

**Name of PA/HA:** PA Health

## **1. EUSBSR Objectives**

A healthy population in the Baltic Sea Region is a prerequisite for productivity, economic competitiveness and further development. By aiming to improve the health and well-being of people in the BSR, PA Health contributes to the objective of increasing prosperity in the region.

PA Health strives to raise awareness among other policy areas for the impact of their domain on health and for the need to implement a Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach.

HiAP is an approach that improves accountability of policymakers for health impacts at all levels of policy-making including emphasis on the consequences of public policies on health systems and determinants of health and well-being. It also contributes to sustainable development.

## **2. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

PA Health most directly contributes to SDG 3 “Good health and well-being”.

In particular, the current work of PA Health contributes to the fight against HIV, TB and associated infections, the reduction of non-communicable diseases (with an approximate 30% reduction of premature avoidable deaths on average in the BSR already achieved), the prevention of harmful use of alcohol, tobacco and other substances as well as strengthening Primary Health Care, which is of utmost importance for a sustainable healthcare system and access to care for the most vulnerable people.

The secondary effects of good health are far-reaching. A healthy population is a more productive population (SDG 8 “Decent work and economic growth”) and a population given the opportunity to be productive is less affected by poverty (SDG 1 “Zero poverty”).

Furthermore, several work areas of the PA Health contribute – in addition to SDG 3 – to the following:

- The PA Health work on occupational health and safety contributes to SDG 8 “Decent work and economic growth”.
- Tackling the threat of antimicrobial resistance improves not only human health, but also livestock health and is therefore also connected to SDG 2 “Zero hunger”  
Hygiene is a crucial aspect when preventing Healthcare Associated Infections, one of the main drivers behind increased antimicrobial resistance, SDG 6 “Clean water and sanitation” is therefore highly relevant.
- The focus on the health of vulnerable groups, in particular prisoners, contributes SDG 10 “Reduce inequalities”.

The future work of PA Health aim at strengthening the understanding of the interconnectedness between health and other sectors as well as the fact that good health and wellbeing is crucial for achieving other SDGs and the achievement of other SDGs is needed for good health and well-being.

PA Health will focus increasingly on healthy and active ageing, to address the demographic change in the region. Optimizing opportunities for good health at all stages of life will ensure

that older people can maintain independence and increase their social and economic participation in society, while reducing healthcare costs. This work will contribute to the following SDGs:

- SDG 4 “Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote life-long learning”, by aiming to increase the understanding that improving health literacy among older adults is essential for managing their health better and life-long learning and enables to retain their ability to make decisions and preserve their independence and autonomy.
- SDG 5 “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”. Women tend to live longer than men, on average in the BSR. The future work of PA Health on healthy ageing aims at promoting gender equality throughout the life-course and supporting the empowerment of older woman that will lead to better later life outcomes, and enhanced well-being.
- SDG 10 “Reduced inequality within and among the countries”, by aiming to support policies that overcome, rather than reinforce inequities.
- SDG 11 “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”, by enhancing multi-sectorial and multilevel action for promoting environments and communities that are age friendly and fit the people’s needs across the life course.

### **3. EU or other policy framework**

The work of PA Health is strongly aligned with the NDPHS Strategy 2020, the WHO Europe Health 2020 Strategy, the European policy framework for health, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, the principle of universal health coverage (UHC), the WHO Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020-2030 and other global and regional strategic frameworks.

PA Health will align its work also to the future strategic frameworks beyond 2020.

### **4. PA/HA governance – steering committee**

Currently, the Committee of Senior Representatives (CSR) is the steering committee for the PA Health. The CSR is comprised of representatives from the Ministries of Health of the NDPHS Partner Countries (Estonia, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation, Sweden) and NDPHS Partner Organizations. CSR/PA Health steering group meetings are also attended by the leadership of the seven NDPHS Expert Groups (antimicrobial resistance, alcohol and substance abuse, HIV, TB and associated infections, non-communicable diseases, occupational safety and health, prison health and primary healthcare).

### **5. Involvement of stakeholders**

PA Health has an established structure of thematic experts and a network of stakeholders in the region. In addition to the NDPHS Partner Organisations mentioned above, several stakeholders from civil society, academia, as well as national, regional and local authorities are involved in the implementation of PA Health activities and projects.

In the future, PA Health will work on further broadening its stakeholder outreach and engagement, in particular to NGOs working on health-related issues in the Baltic Sea Region and

beyond. A strategy on stakeholder relations will be part of the future increased communication activities of PA Health.

## **6. Key PA/HA achievement so far**

Previous activities of PA Health have focused on raising the profile of health on the regional agenda, which has been achieved through the organization of events bringing together policy makers and experts. Furthermore, efforts have been made to highlight the connection between health and economic prosperity through the commissioning of reports and their dissemination to regional decision makers.

Several successful projects have been implemented in the framework of the PA Health. Among them the most recent flagship project “Northern Dimension Antibiotic Resistance Study (NoDARS)” provided valuable information on the penetration of antibiotic resistance in society and identified specific resistance determinants among the normal flora of healthy individuals.

The recent focus of PA Health has been increasing stakeholders’ capacity in fund raising to initiate new potential flagship within the PA Health by organising training activities on project design and management in collaboration with HA Capacity.

PA Health has also put considerable work into extending its network of stakeholders, a process that will be continued in the future. More recently, the PA has started to increase its communication activities and to organize activities highlighting the connection between health and other policy areas, e.g. impact of environmental factors and climate change.

## 7. Actions for the PA/HA

<b>Action 1: Promoting active and healthy ageing<sup>1</sup> to address the challenges of demographic change</b>				
<p><b>Description:</b> As in many other regions of the world, the population in the Baltic Sea Region is affected by demographic change. This presents great opportunities for the societies of the BSR, as well as challenges to adapt, in particular the health and care systems.</p> <p>PA Health is planning to implement activities promoting healthy and active ageing in the BSR, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing stronger links with national SDG responses and supporting the implementation of the WHO strategy on healthy ageing</li> <li>• Assessing of national and regional needs for adaptation to demographic change</li> <li>• Exploring the potential of digitalisation as enabling technology for improved healthy ageing</li> <li>• Aligning of funding resources and joining forces for developing of joint cross-border initiatives</li> </ul>				
<b>Timing: 2019 - 2025</b>				
Indicator title	Value	Baseline	Target/deadline	Data source
Established strategic framework for action aimed at promoting healthy and active ageing in the BSR	# of national needs assessment reports # of joint cross-border initiatives	0	- Strategic framework launched by 2021 - Joint initiatives - 2 per year	PA Health reporting
<b>Flagship on-going or planned within this action</b> Active and healthy ageing in the BSR (AgeFLAG)				
<b>Project (s) and other action (s) are planned within this action?</b> Roadmap to improve the health and well-being of the ageing population in the Baltic Sea Region – AgeFLAG Seed funding project Large-scale project following the AgeFLAG seed project				
<b>Current and planned funding sources for the PA/HA activities?</b> Current: Swedish Institute Seed Funding for AgeFLAG Planned: ESIF, in particular Interreg funding; or applying for an ENI grant from EU				

<b>Action 2: Engaging and better utilizing stakeholders from other sectors to promote a Health in All Policies approach with focus on the impact of environmental factors, and especially climate change on human health</b>				
<p><b>Description:</b></p> <p>Health is interconnected with many different policy areas and sectors. While health and well-being of the population impact the success of other sectors, e.g. labour and education, the policies of other areas can have a large impact on health, e.g. climate, environment and finance. It is therefore crucial to improve the awareness of policymakers from other sectors to understand and analyse the health impact of policies in their sector.</p> <p>PA Health strives to engage an increased amount of stakeholders across the BSR policy areas to promote the Health in All Policies approach.</p> <p>Climate change is often seen as a mainly environmental issue. However, climate change has a strong impact on human health and PA Health is committed to emphasize, raise awareness and increase understanding amongst stakeholders of other policy areas for this connection. Likewise, PA Health also</p>				

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.who.int/ageing/healthy-ageing/en/>

seeks to explore and tackle the impact of the healthcare sector, including pharmaceutical production, on the environment.				
<b>Timing: 2020 - 2025</b>				
Indicator title	Value	Baseline	Target/deadline	Data source
Increased cooperation and synergies of activities in the BSR	# of new stakeholders # of common initiatives, events, communications	0	3 per year	PA Health reporting
<b>Flagship on-going or planned within this action</b> Planned: HiAP in the Baltic Sea Region				
<b>Project (s) and other action (s) are planned within this action?</b> Small scale activities for cross-sectorial stakeholder involvement and sharing of information about health impacts. Continuing the work on circular economy and health				
<b>Current and planned funding sources for the PA/HA activities?</b> Planned: ESIF, in particular Interreg funding; or applying for an ENI grant from EU				

<b>Action 3: Increasing stakeholder and institutional capacity to tackle regional health challenges.</b>				
<b>Description:</b> Enabling capacity building and shared learning through networking, knowledge-brokering and training activities. This action is designed to further enhance the skills and knowledge of regional stakeholders to develop and utilize strategic policy instruments that contribute to the health and social well-being of citizens in the Baltic Sea Region.				
<b>Timing: 2020 - 2025</b>				
Indicator title	Value	Baseline	Target/deadline	Data source
Increased capacity of stakeholders to tackle regional health challenges	# of capacity building activities # of developed or utilized policy instruments (advocacy tools, policy briefs, policy forums etc)	0	3 per year	PA Health reporting
<b>Flagship on-going or planned within this action</b> Capacity building activities under HiAP Flagship (Action 2)				
<b>Project (s) and other action (s) are planned within this action?</b> Organization of trainings, workshops etc. on developing and utilizing relevant policy instruments.				
<b>Current and planned funding sources for the PA/HA activities?</b> Planned: ESIF, in particular Interreg funding; or applying for an ENI grant from EU				