

**Partnership Annual (PAC)
Tenth Conference
Helsinki, Finland
22 November 2013**

Reference	PAC 10/3.1/Info 3
Title	NDPHS Regional Conference: <i>Preparing Health Initiatives for 2014-2020</i>
Submitted by	Secretariat
Summary / Note	This paper reports on the results from the NDPHS's conference, which was organized by the NDPHS Secretariat on the side-lines of the 4 th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR), and aimed at supporting the development of health and social well-being projects in the Northern Dimension Area.
Requested action	For information

Background

The NDPHS regional conference *Preparing Health Initiatives for 2014-2020* was organized in the capital of the current EU Presidency on the side-lines of the 4th Annual Forum of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR).

The conference was designed as another step taken by the NDPHS to **help increase the role and visibility of health and social well-being on the regional cooperation agenda**. More specifically, *Preparing Health Initiatives for 2014-2020* was held to support the development of projects addressing regional challenges by (i) making the participants **acquainted with the regionally agreed priorities in health and social well-being**; (ii) helping **improve strategic cooperation and coordination in the design and implementation of projects**; (iii) **improving the flow of information among stakeholders**, and, finally, (iv) **better coordinating project and policy development efforts**. The intended outcome is for stakeholders in the region, including those not yet closely affiliated with the NDPHS, to build partnerships and have project applications prepared in time for the first round of funding calls during the 2014-2020 programming period.

The conference also aimed to support relevant stakeholders in the Region in **spending project financing in a more effective and focused way**. Whereas a number of financiers and financing instruments support projects aiming to improve health and social well-being in the Region, it is clear that the amount of funding during the coming years will not be sufficient to tackle all issues at stake – not least considering that the 2014-2020 EU financial programmes in the region as developed so far do not pay sufficient attention the human dimension, including health and social issues. To that end, in bringing interested stakeholders together in Vilnius, the conference aimed to help the participants to find ways to reduce fragmentation among their planned interventions.

The organization of the conference as well as the participation costs of the vast majority of participants were financially supported by the EU through a EUSBSR Technical Assistance grant provided to the NDPHS Secretariat.

Results

After it was opened by the Director of the NDPHS Secretariat and an EU Presidency representative Mr. Kęstutis Miškinis, the conference was broken into three morning sessions and seven afternoon roundtables and was attended by over 70 participants. The documents and presentations given at the conference are available on the NDPHS website.¹

Three sessions in the morning provided conference participants with **an overview of policy priorities, past project challenges and best practices, and potential future financial opportunities**. A policy panel of representatives from WHO Euro, the Russian Ministry of Health, and the Baltic Sea Network – ESF informed on the priorities in the Baltic Sea Region that are relevant to health and social well-being initiatives. Partners from projects successfully implemented during the 2007-2013 period shared the lessons learned from their project development and implementation processes. Further, an overview of the foreseen financial opportunities for health during the 2014-2020 programming period was provided.

The information from the morning sessions fuelled further discussion during the afternoon's roundtable session. Conference participants split into **seven thematic roundtables where they identified and discussed areas of shared interest and agreed on concrete activities aimed towards the development and implementation of joint health and social well-being projects in the Region**.

Innovation is a growing priority in regional projects from all areas. In order to support the concept of innovation throughout the themes of strategic importance to the NDPHS, each participants from the roundtable focusing on eHealth sat on a different roundtable for the beginning of the session. They each presented how eHealth systems might be relevant to the thematic area of the roundtable, contributed to the further discussion, and brought the conclusions from these discussions back to the whole eHealth roundtable.

In order to encourage the participants to carry on the momentum build at the conference, the **NDPHS Secretariat announced that the most compelling and complete seed money project(s) submitted by the end of November 2013 would receive up to 45,000€ in total** with support from the German Ministry of Health.

The NDPHS Secretariat is currently developing a conference report. The completed report will be distributed to the conference participants and the NDPHS Expert Groups and Task Groups. It will also be published on the NDPHS website.

¹ http://www.ndphs.org/?mtgs.preparing_health_initiatives_for_2014-2020