



Northern Dimension  
Partnership in Public Health  
and Social Well-being  
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## Helping prepare health initiatives for 2014-2020 - NDPHS holds a successful regional conference

Vilnius, Lithuania – The Secretariat of the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS) is pleased to announce the success of its regional conference *Preparing Health Initiatives for 2014-2020*, organized in the capital of the current EU Presidency. The NDPHS, which combines all the countries in the Region and is the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region's (EUSBSR) Priority Area Coordinator for Health, performs a unique role as the linking agent in the region for cooperation in health and social well-being. Held earlier today on the side-lines of the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum of the EUSBSR, the conference was attended by over 70 participants and marked another step toward strengthening the visibility and role 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 – including the EU with its various programmes – support projects aiming to improve health and social well-being in the Baltic Sea Region, it is clear that the amount of funding during the coming years will not be sufficient to tackle all issues at stake. To that end, in bringing interested stakeholders together in Vilnius, the NDPHS helped the conference participants to find ways to reduce fragmentation among their planned interventions.

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 Baltic Sea Region.

The conference was financially supported by the European Union.

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