

**NDPHS Seminar at the 7th Annual EUSBSR Strategy Forum
“Wealthier and healthier, or just the opposite?”
Stockholm, Sweden,
8 November 2016**



Moderator's conclusions

1. The NDPHS Seminar at the 7th Annual EUSBSR Strategy Forum “Where are we heading – wealthier and healthier in the years to come, or just the opposite?” was organized by the Secretariat of the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS) in cooperation with the eHealth for Regions Network (eH4R).
2. Moderated by Mr. Marek Maciejowski, Director of the NDPHS Secretariat, the event addressed linkages between health of populations and the economic prosperity of their countries, discussed current and possible future regional challenges to health and social care, and debated how big impact what is happening now can have on our future lives – all this in the changing environment featuring growing pressure on the economies of our countries.
3. The event built on and greatly benefited from the presentations delivered by three renowned speakers:
 - Dr. Björn Ekman of the Lund University, Sweden, who delivered presentation “Health and Wealth – Their mutual relationship and what we can expect in the years to come.” During his presentation Dr. Ekman referred to the report “Economic Dimensions of Health and Social Care” which he recently wrote for the NDPHS¹;
 - Prof. Dr. Roland Trill of the Flensburg University of Applied Sciences, Germany, who delivered presentation “How e-Health can help us to be healthier and wealthier”;
 - MD Dr. Galina Maslennikova of the National Research Centre for Preventive Medicine, Russia, who delivered presentation “Human capital losses and gains, and wealth of countries.”
4. The event also benefited from a broad attendance of participants coming from all Baltic Sea Region countries and various sectors – among them policy/decision-makers, academia, business, non-governmental, etc. Their lively discussion – comments, questions and opinions – greatly enriched the event.
5. It was noted that there is a strong link between population health and social well-being, on the one hand, and the prosperity of our nations, on the other. Whereas economic prosperity is good for health, good health outcomes also favor economic growth and development since good population health reduces costs and provides economic returns in the form of enhanced productivity.
6. It was also recognized that the socio-economic burden of various diseases and health risks in the Baltic Sea Region is substantial and, whereas it differs among the countries in the regions, it can be equivalent to several percent of GDP.

¹ Available in the NDPHS Database at <http://www.ndphs.org/?database,view,paper,115>.

7. While noting that a range of cost-effective interventions exists and new solutions emerge which can and should be unitized, evidence was presented demonstrating that investing in health and well-being of populations represents good value for money. Results of a study on potential years of life lost (PYLL) recently implemented under auspices of the NDPHS clearly show how big the losses related to premature deaths in countries in our region were during last years, and how much national economies gain when there are less premature losses of life. Economic rates of return vary across contexts and areas of health and social well-being, but estimates suggest significant returns on investments in health both in the short- and the long-term. Typically, these returns are at least 2 times the initial investment cost, but can be as much as 49 times it.

8. It was noted that there is a great need for innovative approaches across sectors to harness opportunities and address current and emerging risks. Higher efficiency and cost-effective, smart solutions are a must, not least in the provision of health care. Increasing the application as well as further development of e-Health services is one promising approach but it will require further increased health literacy.

9. Effective and efficient addressing of both current and possible future regional challenges to health and social care requires that actions be taken by stakeholders at various levels, including national or regional, community, and local. Similarly, each and every individual has an important role to play, too. Last, but not least, regional cooperation networks, among them the NDPHS and the eH4R, are vital as they help exchange knowledge and best practices between and among the countries in the region, and beyond it.

10. The participants expressed their great appreciation to the organizers of the 7th Annual EUSBSR Strategy Forum for the opportunity to hold the NDPHS Seminar within the framework of the Forum, as well as to the Interreg Baltic Sea Regional Programme 2014-2020 for its financial support.