

OSH EG 9th Meeting in Tartu, Estonia on 5th April 2018

Reference	The minutes
Title	The minutes of the meeting
Submitted by	Päivi Hämäläinen ITA

Welcome and opening

The OSH EG chair Riitta Sauni welcome all participants to the meeting.

Presentation of the NDPHS

Director Ülla-Karin Nurm, the NDPHS secretariat

The NDPHS secretariat new director Ülla-Karin Nurm from Estonia introduced herself. She is a physician and done a wide international career in several organisations.

Ülla-Karin gave a presentation about the NDPHS that is the one of the four partnership in the Northern dimension area. The NDPHS consists of seven expert groups. The NDPHS operates at several levels, the most important being the Partnership Annual Conference (PAC), the Committee of Senior Officials (CSR), Expert Groups and the NDPHS Secretariat. The CSR may establish ad hoc working groups, when necessary. The Expert Groups have the right to establish sub-groups to achieve their own objectives, subject to the approval of the CSR.

Ülla-Karin told about the current issues of NDPHS. The chair & ITA meeting was held in Tallinn 2nd October 2017. The meeting discussed strengthening regional cooperation in health by developing a new horizontal flagship project. The meeting of the CSR was held in Bonn 24th October 2017. One of the main issues concerning the OSH EG was discussion about participation in the CBSS Expert Group on Labour and Employment (EGLE). The EGLE's tasks might overlap with the work of the OSH EG. The CSR also expressed support to the flagship project idea and thanked ASA EG for the initiative.

The evaluation of the NDPHS strategy and action will be late 2018 and link with the development of the new NDPHS Strategy. There is possibility of performing an internal evaluation, followed by an external evaluation after 2020.

Ülla-Karin raised to discussion also the planned NDPHS flagship project as well as other project possibilities. The discussion was lively regarding to the scale of project, project funding and cooperation with other expert groups. The roles of the OSH EG and the BSN were also discussed. Ülla-Karin proposed to map and concentrate the most urgent/relevant project ideas. All groups should have done the mapping of the project ideas. The OSH EG has started that work on its last meeting in St. Petersburg.

General information from NDPHS

EGLE and PA education; [Ingemar Rodin](#)

Ingemar Rodin took part in the meeting of the council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) . The CBSS is a "sister organization" for the NDPHS. The CBSS has proposed to establish a new Expert Group on Labour and Employment (EGLE). The CBSS has asked the OSH EG to participate in the work of the EGLE because at least partly the EGLE's themes are overlapping with the OSH EG themes.

Ülla-Karin told that at least so far the CBSS has not taken straight contact to secretariat and the secretariat has very limited resources to contribute to the planning phase as well as possible joint projects. The OSH EG took up a positive attitude towards cooperation with the EGLE and it can bring synergy benefit to both groups. The OSH EG promised to write a paper how the OSH EG sees the cooperation with the new establishing group EGLE for the use of the NDPHS secretariat.

Ingemar took part also in the meeting of the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) Policy Area (PA) Education held in Stockholm on 12th February 2018. PA Education contributes to strengthening the social dimension of the EUSBSR. PA Education covers three policy areas (education, research, employability). Ingemar told that PA Education has six flagship with the frame of EUSBSR but nothing directly linked to the field of OSH.

Progress report 2017; [Päivi Hämäläinen](#)

Päivi presented shortly the progress report 2017. The official template of the report is formal and does not allow expert groups to indicate all work they have done during the year. The progress report is on the NDPHS webpage.

Action plan; [Päivi Hämäläinen](#)

Päivi told that the NDPHS's action plan 2015-2020 was possible to review and update by the expert groups. Our group decided in the last joint meeting with the BSN that we don't use the possibility now. Instead, the roadmap that was started in the former meeting and the forthcoming inquiry concerning an internal evaluation will guide OSH EG to the next NDPHS strategic period and accompanying action plan.

Expert Group on Alcohol and Substance Abuse (ASA EG)

[Zaza Tsereteli, the ITA of the EG ASA](#)

Zaza Tsereteli presented to us the work of ASA EG and the NDPHS flagship project. Norway is the lead partner of the ASA EG and the group has members from all NDPHS countries except Germany. Zaza's presentation can be found on the NDPHS [webpage](#).

Zaza told us about the background of the NDPHS flagship project. The current NDPHS strategy and accompanying action plan have seven objectives, which actually describe experts groups' work. This was not the purpose when creating the new strategy. The strategy and action plan was supposed to be more horizontal and common to all experts group. The ASA EG decided to make an initiative about the NDPHS flagship project. The idea is that all EGs will have their own subproject under the flagship umbrella. The chair and ITA meeting last year decided the theme is ageing. The OSH EG should focus on ageing workforce. So far, the ASA EG has asked from every group their first and preliminary and introductory ideas. After this meeting we should continue with ideas using problem tree (Zazas second presentation [on webpage](#)). After the finalization of the Problem Tree (problem and needs analysis) and based on it, objectives and necessary activities will be identified and formulated as a proposal for eventual program.

The OSH EG members were asked by email on 1st February their preliminary ideas for the theme of ageing (What are main OSH issues in the case of ageing?). The three following ideas were given:

1. Gender differences in ageing workforce
2. Utilising of the ageing worker's experience and know-how
3. Change in the ageing workers' job description and its effects on the work: Cognitive work versus physically demanding work

Results from the OSH EG flagship group work:

1. Gender differences in ageing workforce

Group 1

- a. Lack of culture on ageing at workplaces
- b. Not enough legislation on this matter
- c. Lack of social support in corporative programs
- d. Work part time
- e. To have special ergonomical equipment
- f. Different working possibility
- g. Flexible working hours
- h. Lack of programs “return to work”

Group 2: Problems:

- a. Estonian men life expectancy still 10 years shorter than EU average
- b. More elderly women in the labour market than men
- c. Use of chemical – low awareness; chemical risk → women, younger men
- d. Current OSH system doesn't support being healthy working life (long shifts, night shifts)
 - i. safety culture is low (general low carelessness of health and safety of individuals as well as in company level)
 - ii. needs for early prevention → awareness
 - iii. insurance system
 - iv. later prevention → women

Group 4

- a. Look at the work – aging female workers (health care, cleaning, other manual work)
 - i. Take care especially care of their working hours (night shifts)

2. Utilising of the ageing worker's experience and know-how

Group 1

- a. Support healthy working coordinator for healthy working

Group 2

- a. Elder people have good experiences but shortages in technology development → up-date needed

Group 3

- a. Difficulties in people over 50 (even 40?) to get a job when they apply, even if high competent. Employers express a fear of “the elderly” not being able to follow the development of for example technical tools (read computer programmers etc.)

3. Change in the ageing workers' job description and its effects on the work: Cognitive work versus physically demanding work

Group 1

- a. Free days for medical procedures

Group 3

- a. Changing level of demands, but also a lower “tolerance” to physical and psychological pressure when ageing – workplaces need to adjust for the elderly being able to continue to participate and contribute in the working life. The

experience that an elderly person brings to the work place is important, but missed out on if they are not allowed or aren't able to continue working.

- b. Adjusting/making the workplaces available according to defined general need in the ageing population. Union and employer organisations need to come together and solve this problem with the support of government (that have to carry the financial load if including the elderly in the working life fails).

New ideas

Group 1

4. Age management

- a. Training on ageing for manager & employees
- b. Special ways on ageing
- c. Incentives for companies employing elderly people
- d. To have a new occupation at company level (advisor, mentor, etc.)
- e. Mentoring from younger to older (IT, languages, etc.)

Group 4

- f. Good practices – Examples from “good” companies, information management

Project idea/proposal jointly with ASA EG and OSH EG: Work and alcohol

The ASA EG will develop a thematic report on Alcohol issues, and one of the chapters will be related to the prevention at work places. We agreed that the OSH and ASA EGs will collaborate on developing of this chapter. Zaza will send the questionnaire developed by ASA EG's researchers. The questionnaire will be distributed among the OSH group members who will collect this info.

Better prevention, identification and reporting of work-related and occupational diseases and emerging risks – Present situation with project activities

[Dick Spreeuwers](#), Project leader, Yellow Factory

Dick Spreeuwers presented the current situation of the Better prevention project. WP1 is almost completed as well as WP 2. Results from questionnaire shows that countries are not comparable and it is better to focus mainly on work-related diseases. The project is ending in the end of year 2018. Dick's [presentation](#) can be found on the NDPHS webpage.

Developing a methodology to assess country needs for competencies and skills in occupational health and safety

[Eda Merisalu](#) Estonian University of Life Sciences; [Claude Loiselle](#) ILO

Claude Loiselle and Eda Merisalu have continued with the project proposal concerning “Developing a methodology to assess country needs for competencies and skills in occupational health and safety”. Claude has discussed with several people in our group during the St. Petersburg and Tartu meetings. The OSH EG member are still very interested in the project and sees it very important. Last slide in Eda's presentation were questions to the OSH EG member she hope that everyone will answer. Päivi promised to deliver those questions to the OSH EG's member.

Internal inquiry

[Riitta Sauni](#)

The OSH EG has in the current action plan promised to evaluate how expected results has fulfil by the end of year 2017. Internal evaluation will be performed between spring and autumn meeting and results are discussed in autumn meeting.

Results from the roadmap, next steps

Päivi Hämäläinen

Päivi presented the results of roadmap group work from St. Petersburg meeting. The actions the OSH EG group was interested in to continue are:

- Healthy lifestyles in healthy working conditions
- Developing a methodology to assess country needs for competencies and skills in occupational health and safety
- Explore the training needs in the individual countries with the aim to develop suitable curricula for several countries in the region
- Posted workers OSH aspects (real situation of occupational accidents and diseases in foreign workers)
- Quality criteria for occupational health services
- Social dumping by sectors
- Productivity of good OSH

Other issues

Representative Yogindra Samant from Norway delivered possible two funding source.

<https://eeagrants.org/The-EEA-and-Norway-Grants-Fund-for-Regional-Cooperation>

<http://www.ndphs.org/documents/5782/call%20Fund+for+Regional+Cooperation.pdf>

Representative Nina Rubtsova from Russia presented her institute work and possible cooperation with the OSH EG and the BSN. She also invited OSH EG to take part to Horizon 2020 Mental health in the workplace –program. The member of the OSH EG were very interested and support the idea but no one was interested to take the role of coordinator while Russia can't be the coordinator. Päivi and Riitta promised to try to find a possible coordinator. Nina's [presentation](#) is on the NDPHS webpage.

Upcoming BSN meeting in Riga, Latvia

Representative Ivars Vanadzins from Latvia has promised to host the next joint meeting with the Baltic Sea Network. Ivars couldn't attend to the meeting so Päivi will send the meeting days later.

Note! The next meeting will be on 16th October in Riga, Latvia. The day before on 15th October will be Better prevention...-project meeting.