
December 2021 ASPHER Newsletter



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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Season's greetings from the President



May we all, according to our beliefs, enjoy, celebrate, reflect, share and give in our December festivals (some just passed).

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas, Hanukkah, Bodhi day, Pancha Ganapati, Omisoka, Kwanzaa, Yalda, Zaratost No Diso, Yule, Winter Solstice, Universal Human Rights Day and more.

Twenty twenty-one has been another historic, catastrophic and tragic year with the pandemic continuing to run, thwarting our efforts,

exhausting us all, wearing us out, despite the promise of THE extraordinary effort on vaccination, testing and other public health interventions. Public health has been brought front and centre. Across many countries public health services and systems have been [found weakened through years of austerity](#) or allowed to wither because our messages have not been politically popular or sometimes downright annoying. Many politicians continue to be negligent, ignoring warnings and action on pandemic preparedness. On the other hand, ASPHER's [survey of the role of schools throughout the pandemic](#) shows the extraordinary extent of influence on national government policies and local service delivery. I salute you all for the work you continue to do. Thank you.

ASPHER's COVID-19 Task Force continues to be active. I remain grateful to colleagues for their enthusiasm and for the breadth and depth of the expertise they bring. ASPHER has now produced [an extensive range of statements and handbooks](#) which are well received across our membership and in many cases at the highest level of national government. I estimate something like 130 papers have been produced, many in peer reviewed journals, some achieving high citation scores, like our [paper on third wave and winter planning](#) concerns. You can pick up my latest thoughts on COVID [in England](#), and [in Europe](#) in my companion blogs for December.

Our young professionals group continues to challenge and excel and I am extremely grateful to Ines Siepmann for picking up the mantle of young professional lead and ASPHER executive board member. We continued with the virtual ASSETS summer school meeting last summer and hope we can make it to Zagreb next year. Rana Orhan, our ASPHER fellow has done excellent work on our behalf, earning us, with your votes, [a European Union Health Policy Platform Thematic Network](#) for [Adaptation actions on climate change and health \(through education and training\)](#). She has also put together the [ASPHER Climate and Health Competencies for Public Health Professionals in Europe](#) built on the curriculum of the [Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education](#). We thank Cecilia Sorensen, GCCCHE for her help and interest in our work. Please use this vital resource.

In ASPHER's internal business we are moving forward on the new website which will be launched in the new year. We have made major improvements to our governance arrangements and improvements in our finances. We have a lively and active group in our executive board and I am grateful to them for their commitment and support.

We have also driven forward the [Global Network for Academic Public Health](#) (GNAPH) with our sister organisations from other WHO Regions of the World. We are particularly grateful for the efforts of Laura Magaña and Dorothy Biberman from the North American [Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health \(ASPPH\)](#), for helping us to propel our global agenda forward. GNAPH and the World Federation of Public Health Associations have joined forces to lobby the World Trade Organisation on the [\(TRIPS\) Waiver](#). We are grateful to Alison McCallum and colleagues for the initiative behind our [letter to WTO](#). More work has to be done on this if we are to vaccinate the world and get out of the pandemic. This year, we have produced the major statement on the vital [role of schools of public health in teaching and training](#) – calling for major investment by governments and by international funding agencies. Laura presented this to a meeting of G20 Health Ministries in October. ASPHER's role in relation to European institutions and global public health was strongly explored in our Deans' and Directors' Retreat and we are extremely grateful to Dr Hans Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe; David Atchoarena, Director UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning; Jim Campbell, Director, Health

Workforce Department, WHO Headquarters; Professor Peter Piot, Special Advisor on COVID-19 to European Commission President Ursula Von Der Leyen; Dineke Zeegers, EUPHA Executive Director; and Caroline Costongs, EuroHealthNet Director for their contributions.

And we have moved forward the [ASPHER strategic 2025 agenda](#). We have improved and enhanced our internal governance, membership relations and financial procedures and we will be refining our internal rules in the new year. We continue to build on the work of past-Presidents Kasia Czabanowska and Anders Foldspang in embedding tools for [competency](#) and [curriculum development](#). Our publication, the [WHO-ASPHER Competency Framework for the Public Health Workforce](#), continues to be a key document for us. We have used it as a platform for our work with ECDC on competencies for Updating Core Competencies for Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology (UCCAIDE), and for the [ASPHER Climate and Health Competencies for Public Health Professionals in Europe](#). We expect to publish our professionalisation Road Map with WHO early next year. My thanks to Hans Kluge, Regional Director for WHO-EURO and Natasha Azzopardi-Muscat for their great enthusiasm and support for ASPHER and for their commitment to our joint working. Mary Codd, UCD and ASPHER Executive Board, is continuing to develop the competency work picking up from Kasia and Anders.

We have built on our partnerships with other European public health organisations [EUPHA](#), the [European Public Health Alliance \(EPHA\)](#) and [EuroHealthNet](#), and we are building on our work with the [International Association of National Public Health Institutes \(IANPHI\)](#) and with [APHEA](#). In May, we produced a [joint statement with EUPHA](#), which is informing our joint agenda. We greatly value the prominence that EUPHA afforded us for the European Public Health congress in November; some of our ASPHER Young Professionals showcased their work and professional philosophies alongside WHO and Observatory contributions on the future of public health post pandemic. We were also able to present a unified front on the European Commission's failure to support NGOs with the operating grant this year. We hope next year the grant will be fully reinstated – not just offered for a year.

Europe faces further uncertainty on the pandemic front as we enter 2022. Vaccines brought hope and extraordinary efforts were made by scientists, industry, health services and communities to get vaccines out widely. However, the virus is proving a worthy adversary – there is waning of immunity, a need to keep boosting, and a need to address vaccine hesitancy across all communities. Vaccination we now know does not do away with the need for social distancing and non-pharmaceutical protections. We face again, in 2021-22 a [cold winter, possible flu, and further COVID](#).

Keep safe and protect yourselves, your families, your friends and colleagues. And come back renewed in the new year resolved to work better, smarter, not harder, to protect and improve the health of people and planet.

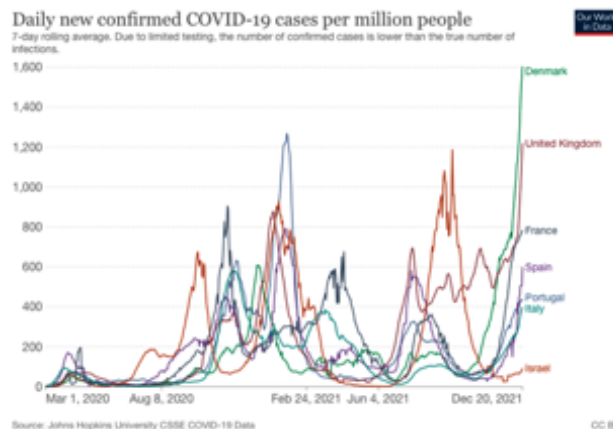
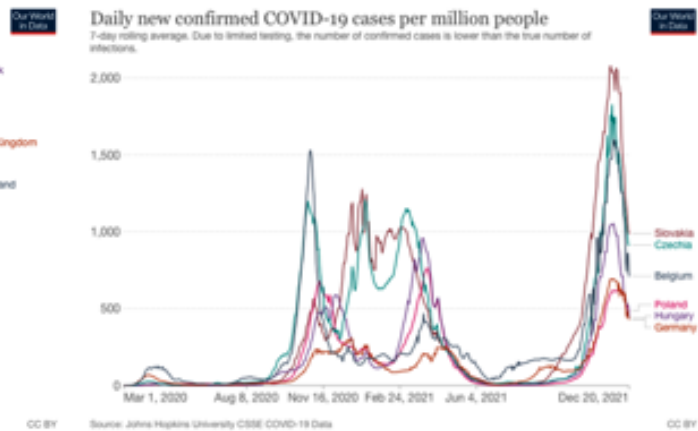
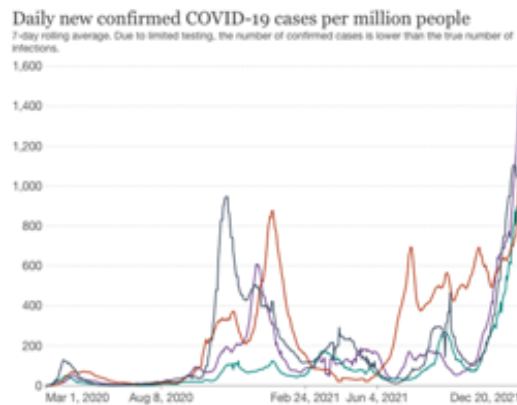
I would like to offer my thanks for all your support this year, particularly to my colleagues on the ASPHER Executive Board, the COVID-19 Task Force and especially to the ASPHER Secretariat – Robert Otok, Lore Leighton, Rana Orhan and Tatiana Caftea.

And now by way of the traditional Dr J Christmas present, here is an anthem for our time – ['Lean on Me' by Bill Withers, played for you by Dr Harp's Medicine Band](#). Happy New Year!

President's Blog, Part 2: The European experience

Dear Colleagues, I write to you on the verge of Christmas, and midwinter festivities wherever you are. You can read this blog alongside my piece [‘From the English correspondent’](#).

You can get a full current picture of the COVID pandemic in Europe at [ASPHER's COVID-19 Task Force page](#) and its weekly [European situation reporting](#).



European governments are on high alert for Omicron and many governments have reacted decisively.

In Europe, [Norway](#), [Denmark](#), [Switzerland](#) and [UK](#) are still in the grip of exponential growth of infections, with Omicron taking over as the prominent variant of concern.

[Czechia](#), [Germany](#), [Poland](#), [Slovakia](#), [Belgium](#), [Hungary](#) have passed recent peaks of presumed Delta Variant.

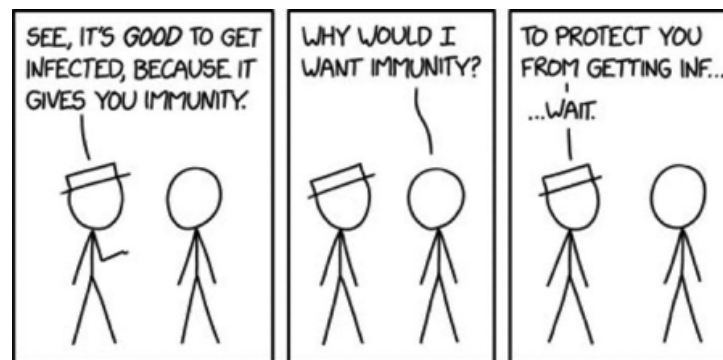
Rates are rising in [France](#), [Sweden](#), [Israel](#), [Italy](#), [Portugal](#) and [Spain](#), but from a lower base.

In Portugal, [Omicron is expected to be 80%](#) of cases in the New Year, doubling the 5000 cases at present, despite having very high levels of vaccination. Portugal is also embarking on a vaccine [programme for 5-11 year olds](#). [Norway has imposed its strictest restrictions](#) since the beginning of the pandemic, in response to the escalation of cases. This includes a ban on alcohol sales in bars and restaurants. Households are limited to 10 people and public gatherings less than 50. [Denmark](#) has also responded with stricter measures including the closure of public venues. This is in response to 11,194 cases on December 17th. The Netherlands is imposing a strict Christmas lockdown. [The Netherlands has imposed new strict restrictions](#) and restrictions are increasing in many European countries.

Norway's swift action, alongside Finland, in March 2020 meant that they saved lives and were able to deal with the Wuhan and later strains effectively through responsive public health

interventions; and they [bought time](#) for vaccine programmes to come in. As WHO leader [Dr Tedros has said most recently](#) 'an event cancelled is better than a life cancelled'.

Great Barrington Declaration apologists have re-appeared out of the woodwork. Their [ill-conceived assertions](#) appeared before the 'Kent'-Alpha variant of concern. They have [proved to be utterly wrong](#), with Delta, and now Omicron, and with the disaster of the [Manaus experience in Brazil](#); and consequently there have been 4.26 million extra deaths since their pronouncement on October 4th 2020; 1.224 million of those in Europe. And there is still [no evidence of herd-community-immunity](#).



Late or incomplete interventions further damage economies, with the main victims being those with the fewest resources who are also most at risk from COVID-19. There will once again be a [social, economic, and health worsening](#) in the European Region. Once again, the threat is obvious to economies from not dealing with the pandemic decisively. The [German](#) and [French](#) bans on UK business travellers and tourists are just examples of how the pandemic limits economic activity and why we need to control the virus.

European governments face difficult decisions. It is clear that Norway and Denmark, faced with the greatest onslaught of numbers have acted swiftly. The Netherlands also acted swiftly and numbers are already coming down. Whether the measures will be sufficient remain to be seen. [The public health community in the UK remains deeply concerned](#) and feels its expertise and knowledge are unappreciated. This renders the UK population unprotected and leaves the economy vulnerable when other countries rightly decide not to allow in business people and tourists from 'plague island'. The English experiment with high rates of infection first Delta from July, now Omicron, has been a disaster of extraordinary proportions – with an Airbus A320 plane crash everyday, and 90000 infections yesterday....

COVID-DO-IT-ALL

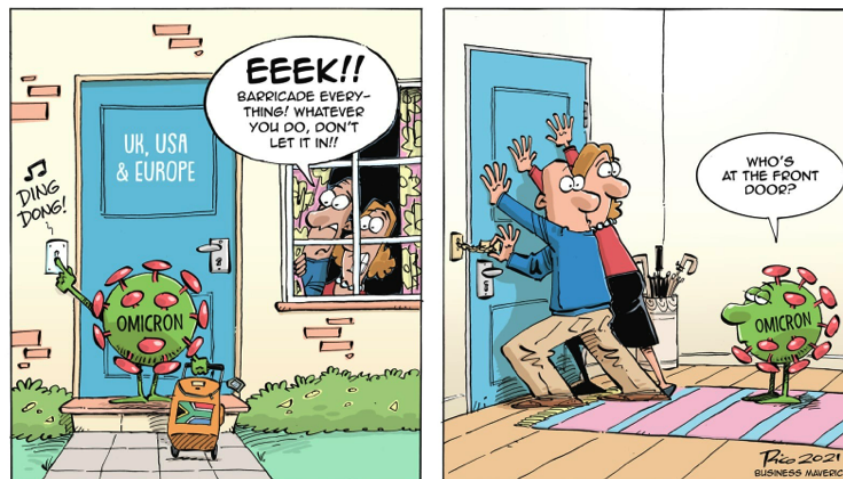
Last week, [WHO Director General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus](#) said 'vaccines alone will not get any country out of this crisis. Countries can – and must – prevent the spread of Omicron with measures that work today. It's not vaccines instead of masks. It's not vaccines instead of distancing. It's not vaccines instead of ventilation or hand hygiene. Do it all. Do it consistently. Do it well.' As the pandemic progresses, we are understanding the weaknesses of each of the interventions we have in the armoury to combat COVID-19. [The Swiss Cheese model](#) has been used to show the need to employ all the pandemic control measures available, so that where one failed, another would do the job. This mentality and policy stance has not been conveyed by our political leaders. Vigorous measures are needed to combat the COVID-19

pandemic winter resurgence in Europe 2021/22 at international, regional and local levels, using all the evidence-based tools available; we need an integrated, [COVID-DO-IT-ALL strategy](#).

A global approach to a global problem

And we need to constantly remind ourselves that the pandemic will not be over until it is over for everyone. That requires an extraordinary effort on vaccination and far more generosity of spirit from the rich world than we have seen so far. [ASPHER has been campaigning](#) with the Global Network for Academic Public Health and the World Federation of Public Health Associations, for a [Vaccine Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights Waiver](#). We have to grow the [world's capacity to produce vaccines](#), and deliver maybe every 6 months to everyone on the planet.

We also need to celebrate the extraordinary achievement of the South African scientists who We cannot expect the same early identification of new variants, for the benefit of the world, if countries where the scientists have done the work, and identify the next VOC, are instantly vilified and ostracised. We must act together a global community, scientific, political and general public. We really do have to be in this together.



President's Blog, Part 3: From our English correspondent

For the second year running, Christmas is saved!

The United Kingdom Prime Minister has again saved Christmas. Last year Alpha (formerly 'Kent' variant of concern) appeared. Boris Johnson won the battle against the scientists.

This year Omicron is with us for Christmas, Boris Johnson has fought off the scientists, just as he did last year.

Since August, ASPHER publications have warned about this state of ['deju-vu'](#) or



[‘groundhog day’](#). People have heard me say that all policy makers and public health specialists should ‘look east’, during the pandemic. The experience of [SARS-COV-1 made East Asian countries](#) acutely nervous and highly prepared for any new appearances of potentially pandemic viruses. In most countries of Europe, we remain under-prepared, unwilling, and unable to act and react, not being prepared, even after the experience of at least 3 waves of the SARS-COV-2 virus and six major variants of concern. There are a few notable exception who seem able to respond decisively, which I discuss in my [‘European blog’ – number 2](#).

In the UK, scientists have called for urgent action, as set out by the Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Modelling, Operational sub-group ([SPI-M-O](#)) for the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) and Independent SAGE. [Independent SAGE](#) called for a short circuit breaker enabling limited mixing from the 25 to 28th December. In Christmas week, the prime minister has emerged from Cabinet [telling us no new restrictions](#) will be put in place, he still needs more evidence.

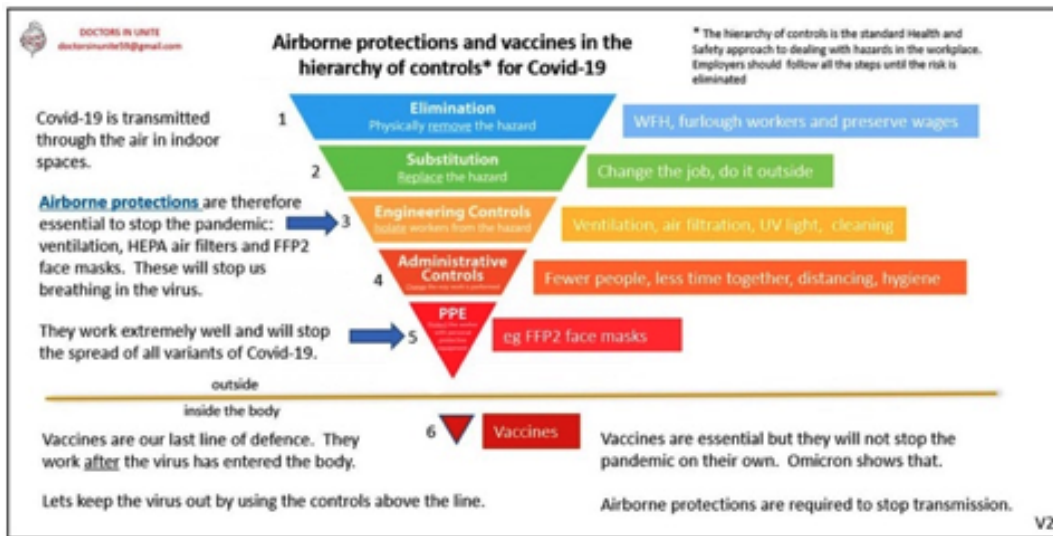
Prime Minister Johnson has forgotten or ignored the words of [Dr Mike Ryan](#), Executive Director for Emergencies programme at WHO from early in the pandemic, [replayed frequently on social media](#). ‘Be coordinated, be coherent, go after the virus...be fast, have no regrets.....you must be the first mover.... If you need to be right before you move, you will never win. Perfection is the enemy of the good.’ In England, the runaway train is heading for the buffers, and we still need more evidence that it will kill us, or kill our economy. And we are now [too late to make the changes](#). The Prime minister has said he will not hesitate to act, but [many on social media](#) have commented – that that is what exactly what he has done... hesitated.

Other scientists have suggested ‘We must trust to the common sense of the public...Lockdown cannot [become an annual winter event](#)’. Agreed; but leaving it to individual citizens to decide, doesn’t help the [hospitality industry](#), the [health service personnel](#) who are falling sick, or [the sports programme](#). People are voting with their feet and [avoiding the high street](#). The London mayor has [declared a major emergency in the capital](#) and hospital admissions are now rising. It is no longer enough to model the impact of COVID-19 on hospitalisations and deaths; what is new with [the rapidly moving Omicron](#) is the power to [demolish entire workforces services through sickness absence](#). In the UK, already exhausted health services personnel are falling sick – 30% sickness absence in some cases; [100 London ambulances](#) are off the road due to staff sickness.

The UK Prime Minister has fought off the advice the English Chief Medical Officer decided he should offer to the public, that they should [consider very carefully which social events](#) were important to them, ahead of their planned Christmas family gatherings. It was wise advice from the CMO, no more than many of us were already offering to our families and plotting our course through to Christmas day. It did not help the hospitality industry though who needed certainty and government support for the hits they then took, in [‘Crimbo Limbo’](#). Our government has created the conditions whereby they do not prevent death and disease, and they do not help the economy.

[Chand Nagpaul, Chair of the British Medical Association](#) has said it, ‘boosters are not enough: Britain needs a strong, immediate plan for infection control’. ASPHER has said it [‘we need a COVID-DO-IT-ALL approach’](#). Just relying on vaccines, or testing, or isolation alone won’t work. Indeed, the Union, Doctors in UNITE have suggested that vaccines are the last line of defence – current actions by the UK and other countries are a distortion of what is needed – which is

personal and collective protection from airborne spread, through masks and ventilation measures, as shown in the figure.



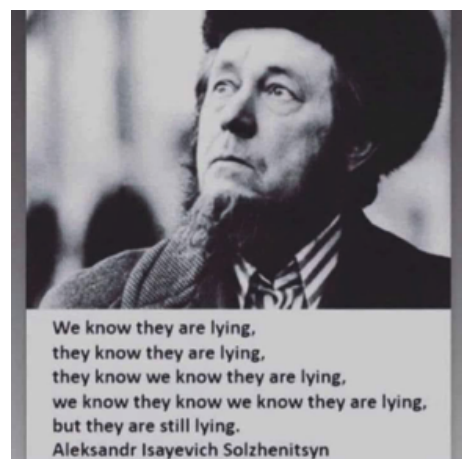
A global approach to a global problem

And we need to constantly remind ourselves that the pandemic will not be over until it is over for everyone. [ASPHER has been campaigning](#) with the Global Network for Academic Public Health and the World Federation of Public Health Associations, for a Vaccine Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights Waiver. We have to grow the [world's capacity to produce vaccines](#), and deliver maybe every 6 months to everyone on the planet. It is to the shame of all governments that this is not happening, and the [UK government's most recent pronouncement](#) does not give any confidence that there is really a global effort to combat the pandemic. The disgraceful treatment of South Africa following their brilliant identification for the Omicron variant cannot be repeated. We must act together a global community, scientific, political and general public. We really do have to be in this together.

Hypernormalisation

The UK Prime minister has averted the prospect of the UK becoming a ['public health socialist state'](#). The government and the ruling party that supports it has become reduced to mantra, when lives, and the economy are at risk. The UK is descending into ['hypernormalisation'](#) - that world experienced by the Soviet Union before its collapse in the late 1980s. Everyone knew they were being lied to by government and by the officials and the officials knew they knew that they were lying, but no-one seemed to be in position to deal with the lies, or change the downward spiral of a collapsing state.

There continue to be allegations and legal challenges of corrupt [deals in health service procurement](#), and now with the [Immensa screening failure scandal](#). Our government is at risk of legal action over parties allegedly held at Christmas and



later in May, during lockdown. Whether they happened or not, a [senior government press adviser resigned](#). Inflation is running at 5%. We have yet to implement the import controls expected under the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement. The minister responsible for the failed Brexit negotiations ostensibly because he didn't believe in the draconian restrictions for COVID control – neat opportunity to leave. The new Brexit minister, Liz Truss, is on record in her support for A trade deal has been struck with Australia that leaves the UK, and [UK farmers poorer](#), transports smaller amounts of farm produce 1000s of miles around the world, further [damaging the carbon footprint of Britain](#) And we still do not have a working agreement with our nearest and dearest trading partner, the European Union. Save us please, my friends!

Happy Festive Season to you all, colleagues and friends. Come back refreshed for the new year and the continuing fight to improve and protect health!

Yours in Health, Love and Peace,

John Middleton
President, ASPHER

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MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARIAT

What a year it has been! Who would have thought we would still be in the thick of the Covid-19 pandemic? The [ASPHER COVID-19 Task Force](#) has been meeting weekly and following the situation from the very beginning. Don't miss the end of the year highlights from the group featured in this newsletter with [guidance on pandemic waves](#) and the need to [Do-It-All](#) in the face of Omicron and potential future variants.

Dr Michael J Ryan, Executive Director of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme has been a leader in the struggle over the past two years to contain Covid-19 and we are honoured to announce that [Dr Ryan is the 2021 recipient of ASPHER's Andrija Stampar Medal](#). He has demonstrated excellence in his current and previous efforts as he acts to 'be coordinated, be coherent, go after the virus... be fast, have no regrets.'

ASPHER was also busy on many other fronts as outlined in the [president's message](#). This includes close work with ECDC, with the Updating Core Competencies in Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology (UCCAIDE) and VXTRAIN projects. We are happy to report that UCCAIDE is now recently completed – we will bring you relevant news in early 2022 when materials are made available. Meanwhile, VXTRAIN is entering a crucial period with background deliverables wrapped up and work starting on vaccine acceptance communication curricula. While mentioning ECDC, don't miss the [ECDC call for seconded national experts](#).

The Erasmus+ Capacity Building project, [Sharing European Educational Experience for Israel \(SEEEPHI\)](#) is approaching the end of year one in perfect step and synergy with the WHO-ASPHER Road Map for Public Health Workforce Professionalisation due to be published in early 2022. We are looking forward to rolling out the Road Map in several country-level actions and programmes with our members and partners; while SEEEPHI serves as a great example of how to enable the relevant agenda with EU-funding support. We are determined to build effective partnerships at individual country levels in these efforts.

We will have exciting news on collaborative and partnership efforts to announce to you very soon when we are able to reveal the ASPHER work plan for 2022 advancing on the [ASPHER 2025 agenda](#) – pending final consideration by the ASPHER Executive Board in January. ASPHER also followed the IANPHI and EPHA AGA meetings earlier this month and engaged with EUPHA and WHO EURO on 2022 planning.

The primary element that remains critical for all of the Association’s work is our active and committed membership – we are very lucky and proud to have all of you making ASPHER strong. The presidency agenda over the past two years has proved a worthy effort to improve members’ connectivity and engagement, and we are striving for more. We would be delighted to hear from all of you with your individual perspective. We have already learned a lot from those of you who have answered the Membership survey. If you haven’t yet responded, we hope you will find some time during the holiday break for one final chance to respond and [share your programme’s story](#) – please do!

We are excited to enter 2022 with a vigorous and growing member network with new applications coming up. We hope that conditions will allow us to see many of you next year... let’s see. For now, we encourage you to read Lore’s reporting from her mission to [Fulda University of Applied Sciences for their International Days](#). Meeting in person is a pretty rare experience these days, so don’t miss it.

Following up on all of the above, we continue to work to enhance ASPHER infrastructure to serve members better. In the upcoming year, we aim to improve the Association’s online presence and have a greater impact in the digital public health community. In this regard, the Secretariat is encouraging all members to set up social media accounts and send us relevant details so we may link up with you and amplify your communications. We also encourage members to take advantage of the ASPHER blog if you have any items or reporting from your country or institution that you wish to share in more detail.

Be sure to catch all the [Association](#), [Member](#) and [Partner](#) news and [opportunities](#) in this issue!

We hope that you will have the opportunity for quality time off in the coming days, please enjoy! All our best for a great 2022!

ASPHER Secretariat

The Secretariat will ensure to screen ASPHER members’ social media accounts on a regular basis for any news which can be published in the monthly newsletters and shared within the network. Therefore, share the handles of your social media accounts with the Secretariat, if you have not done so already or follow us on social media platforms. If you are posting content, which might be of interest for the ASPHER community, feel free to tag us on Twitter: @ASPHERoffice and LinkedIn: @ASPHER.

You are always welcome to share your news, publications, comments & suggestions with Lore at lore.leighton@aspher.org to be included in the next regular issue of the [newsletter](#) and on the ASPHER website [activity log](#).

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ASPHER COVID-19 NEWS

We would like to thank the ASPHER COVID-19 Task Force for putting together a tremendous body of work this past year. The materials position ASPHER as an important voice in the public health response to the COVID-19 pandemic, while emphasizing the work that schools deliver. It is truly a joint success!

The Task Force has wrapped up 2021 with three papers featured here in the newsletter as well as the final 2021 [Weekly Situation Report](#):

[‘COVID-DO-IT-ALL’ We need Integrated Protection Systems and Strategies Against Omicron and other COVID-19 variants](#)

[COVID-19 Pandemic Waves Surveillance in another Severe Winter of 2021: A basic guide to understand epidemic contexts, interpret pandemic waves and trends, ahead of the curve](#)

[How can European Schools of Public Health promote understanding, explaining and teaching about pandemic waves?](#)

All are also linked on the TF homepage: <https://www.aspher.org/covid-19-task-force.html>

The Task Force will reconvene on Thursday 13 January to kick off 2022. If someone from your programme is interested in joining the Task Force, let Robert know at robert.otok@aspher.org.

‘COVID-DO-IT-ALL’ We need Integrated Protection Systems and Strategies Against Omicron and other COVID-19 variants

Vigorous measures to combat the COVID-19 pandemic winter resurgence in Europe 2021/22 are needed at international, regional and local levels, using all the evidence-based tools available to Health Authorities.

In November, the Regional Director of the European office of World Health Organization warned Europe risked around 500,000 extra deaths from COVID, when the main concern was the delta variant. On the 26th of November, a new COVID-19 Variant of concern (VOC) was named by WHO ‘Omicron’ and highlighted as being of “high to very high risk”.

On December 14th 2021, WHO Director General Dr Tedros Adnanom Ghebreyesus said ‘vaccines alone will not get any country out of this crisis. Countries can – and must – prevent the spread of Omicron with measures that work today. It’s not vaccines instead of masks. It’s not vaccines instead of distancing. It’s not vaccines instead of ventilation or hand hygiene. **Do it all. Do it consistently. Do it well!**

ASPHER joins the call: with COVID, we must do-it-all.

[Read the ASPHER Statement ‘Do It All’](#)

COVID-19 Pandemic Waves Surveillance in another Severe Winter of 2021: A basic guide to understand epidemic contexts, interpret pandemic waves and trends, ahead of the curve

Interpretation of COVID-19 epidemic situations, trends and pandemic waves poses a challenge to epidemiologists and public health specialists around the world. The multiple mechanisms that shape pandemic waves characteristics are complex and it is often difficult and time consuming to create reliable predictive models, accurate forecasts and scenarios. However, a series of insights from field and intervention epidemiology can help interpret trends and signals by considering common pitfalls associated with context-free models.

Better interpretation of wider emerging data may help decision makers to be ahead of the curve and reduce the negative impact of further epidemic waves in public health and mitigate the broader social impact of the disease.

This article provides deeper insights into the interpretation of pandemic waves and epidemic situations in context and may be used as a guide for training and surveillance reporting, while generating further research hypotheses.

[Read the full pandemic waves surveillance guide here.](#)

How can European Schools of Public Health promote understanding, explaining and teaching about pandemic waves?

In view of the lack of consistent explanations and usage of the term 'pandemic wave', ASPHER has identified the desirability of further descriptions and other useful materials that can promote improved shared understanding and learning with the current pandemic and as a potential basis for future pandemic preparedness. The COVID-19 pandemic wave patterns brought into question the classic Public Health School definitions prior to the pandemic. There is profound academic work to be done on how Public Health Schools should define broad content of the teaching on pandemic waves reflecting recent experience.

The statement aims to update or formulate ASPHER commentaries and resources, or other technical reports, to cover the nature of pandemic waves and their implications for populations to assist the professional advisory roles of public health academic, field and clinical practitioner colleagues; and to identify or produce useful materials that can aid ASPHER members in conducting their teaching, epidemiological investigations and research, advice-giving to public health systems and other bodies, and assist the development of broader epidemiological sciences.

The paper includes a glossary of useful terms and teaching materials will be made available soon - stay posted!

[Read the statement here.](#)

Update: Covid-19 Task Force Country Situation Reporting

For the past year, the ASPHER Covid-19 Task Force has been producing weekly [European country situation reports](#). The reports take a snapshot of what is happening in terms of the pandemic across regions of Europe and how governments are responding. It has proved most useful in Task Force discussions to stimulate conversation and timely response on the most pressing issues arising from the pandemic.

The work of the weekly report has been largely the undertaking of ASPHER Intern and ASPHER Young Professional (YP) Pallavi Chatarajupalli (HAW Hamburg) with assistance from ASPHER YPs Petra Andelic (Maastricht University), Leo Gkekos (Karolinska Institute) and Rok Hrzcic (Maastricht University) over the course of the year. We are most grateful to and would like to congratulate Pallavi, who has wrapped up her internship with ASPHER and who is now completing her thesis on excess mortality during Covid-19!

Rok Hrzcic has taken over responsibility for the weekly reports streamlining the content. [Don't miss the latest report and check in for updates each week here.](#)

Update: TRIPS Agreement Statement sent to World Trade Organization

In the [previous newsletter](#) we reported on the [ASPHER Statement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights \(TRIPS\) Agreement](#) and vaccine equity supporting the September 30 proposal to WTO for a TRIPS waiver ([IP/C/W/684](#)) for access to COVID-19 health products and technologies.

The Statement has been cobranded by the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) and the Global Network for Academic Public Health. It was [sent to representatives of the World Trade Organization](#) ahead of the special session of the World Health Assembly on 29 November on pandemic prevention and preparedness..

Further COVID-19 Reading

Glasziou P P, Michie S, Fretheim A. Public health measures for covid-19. BMJ 2021; 375 :n2729
BMJ: <https://www.bmj.com/content/375/bmj.n2729>

Lopes H, Middleton J. Learning from the pandemic, building increased international cooperation. South Eastern European Journal of Public Health (SEEJPH). 2021
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11576/seejph-4760>

Talic S, Shah S, Wild H, Gasevic D, Maharaj A, Ademi Z et al. Effectiveness of public health measures in reducing the incidence of covid-19, SARS-CoV-2 transmission, and covid-19 mortality: systematic review and meta-analysis. BMJ 2021; 375 :e068302
BMJ: <https://www.bmj.com/content/375/bmj-2021-068302>

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ASPHER NEWS & EVENTS

Michael J Ryan, Andrija Stampar Medallist 2021



Michael J Ryan, Executive Director of the World Health Organization's Health Emergencies Programme has been selected as the 2021 Andrija Stampar Medallist.

Dr. Ryan hails from Ireland where he trained in medicine at the National University of Ireland in Galway. He studied for a Masters of Public Health at University College Dublin and later completed specialist training in

communicable disease control, public health and infectious disease at the Health Protection Agency in London. Ryan also completed the European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training (EPIET).

Dr Mike Ryan has been at the forefront of managing acute risks to global health for 25 years. He served as Assistant Director-General for Emergency Preparedness and Response in WHO's Health Emergencies Programme from 2017 to 2019.

Dr Ryan first joined WHO in 1996, with the newly established unit to respond to emerging and epidemic disease threats. He has worked in conflict affected countries and led many responses to high impact epidemics. He is a founding member of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN), which has aided the response to hundreds of disease outbreaks around the world. He served as Coordinator of Epidemic Response (2000-2003), Operational Coordinator of WHO's response to the SARS outbreak (2003), and as WHO's Director of Global Alert and Response (2005-2011), He was a Senior Advisor on Polio Eradication for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative from 2013 to 2017. He is currently leading the WHO team responsible for the international containment and treatment of COVID-19.

ASPHER is delighted to congratulate Dr. Mike Ryan on receiving the 2021 Stampar for excellence in the field of public health and we look forward to his laudatio and acceptance address in the new year.

Update: GNAPH Declaration published in Public Health Reviews

The GNAPH Declaration: Global Governance for Improved Human, Animal, and Planetary Health: The Essential Role of Schools and Programs of Public Health has now been [published in Public Health Reviews](#).

We encourage our member schools and programmes of public health to use the declaration in their evidence to national governments, and health and education ministries, to make the case for enhanced public health education and increased public health workforce capacity. ASPHER is at your disposal to help with your efforts!

ASPHER Fellow Rana Orhan, panelist at Lancet Climate Countdown

2 December 15:30-17:00 CET

Hear from:

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|
|  Dr. Elena Višnar Malinovská, DG CLIMA |  Dr. Niheer Dasandi Lancet Countdown Author |  Kim van Daalen EU Policy Brief Author |  Dr. Martin Balzan CPME |  Cristina Pricop EPA |
|  Dr. Aleksandra Kazmierczak EEA |  Dr. Rachel Lowe Lancet Countdown Europe |  Dr. Anne Stauffer HEAL |  Rana Orhan ASPHER |  Dr. Maike Voss KLUG |

Join us for the European launch of the 2021 Lancet Countdown Report and the 2021 Europe Policy Brief
If you'd like to attend any of the events please find more information here: <https://bit.ly/3nT1wpG> **#LancetClimate21**

On December 2, the launch of the European [Lancet Countdown Report 2021](#) brought together a range of academics and policy experts across Europe with a wide-range of experience and expertise. The Lancet Countdown: Tracking Progress on Health and Climate Change exists to ensure that health is at the centre of how governments understand and respond to climate change.

ASPHER Fellow Rana Orhan spoke at the event making a call for action to train the public health workforce to be ready to address climate change!

[More information about the event, objectives and speakers can be found here.](#)

ASPHER President John Middleton addresses CHAD-FPH COVID-19 webinar series

On 28th October 2021, the [Centre for Health and Development](#) (CHAD) and Faculty of Public Health (FPH) hosted the first in a series of webinars relating to COVID-19, health impacts and inequalities: [COVID-19: What went right, what went wrong and how do we learn from this?](#) ASPHER President John Middleton provided a national overview for the UK in the inaugural webinar, which is available to [watch here](#).

The 2021 European Public Health Conference Statement

ASPHER has officially co-signed the [2021 European Public Health Conference Statement](#). The Conference Statement urges all governments to build back better and fairer after the COVID-19 pandemic, and in ways that will limit climate change and its impacts

It calls upon national and international decision-makers to:

- ★ Base decisions and actions on the best available evidence, acknowledging that this may change;
- ★ Invest in health systems, information systems, and a qualified (public) health workforce;
- ★ Acknowledge public health and the public's health as cornerstones for a healthy and functioning society;
- ★ Follow the guiding principles of Health in All Policies to ensure a whole-of-society approach to public health; and
- ★ Focus on reducing health inequalities within and between countries by direct policy action.

ASPHER Working Group on Economic Evaluation in Healthcare in Europe webinar series



The [ASPHER Working Group on Economic Evaluation in Healthcare in Europe](#) (EEHE) launched a webinar series on Wednesday 15 December with a webinar on the topic of Personalized medicine and HTA: Economic evaluation and reimbursement.

If you are interested in future EEHE webinars, contact m.pavlova@maastrichtuniversity.nl or post a message to [@EEHE_WG](#)

Public Health Reviews Calls for Papers

Public Health Reviews is multi-disciplinary and dedicated to foster knowledge synthesis and translation in public health, in order to inform public health science, practice, policy and education, and improve public health. PHR publishes high quality Reviews of all formats, and Policy Briefs. Current calls for papers include:

Life course epidemiology of chronic disease - from surveillance to interventions

PHR invites high quality Reviews of all formats, including mapping and scoping reviews, and Policy Briefs on:

- ❖ How life course epidemiology modified surveillance and monitoring of chronic diseases.
- ❖ Level of evidence for the prevention of chronic diseases across the life course.
- ❖ Causality challenges in the life course epidemiology of chronic diseases and implications for policy-making.
- ❖ Preventive, including primordial, strategy of chronic diseases in a life course perspective.

Transformative public health education

PHR invites Systematic Reviews, Meta-syntheses, Commentaries (in-depth opinion pieces), other types of Reviews and Policy Briefs on:

- ❖ Development and advancement of theory and practice of transformative education in public health.
- ❖ Effectiveness of educational solutions in public health that contribute to transformative learning.
- ❖ Innovative educational interventions.
- ❖ Evidence on transformational education.
- ❖ New insights into any of these connected issues that can contribute to educational systems preparedness post COVID-19, but also its sustainable development for the future.

COVID-19: Guidance from research for policy and practice

PHR invites Reviews and Policy Briefs on:

- ❖ How health systems can effectively respond to challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, and
- ❖ How learnings of the pandemic may inform the planning and implementation of public health and healthcare policies beyond COVID-19.

Health in all sustainable development goals

PHR invites high quality Reviews and Policy Briefs that put health and well-being in the context of the U.N. sustainable development goals (SDGs).

The Swiss School of Public Health – the owner of PHR – is an academic guest of the postponed EXPO 2020 taking place January 2022 in Dubai. With this Call, the two journals of the SSPH+ bring the voice of public health sciences to the EXPO2020. All papers approved for publication will enter a competition for a Best Article Award in each journal.

Elias Mossialos, A Stampar Laureate honored on his own pitch



Ceremonies that recognize special contributions to society by individuals or institutions are extremely important. Today, the contributions of Professor Elias Mossialos are again recognized in an awards ceremony of an [Honorary Doctorate of the Department of Public Health Policies of the University of West Attica](#). As part of the ceremony I requested a few minutes intervention to congratulate Elias and to remember the institution from which he stepped out into the wider world but it could not be accommodated within the procedures of the specific ritual.

My purpose was to draw attention to two historical moments that unfolded in the space where Professor Mossialos was honored and from where he went on to an impressive international career.

Ninety years ago there was a short-lived revolution in public health that began with thoughts and works of Savvas and Kardamatis and proceeded with courageous political decisions. Two

results of the revolution: an increase of 20 years in Greek life expectancy (1930-70) and the acceptance of Greece in the league of progressive nations.

Thirty years ago herein, two important discussions unfolded. one chaired by Demosthenis Agrafiotis was on the future of public health in Europe. The second discussion I conducted as President of ASPHER, which 1.strengthened the Schools pioneering activities in the Balkans with Yiannis Kyriopoulos that started in 1989 and 2. ASPHER's inauguration of what has become the most famous award in public health in the name of Andrija Stampar of Yugoslavia.

Elias is also an ASPHER Stampar Laureate! On his medal is inscribed a Stampar aphorism: investing in public health brings a rich harvest. Congratulations Professor.

By Jeffrey Levett, ASPHER President (1992-1993).

MEMBER NEWS & EVENTS

15th International Scientific Conference: Digitalisation and Education in Health Sciences

Angela Boškin, Faculty of Health Care, Slovenia: 9 June, 2022

The 15th International Scientific Conference 2022 will emphasize the importance of digitalisation and new approaches to health sciences education. The conference brings together the practice of health sciences, facilitates collaboration between different health disciplines and introduces a modern approach to the holistic treatment of the individual.

The conference is dedicated to presenting the current research and development work in the field of digitalisation of health sciences and the implementation of new educational methods in nursing care, health promotion, physiotherapy, and other health sciences.

Deadline for abstract submission is 4 February 2022.

For more information about the conference and abstract guidelines [here](#)

International Days at Fulda University of Applied Sciences

ASPHER was thrilled to make it to International Days at Fulda University of Applied Sciences on 1-3 December. Lore Leighton from ASPHER Secretariat was able to travel to the event where we were warmly welcomed by Fulda faculty, staff and students. It proved an excellent opportunity to meet up in person with ASPHER Members from Jagiellonian University, Poznan University of Medical Sciences, Medical University of Gdansk, and Medical University of Karaganda University. Several ASPHER Members joined the meeting electronically with Mary Codd, University College Dublin speaking on public health competencies; Polychronis Kostoulas, University of Thessaly speaking about the potential for mapping member's mobility schemes; and Osnat Baskin, Ashkelon Academic College reporting on the SEEPPHI project.

ASPHER looks forward to building on the discussions and momentum to strengthen public health education at the undergraduate level and promote international cooperation amongst our members.



Selected ASPHER Member Publications

Böbel S, Bormans M, Siepmann I, Tirekidis I, Wall K, and JPH)Kalaitzi V. Diverse and inclusive leadership teams in public health schools: the change agents for sustainable and inclusive public health education. South Eastern European Journal of Public Health (SEEJPH). 2021.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11576/seejph-4682>

Dopelt K, Loren O, Gapich G, Davidovitch N. Moving From Indifference to Responsibility: Reframing Environmental Behavior Among College Students in Israel. Frontiers in Climate. 02.12.2021.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fclim.2021.776930>

Haque S, Terêncio Marques I, Stankutė I, Bikniūtė I, Staišiūnaitė A, and Czabanowska K. Towards harmonisation of public health master education based on WHO-ASPHER Competency Framework for Public Health Workforce in the Euro-pean Region. South Eastern European Journal of Public Health (SEEJPH). 2021.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11576/seejph-4684>

Poirier MJ, Hard J, and Holst J. COVID-19 pandemic providing a window of opportunity for higher education: Case study of a three-country teaching-learning experience. South Eastern European Journal of Public Health (SEEJPH). 2021.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.11576/seejph-4924>

Saddik B, Elbarazi I, Temsah M-H, Saheb Sharif-Askari F, Kheder W, Hussein A, Najim H, Bendardaf R, Hamid Q and Halwani R. Psychological Distress and Anxiety Levels Among Health Care Workers at the Height of the COVID-19 Pandemic in the United Arab Emirates. Int J Public Health 66:1604369. 2021.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/ijph.2021.1604369>

PARTNER NEWS AND EVENTS

Call for Abstracts: EHMA 2022 Annual Conference is coming to Brussels!

15-17 June, 2022

The European Health Management Association (EHMA) is delighted to announce its 2022 Annual Conference in Brussels, Belgium on the theme - 'From people to systems: leadership for a sustainable future'. EHMA 2022 will take place on 15-17 June in Brussels, Belgium.

Submit your abstract by Monday, 14 February 2022 at 12.00 PM CET.

Learn more about the topics and submission guidelines [here](#)

European Public Health Week 2022

Mark your calendars! May 16-20 2022

The next [European Public Health Week](#)'s theme is 'Health throughout the life course' and addresses everything that effects you throughout your life. Daily themes (in concept):

- ★ 16 May: A healthy youth and health literate youth
- ★ 17 May: Vaccination as key prevention strategy
- ★ 18 May: Climate change effects our health
- ★ 19 May: No health without mental health
- ★ 20 May: Building resilient health systems



ASPHER is looking forward to actively engaging with members in EUPHW; stay tuned for further news! If you wish to be added to the EUPHW mailing list for updates, please email euphacommunications@eupha.org with the subject "subscribe EUPHW".

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OPPORTUNITIES

ISPUP is recruiting: Two Assistant Researchers

Notice of the opening of the international selection procedure for the recruitment of two assistant researchers in the scientific field of Public Health Sciences to carry out scientific research activities in the epidemiology research unit - Institute of Public Health of the University of Porto (EPIUnit)

Call start and finish dates: 25th November 2021 until 7th January 2022

[Learn more about the call and how to apply here.](#)

Call for expression of interest for ECDC Seconded National Experts

Applications are invited for the secondment at the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). The aim of secondment is to enhance and develop the relationship between ECDC and national institutions throughout Member States of the European Union.

The Centre is especially looking for candidates in the following areas: General surveillance and Epidemic Intelligence; Microbiology and Molecular surveillance; Public Health Training; MediPIET; Disease Programmes; Eurosurveillance; Knowledge Management; Communication; European and International Cooperation; Information Technologies

The closing date for the submission of applications is 2 February 2022, at 24:00 Stockholm Time. [Find more details about the call and the application procedure here.](#)

Download the Winter 2021 ECDC Public Health Training Quarterly [here](#).

Europubhealth+, European Master in Public Health

The Europubhealth+ European Master in Public Health is a double degree programme delivered by a consortium of 8 European universities and supported by the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme as a Master of Excellence since 2006. It is a two-year multidisciplinary programme offered in a unique multicultural environment. It is aimed at students with diverse backgrounds (clinical sciences, social sciences, management or engineering) with a Bachelor's degree or equivalent, who wish to pursue a career in public health at the local, national or international level. The training takes place in at least two different European countries and is taught in English, Spanish or French depending on the host university. The first year is dedicated to the core competencies of public health. For the second year, students can choose one of the 7 specializations on offer, corresponding to the key areas of public health.

For September 2022 intake, the consortium is offering Erasmus Mundus scholarships of up to €46,000 to the best candidates from around the world. Some of these scholarships are specifically meant for students from the following countries :

- ❖ **Western Balkans:** Albania, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro
- ❖ **Central Asia:** Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan
- ❖ **Gulf countries:** Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates
- ❖ **South Africa.**

To be eligible for these scholarships, students only need to meet the eligibility requirements for the Master programme and submit an online application before 12. January 2022.

Download [programme flyer](#). All details are available on <https://www.europubhealth.org/>

Vacancy: The Lancet Countdown: Tracking Progress on Health and Climate Change is looking for a Communication Manager!

The Lancet Countdown: Tracking Progress on Health and Climate Change is seeking a creative and motivated mixed-media expert with strong strategic communications and media management skills to join the team.

The successful candidate will be responsible for the collaboration's external communications including media engagement, online and social presence, coordination of its communications with national and regional collaborations and the launch of academic outputs.

The post is available immediately to 31 July 2023, in the first instance. The closing date for applications is 3rd January 2022.

[Follow this link](#) for the full job description and how to apply.

Share the ASPHER newsletter!



[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)

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