



Reference	PHC EG 9/3
Title	Information from the NDPHS Secretariat on the NDPHS progress
Submitted by	NDPHS Secretariat
Requested action	For information

1. COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the working methods of the Partnership, which so far has relied, to a large extent, on physical meetings of experts, the governing bodies and various regional networks. Since the beginning of the pandemic efforts have been made to master remote working and organizing online meetings, with the aim to keep the Partnership active and productive. The Secretariat very much welcomes the efforts of the PHC EG leadership and commitment of the EG members to convene this meeting in a virtual format.

The Partnership will also have to reflect on whether it needs to adjust the strategic direction and working modalities now and during the years to come. All EGs are invited to reflect on this matter, both in terms of the substance of their work and its organization.

2. New NDPHS Strategy

The NDPHS Strategy will expire with the end of 2020. A new mid-term strategy needs to be developed for the next mid-term. The NDPHS Strategy Working Group, supported by the Strategy Consultant aims at producing a draft NDPHS Strategy, including its operational part, by early 2021. All NDPHS structures are expected to be closely involved and provide input to the strategy.

The strategic priorities for the next period have been defined by the 14th Partnership Annual Conference (PAC) on 28 November 2019 as follows:

The PAC acknowledged and adopted the existing seven thematic areas as relevant for the NDPHS' work in the next strategic period after 2020:

- antimicrobial resistance;
- alcohol and substance abuse;

- HIV, TB and associated infections;
- non-communicable diseases;
- occupational safety and health;
- prison health;
- primary health care.

In addition, the PAC recognised four identified cross-cutting themes, that should be addressed:

- healthy ageing;
- integrated care;
- mental health;
- digitalization.

The first NDPHS workshop to start developing the new NDPHS Strategy took place on 26-27 February 2020. The work will be resumed after the NDPHS has submitted a grant application to the EU (see the next point).

3. EU Grant application

On 21 January 2020 the NDPHS has been invited by the EU to submit an application for a grant in the amount of maximum EUR 1,850,000.00 for the project “Support to the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being in implementation of the new Strategy 2021-2026”.

From the beginning of 2020, the NDPHS Secretariat, in cooperation with the interested NDPHS Expert Groups and with support of a consultant, is developing the grant application. The application will include activities proposed by the Expert Groups, as well as horizontal activities proposed by the NDPHS Secretariat in order to address the four cross-cutting themes – healthy ageing, digitalization, integrated care and mental health – adopted by the 14th Partnership Annual Conference.

4. EUSBSR

The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is currently being revised and the NDPHS will continue acting as the Coordinator for the Policy Area Health in the Strategy. The discussion is emerging to use the EUSBSR as a platform to address some of the challenges posed by COVID-19 and the NDPHS will play a role in this cooperation. Preliminary discussions have been held with other Policy Area Coordinators, such as Policy Area Secure.

5. New premises of the NDPHS Secretariat

Securing suitable premises for the NDPHS Secretariat based in Stockholm has been a pending issue for several years. As of July 2020, the NDPHS Secretariat will have premises that correspond to its needs and ensure optimal working environment.