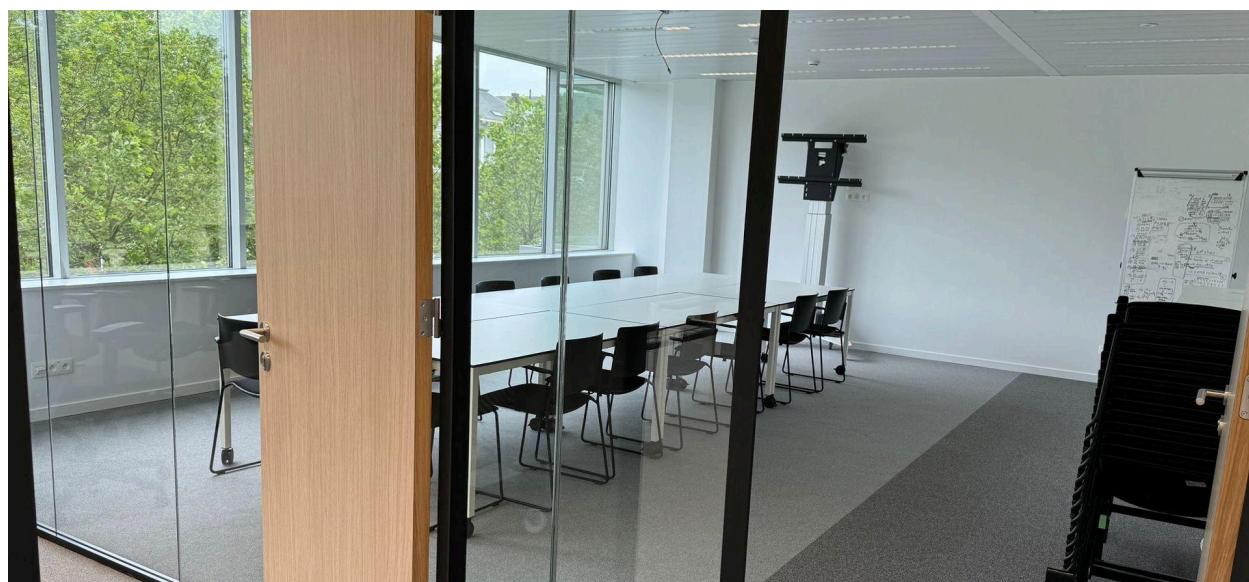
The 25th of March was a busy day with many ASPHER happenings in Brussels! This included the [historic MoU signing with WHO-Europe](#) and the newly developing partnerships with the World Association for Disaster and Emergency Medicine (WADEM) and the European Council of Disaster Medicine (ECDM). To celebrate these developments as well as ASPHER's new headquarters in the European Quarter, ASPHER held a special reception inviting other European public health organisations and participants from the [Enhancing European Public Health Preparedness, Pre-Hospital, and Disaster Medicine Colloquium](#).

Natasha Azzopardi Muscat, Director of the Division of Country Health Policies and Systems, WHO Regional Office for Europe addressed the reception; and ASPHER, WADEM and ECDM marked the coming together of the public health and disaster medicine communities with commemorative plaques.

ASPHER Office relocated to European Quarter



Along with the University of Maastricht Brussels campus, ASPHER Headquarters has moved to our new home at Avenue des Arts 47 in the heart of the European District. The new modernised premises bring us closer to most other Brussels-based public health NGOs as well as the EU Parliament and Commission offices. In addition to UM, we are also sharing the premises with [Young Universities for the Future of Europe](#) (YUFE) making the office a hub for European higher education.



Members visiting Brussels are always welcome to drop by, so be sure to let us know if you are in town!

In Memoriam, Judy Overall 1947-2024



ASPHER lost a valued member of our community with the passing of Judith "Judy" Anne White Overall.

Judy's work with ASPHER focussed on the Human Rights in Patient Care with the publication of Practitioner Guides in multiple languages to address the legal, ethical, and human rights norms, which are increasingly important to the delivery of quality patient care. You may learn more about Judy's work and download practitioner guides at the website for [Human Rights and Patient Care](#).

[Tributes](#) to Judy from ASPHER members and HRPC colleagues are available as well as a moving memorial [video](#) and [poster](#) created for Judy and displayed at the ASPHER Retreat in Porto.

Dr Judy Overall, dearest friend and colleague, went to "the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveller returns," but her proper place is in our hearts; she left an indelible mark. She belongs to the generation of our colleagues inspired by scientific and professional values – working in a world where the only constants are rapid changes and challenging times. Dr Overall was not only a colleague but also a lighthouse of knowledge, mentor, and support to countless colleagues.



She discovered the world of public health and law, expanding her knowledge and competencies in working with the community of practice. She quickly found the horizons of international cooperation by improving herself at well-known world universities. In her career, dedicated and driven by the desire to help vulnerable groups... she documented her experiences. She was recognized for mobilizing public health professionals to work devotedly to preventing many legal violations, primarily violations of patient rights. Therefore, we always evaluated her work as extraordinary.

Dr Judy Overall dealt with numerous issues of human rights, especially the international framework and regional and country-specific legal procedures. She led and inspired generations of physicians and lawyers in professional and scientific work. The Belgrade team will always be grateful for the multidisciplinary approach she has passed to us; with Judy, we learned to work together and find a mutual field of understanding between physicians and lawyers. We accepted that real-life case studies are critical, and we collected many examples of compliance with and

violations of human rights in patient care. The Belgrade team and Judy have developed the Serbian version of the Human Rights in Patient Care Practitioner Guide, a long-desired and urgently necessary compendium of actual national regulations and case studies, which the Open Society Institute supported. One effective way to make this Guide accessible to a broader audience was by providing practical examples from the courts and government agencies in Serbia. Specifically, the practice of the Agency for Peaceful Settlement of Labor Disputes in cases related to the infringement of the rights of healthcare professionals and patients, including lawsuits for damages caused by medical errors, was helpful. This approach achieves another goal of the Guide, which is to help readers understand the issue of human rights in patient care and to demonstrate the available legal frameworks for resolving disputes and protecting these rights at both national and international levels. Dr. Overall led and inspired academic staff and practitioners to significantly contribute to the permanent improvement of everyday healthcare practice.

Dr Judy Overall was also an evaluator of the Belgrade Roma mentoring project financed by the Open Society Institute for many years. Her excellence has set a standard that will endure as a legacy in the academic community. In addition to the recognition and achievements accompanying her distinguished career, Judy Overall was a friend, advisor and source of inspiration. She possessed a rare ability not only to impart knowledge but also to nurture the intellectual and personal development of those around her. We are grateful for the time we shared and the lessons we learned from the exceptional Dr Judy Overall.

I was fortunate enough to know Judy and work alongside her to enhance the public health sector and improve the healthcare system. Judy is deeply missed every day, especially during these times of rapid change. However, she has left a bright light shining for us to follow, for her family, and for all of us. She has opened new horizons, and we are grateful for her contributions. Thank you and may she rest in peace.

March 2024, in Belgrade

On behalf of the Belgrade team:
Prof. Dr. Vesna Bjegovic-Mikanovic
University of Belgrade, Faculty of Medicine
Centre School of Public Health and Management

.....

CCP

Waiting for Karl and Mary

ASPHER PROJECTS

December 2023 sees the start of two member-led projects that ASPHER is taking part in: VAX-Action and EARLY. ASPHER is happy to be able to support member-led projects through activities such as consortium building, dissemination, evaluation and training - don't hesitate to consider a role for ASPHER for your projects.

VAX-ACTION: Tackling Effectively Vaccine Hesitancy in Europe



VAX-Action, which is co-funded by EU4Health, aims to support EU Member States and relevant stakeholders to implement a combination of tailored, evidence-based interventions aimed to reduce vaccine hesitancy. It addresses the need to understand what type of interventions are now available, which are effective, how to translate effective interventions to new contexts, and to explain the unsuccessful ones to create opportunities for learning and redesign.



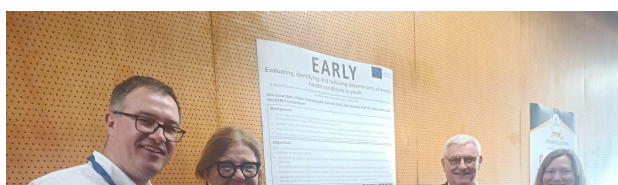
VAX-Action is coordinated by IHMT, NOVA University Lisbon, PORTUGAL under the lead of Prof Tiago Correia and builds on previous EU projects in the area. It brings together a consortium of ASPHER member schools, including University Vita-Salute San Raffaele, Milan, ITALY; EHESP School of Public Health, FRANCE; National School of Public Health, Management and Professional Development, ROMANIA; Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Rome, ITALY; Institute of Public Health, University of Porto (ISPUP), PORTUGAL; Institute for Postgraduate Medical

Education (IPVZ), CZECHIA; and University of Pavia, ITALY. ASPHER is responsible for the work package on dissemination.

The project held its kick off meeting on the official project start date on 1st of December and will regroup in early January to sign off on our partnership agreement. We'll keep you posted on developments.



EARLY: Evaluating, Identifying & Reducing determinants MHC in Youth



The EARLY project aims to reduce the burden of non-communicable diseases such as mental health conditions (MHC), especially depression, anxiety, stress disorders, substance use disorders and identify and reduce risky modifiable exposures for these conditions in youth. EARLY will pursue this goal through developing a comprehensive exposure matrix which can be adapted to emerging new risks, to understand youth, parents', and stakeholders' perceptions, we will conduct qualitative, interviews, by providing representative, multinational data on youth MHC and through developing, implementing and evaluating a multicomponent intervention. This will serve as an innovative model for promoting mental health and preventing MHC.

EARLY, which is co-funded through Horizon, is coordinated by the Technical University of Applied Sciences in Emden/Leer, GERMANY with Prof Jutta Lindert leading. Other ASPHER members involved in the consortium include Tirana Medical University, ALBANIA; University of Bremen, GERMANY; Medical University of Gdansk, POLAND; University of Porto, PORTUGAL; and University of Novi Sad, SERBIA. ASPHER will be tasked with development of mental health training activities tailored for youth and carers.

The project, which started on 1st of December, held an introductory meeting of partners on 13 December. The kick off meeting is planned for 11-12 January in Emden, Germany.



SEEEPHI: Sharing European Educational Experience in Public Health for Israel



The SEEEPHI project has faced significant disruptions over the past year due to the conflict in Israel since 07 October. All



Universities remained closed for an extended period of time, medical personnel were unable to travel, and many partner leads continue to be involved in both required and voluntary duties related to support efforts.

Despite the challenges and some delays, the project has picked up pace again in recent months and many partners were on hand in Porto for the ASPHER Deans' Retreat to disseminate project results among ASPHER members and partners. Partners onsite also took the opportunity to meet for planning for the wrap up of the project along with Lead External Evaluator, Paul Barach.

SEEEPHI is now taking a brief suspension break over the summer months and will be closing the project in September with a final event at the annual conference of the Israeli Association of Public Health Physicians (IAPHP) to be held at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (HUJI) on 3rd September. Partners will also meet at the University Maastricht Brussels Campus for a final partners meeting later in the month.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

NAWA Project Closing Meeting

22 May 2024, Gdansk, Poland



On Wednesday, May 22, 2024, ASPHER traveled to Gdansk for the closing meeting for the Public Health Education and Pandemic Challenges project, made possible by the funding from the NAWA - Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange) under the Strategic Partnerships Programme. Held in Medical University of Gdańsk, this event marked a milestone, allowing partners to reflect on our collective achievements and discuss the future trajectory of public health education. The insights shared and the collaborative spirit exhibited during the meeting were truly remarkable.

This event was more than just a series of presentations and discussions; it was an invaluable opportunity for many participants to meet in person, fostering connections and building relationships that will undoubtedly strengthen our future collaborations. The sense of community and shared purpose was evident, making this gathering a pivotal moment in our collective efforts.

The success of this meeting was largely due to the exceptional leadership of Professor Łukasz Balwicki and the tireless work of Anna Tyrańska-Fobke. Their dedication and meticulous planning ensured that every detail was executed flawlessly. We extend our deepest gratitude to them for their unwavering commitment and professionalism, which have been instrumental in the success of the project.

.....

MEMBER NEWS & EVENTS

Call for Interest: Joint Research Project: Infections and Society Impact Research Group (ISAAC): Establishment of a European Consortium for Interdisciplinary Research on Infectious Diseases



Faculty of Health
Sciences

The ISAAC project aims to establish an interdisciplinary research network to support researchers in health sciences, focusing on the societal, economic, psychological, and media impacts of infectious diseases. Key partners include universities and research centers from across Europe and international partners from

South Africa, New Zealand, and Taiwan. The project will:

- Develop a comprehensive database on infectious diseases, integrating epidemiological, socioeconomic, environmental, and media data.
- Design an early warning and response system (EWARS) for climate-sensitive infectious diseases using data science approaches.
- Establish a living lab to co-create measurements and services related to public health issues.
- Analyze the social, economic, psychological, and media impacts of infectious diseases.
- Foster knowledge transfer and networking among researchers, stakeholders, and the public.

Learn more about plans for the ISAAC project [here](#).

To express interest or request further information, please contact: Prof. Ondrej Holy (Project Coordinator) Faculty of Health Sciences, Palacky University Olomouc ondrej.holy@upol.cz.

Call for Papers: The Impact of Social Media on Public Health and Education



European Journal of
*Investigation in Health,
Psychology and Education*

Social media platforms have become an abundant source of information for a global audience of billions. However, social media can also spread misinformation and potentially harmful health advice. Social networks' complex algorithms prioritize content, regardless of its scientific basis, leading users to act on potentially misleading health information. Influencers, often lacking formal healthcare

qualifications, can spread misinformation about topics such as diet, exercise, vaccinations, and medical treatments. Studies have shown that social media followers are more attracted to and affected by social media influencers than health professionals.

The pervasiveness of inaccurate health information on social media platforms poses a significant public health challenge, which can manifest in several health-related behaviours, including vaccination hesitancy, disordered eating, body image issues, excessive exercise, and the use of untested and even hazardous supplements. These concerning trends have the potential to inflict significant harm on individuals' health, potentially increasing susceptibility to chronic conditions and compromising immune function.

This Special Issue aims to explore the effects of social media on health behaviours. Examining this link will enhance our comprehension of the potential challenges and risks associated with social media in relation to health. We welcome original articles (quantitative analysis, both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies) and systematic review works.

[Learn more about this special issue of the European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education here.](#)

Prof. Keren Dopelt
Guest Editor

Call for Papers: The Health of Displaced People: A Challenge for Epidemiology and Public Health



It is estimated that there are currently at least 110 million forcibly displaced people worldwide. Epidemiological and other scientific investigations are needed to characterize their health status and the pathogenic short- and long-term role of “exodus hazardous”, and to identify circumstances and interventions that favour or hamper the provision of health services, at least of the most basic kind. Because of their mobile character, the study of displaced populations is problematic. The topic is therefore relatively understudied, even compared with studies of stabilized, non-forcibly migrant populations.

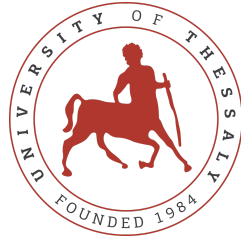
[Rodolfo Saracci's editorial](#), published in IJPH, sets the context for this call. As emphasized by Saracci, humanitarian crises leading to displacement entail a wide range of “exodus hazards” that potentially impact health and health systems before, during, and after the displacement.

Guest Editors for the special issue are Rodolfo Saracci, Oliver Razum, Dorit Nitzan, Kailing Marcus and JM Pescarini.

This is a joint special issue of PHR and IJPH. For PHR, we invite high-quality Reviews (all types) and Policy Briefs. For IJPH, we invite Original Articles.

[Learn more about the call for papers here.](#)

Introducing 'Risk Analysis in Public Health' - A Specialized AI Tool for Public Health Professionals!



Executive Board Member Polychronis Koustolas of University of Thessaly is excited to share a groundbreaking resource that's enhancing our approach to public health risk analysis. This AI tool offers in-depth insights into various aspects of public health. From clinical trials and food safety to epidemic response and the management of endemic diseases

(and a lot more), it covers a broad spectrum of public health challenges, extending all the way to strategic resource allocation.

What sets this tool apart?

- It's founded on comprehensive knowledge, tailor-made for public health risk analysis.
- It's versatile, providing valuable insights across a wide array of public health issues.
- Additionally, it's designed to be accessible to a diverse audience, from students just starting in the field to seasoned professionals.

[Dive into this innovative tool and explore its capabilities.](#)

Trailblazing Apprentices Achieve UK Academic First



[Students at the University of Salford celebrated](#) after becoming the first in the UK to complete a Public Health Practitioner apprenticeship degree.

This academic first sees five apprentices become the first to graduate the pioneering course, launched in 2019, and are automatically eligible to register with the [UK Public Health Register](#) as Public Health Practitioners.

Dr Anna Cooper-Ryan, Head of Public Health at the University of Salford's School of Health and Society, said: "We're very proud of our trailblazing graduate apprentices who, through their hard work and dedication, have exceeded all our expectations.

The course was developed through consultation with what was then Public Health England, and employers from across the country and is designed to provide a new way to develop and retain a fully professionalised workforce in public health.

A degree apprenticeship combines academic study at university with on-the-job training in the workplace and the Apprenticeship Services Unit at the University of Salford offers excellent support throughout the apprenticeship journey.

If you would like to learn more about the course then please visit the School of Health and Society [degree apprenticeship page](#) on the University website.

International Conference: Society for Bayesian methods in Epidemiology and Diagnostics (SBED)

31 January – 2 February 2024, Brussels, Belgium



HARMONY
Novel tools for test evaluation and
disease prevalence estimation

We are pleased to announce the establishment of the Society for Bayesian methods in Epidemiology and Diagnostics (SBED); an international society, for the application of Bayesian Latent Class Models (BLCMs) in life sciences in order to promote collaboration of scientists working in the field and the harmonized reporting of relevant research.

The society's 1st activity was the organisation of an international conference that took place 31 January – 2 February 2024 in the vibrant city of Brussels, Belgium. The event is under the auspices of the [HARMONY COST Action](#), which is chaired by Polychronis Koustolas of the University of Thessaly, ASPHER Executive Board member.

Whether you're an epidemiologist, clinician, veterinarian, psychologist, environmental health expert, or an enthusiast in BLCMs, your participation is vital.

Don't miss this opportunity to become a member in shaping the future of epidemiology and diagnostics!

[Learn more about SBED here.](#)

ASPHER Member Blogs

Former ASPHER President John Middleton continues to regularly blog at ASPHER.org. ASPHER blogs are open to all members and is a great forum to spread your news, information and ideas and to dialogue with the ASPHER community. This feature will be integrated in a more intuitive way as we roll out the new ASPHER website, but in the meantime, **if you have a blog or news item you would like to post, contact Lore at lore.leighton@aspher.org**

Read Prof John Middleton's blogs on [Evidence for the UN Special Rapporteurs session on the Criminalisation of Homelessness and Poverty](#); and [The Healthy State? How Geopolitics Undermines The Protection And Improvement Of Health Of The People We Serve](#).

Further Reading:

Hrzic R, Brand H. (2024). Twenty years since the 2004 European Union enlargement: what does it mean for health? European Journal of Public Health.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckae071>

Ricciardi, W. (2024) Save the world or disappear: the fate of Public Health in an era of formidable challenges. European Journal of Public Health.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckae090>

PARTNER NEWS

Building the national workforce for essential public health functions Reports Launched by WHO



World Health Organization

The World Health Organisation has just launched a suite of papers from its two-year programme “Building the national workforce for essential public health functions (EPHF): A Roadmap for aligning WHO and partner

contributions. The introductory web page can be found [here](#).

ASPHER members have played an active part in the development of these landmark papers and you can [read more about their contributions here](#).

The [collection of WHO health workforce reports](#) is designed to support countries wishing to develop their public health workforce: it is made up of the:

- National workforce capacity for essential public health functions: Operational handbook for country-led contextualization and implementation;
- Defining essential public health functions and services to strengthen national workforce capacity;
- Global competency and outcomes framework for the essential public health functions, and
- National workforce capacity for essential public health functions: operational handbook for country-led contextualization and implementation.

17th European Public Health Conference 2024: Sailing the waves of European public health: exploring a sea of innovation



**EUROPEAN
PUBLIC
HEALTH
CONFERENCE**

Main conference 13 - 15 November 2024

Pre-conferences 12 November 2024

Lisbon, Portugal

After wrapping up the ASPHER Deans' & Directors' Retreat in Porto, we are looking forward to returning to Portugal for the EPH Conference in Lisbon from 12-15 November!



[Prof Sónia Dias from ASPHER Member National School of Public Health, NOVA University, Lisbon is chairing the International Scientific Committee](#) of the 17th EPH Conference and we hope she was inspired by her time at the Porto Retreat.

This year's conference theme, Sailing the waves of European public health: exploring a sea of innovation, encapsulates public health's collective mission seeking to push the boundaries, discover new approaches, and chart the course for the future of public health in Europe.

Subthemes of the EPH Conference 2024, which will be the focus of the plenary sessions in Lisbon:

- Artificial Intelligence in Public Health
- One Health - Animal Approach
- Social Marketing in Public Health
- Health Inequalities
- Global Health

Learn more and register [here](#). Early registration rates apply until 31 August.

EuroPubHealth+ Graduation Week

[Report back from graduation week](#)



European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) 2024 Shifting sands of health - Democracy, demographics, digitalisation

24-27 September, Bad Hofgastein, Austria and online



The health landscape in Europe is ever-changing, driven by numerous factors, trends, and forces. Inter-linked transformations, most prominently the demographic shift and the rapid developments in the world of digitalisation, have wide-ranging implications for the health of our societies and healthcare systems. Furthermore, the erosion of self-governing democracies by populist and autocratic political movements remains underestimated in health policy debates: democracy isn't so much dying in the darkness as being extinguished in the cold light of day. The health community faces a stark choice: mobilise in this new landscape or collude with the health consequences. Join us at the hybrid EHFG 2024 from 24 - 27 September

to help find solutions for the complex "3D" interplay of democracy, demographics, and digitalisation. Let's be optimistic and not bury our heads in the shifting sands!

Find more about the EHFG 2024 programme and registration [here](#).

The EHMA 2024 Conference

05-07 June 2024, Bucharest



The EHMA 2024 Conference took place from 5 to 7 June at the Politehnica University of Bucharest in Romania and centred around the theme 'Shaping and managing innovative health ecosystems', capturing the essence of health megatrends, focusing on digital transformation, sustainability, and the evolving skill sets required in healthcare.

Throughout the conference, several key themes and challenges were discussed. A significant focus was on health disparities and equity, highlighting the persistence of health disparities influenced by socioeconomic factors. Discussions emphasised the importance of equitable health technology distribution and integrated approaches to close health gaps. Investing in healthcare systems was identified as essential for improving life expectancy and addressing behavioural health factors. The importance of smart investments, health literacy, and evidence-based decision-making was underscored.

The EHMA 2024 Conference Abstract book is now [available here](#), featuring a comprehensive collection of research and posters.

The conference report, plenary session videos, and selected PowerPoint slides will be soon made available on [the conference website](#).

OPPORTUNITIES

Dr. Greg Bossart Memorial One Health Scholarship

Submission Deadline July 31, 2024; 11:59 pm Eastern Daylight Time



A \$5,000 USD Dr. Greg Bossart Memorial Scholarship is available to a graduate student anywhere in the world in wildlife biology, epidemiology, veterinary, medical, public health, basic or social sciences or other post-graduate program focusing on the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment using a One Health framework. Funds will be awarded before / by November 3, 2024, One Health Day. The scholarship is funded by [Georgia Aquarium](#) and is administered by the [One Health Commission](#).

Greg Bossart, DVM, Ph.D. was a highly respected veterinarian, pathologist, and conservationist committed to advancing the understanding of marine mammals as sentinels of ocean and human health. With a career spanning 30 years and over 200 publications, Dr. Bossart identified resurgent and emerging diseases in dolphins, manatees, birds, and whales. His research and innovative techniques helped characterize the first viral diseases in manatees and he was responsible for developing the first immunohistochemical technique for diagnosing brevetoxicosis (red tide poisoning) in both marine mammals and birds.

Learn more about eligibility requirements and how to apply [here](#).

Share the ASPHER newsletter!



[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)

The Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER)
ASPHER Brussels | T: +31 (0) 433 884 398 | S: [asptherskype](#) | E: office@aspher.org