



**Pre-conference 14th EPH Conference  
Wednesday 10 November 2021, 09:00 – 12:40 CET**

## **Genuine Participation and the Transformational Potential of Health Promotion - Coronavirus Politics**

*Organised by EUPHA Section on Health Promotion; UNESCO Chair Global Health & Education and International Institute, University of Michigan*

### **Background**

The COVID-19 pandemic led the world into an unprecedented crisis, affecting health, economy, social life and politics and impacting all sectors of society. In their attempts to contain the pandemic as good as possible, during the first year of COVID-19 governments across the world implemented public health emergency measures such as lockdowns and curfews leading to closing schools, universities, restaurants, theatres and almost all non-system relevant settings. However, these settings are critical places for people to meet, talk, play, learn and work, which is why these are so important for health promotion. Never before in modern history did a health problem have such an overwhelming impact on society. It is challenging our views on what a healthy and health promotive society means.

In this context, it is important to consider the role of health promotion in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic. Although at first sight, this pandemic and the way to address it may not appear to be a core concern for health promotion, we would argue that on the contrary, health promotion is more important in this time of crisis than ever. Indeed, this crisis underscores the need for strong public systems, as well as the critical role of health literacy in promoting population health. There is a need for effective communication and community mobilization efforts to enhance protective and self-care behaviors and measures at a societal, community and individual level. At the heart of the health promotion response to the COVID-19 crisis is the need to increase people's control over their own health, to enhance social cohesion and solidarity, and to (re)build public trust and collective responsibility for population health and wellbeing. Successful community engagement supported by new digital opportunities for safe communication, is key to coping successfully with this crisis and its many disruptive consequences at a societal level. As such, health promotion has a central role to play in empowering communities and individuals in adopting effective responses and managing the psychosocial impacts of the multi-layered consequences of this pandemic. The health promotion community has an advocacy role to play in arguing for sustained investment in public health systems, so that countries are better prepared for future crises and recognize the value of supporting health and well-being. This is where the transformative potential of health promotion comes in and can ensure the best health for every human being.

### **Objectives and Activities**

The main goal of this pre-conference is to open new perspectives on genuine participation as a means to highlight the transformational potential of Health Promotion. By shifting participation as a mantra to participation as a practice this pre-conference aims at establishing a stronger focus to inclusion as part of health-for-all-policies. During the preconference we will

1. identify gaps between discourse and practice in participation
2. discuss a range of practices and tools to guide the transformational potential of health promotion
3. share priority areas for moving ahead with genuine participation

These issues will be addressed in two sessions, in which we will explore different perspectives to the future of the transformational potential of health promotion focusing on the global and the national level:

### **Session 1:**

Moderated by Luis Saboga Nunes

The first session will focus on the global level with the UNESCO Chair Global Health & Education Genuine Participation. Guest speakers and discussants in this session are Bjarne Bruun Jensen, Goof Buijs, Marco Akerman, Mamdouh Wahba, Min Chien Tsai, Nicola Gray, Raúl Mercer and, Vanessa Salgado.

Introduction: aims & goals of the UNESCO Chair Global Health & Education (Didier Jourdan, France)

Genuine Participation: theoretical background and roadmap (Bjarne Bruun Jensen, Denmark)

Round table: Genuine Participation Practical Examples around the world Goof Buijs (Netherlands), Mamdouh Wahba (Egypt), Min Chien Tsai (Taiwan), Nicola Gray (England), Raúl Mercer (Argentina), Vanessa Salgado (Brazil)

Interactive group work and conclusion (Goof Buijs)

With simultaneous interpretation in Portuguese

The UNESCO Chair Global Health & Education aims to promote research and training, to contribute to building, interpreting and disseminating the knowledge base in the field of health promotion, including health education, in schools and communities for children and young people. It contributes to give visibility and recognition to the work done by research teams in Asia, Africa, Oceania, Americas and Europe.

### **Session2:**

Moderated by Orkan Okan

The second session will continue the first thematic approach with an eye on national practices of Genuine Participation. Guest speakers in this session are Scott Greer, Elisabeth King, Elize Massard da Fonseca, André Peralta Santos and Pedro Magalhães (all from University of Michigan, USA).

The goal is to share examples of interdisciplinary approaches to health promotion, research networks for primary prevention and health promotion. The session will focus on coordinating and supporting health promotion and primary prevention research on the national level in different countries in order to showcase contemporary best practises. Welcome note and context: how and why different political systems that were put to the test engage and did what they did during the pandemic of COVID-19 (Scott Greer, USA)

National Practices from Latin America and the case of Brasil (Elize Massard, Brasil-USA)

Europe & Federal Countries to Handling the COVID-19 Crisis (Thomas Czypionka, Miriam Reiss (Austria, England)

European Rescue of the Nation-State? (Eleanor Brooks, England)

Efficiency (optimization of resources) trap to deal with COVID-19: the case of peripheral countries (Luis Saboga-Nunes, Pedro C Magalhães, André Peralta-Santos, Portugal)

Central and Eastern Europe containment of COVID-19 (Elizabeth J King, USA)

Health Promotion and COVID-19: lessons unveiled & strategies unspotted

Although COVID-19 is effectively unprecedented in the modern world, political systems responding to it need to move from hazard mitigating responses to comprehensive health promotion strategies.

Conclusion: introducing the statement *Genuine Participation and the Transformational Potential of Health Promotion*

**Organizational arrangements:**

The active participation of attendants will be supported by an online platform before, during and after the preconference. After registration, participant will receive a link to dedicated resources. The platform will also be used during and after the conference especially for the collaborative writing of the statement.

Every presentation will come along a set of questions to be discussed with participants. Attendees will also contribute by stating observations and conclusions on the lessons drawn from the discussions that will be summarised in a statement to be disseminated within the networks of the organising institutions and beyond.

A paper presenting the statement will be published afterwards. Much effort will also be invested in fostering a shared vision of *Genuine Participation and the Transformational Potential of Health Promotion*, action and new collaborations between the participants.

We also hope that providing a space for attendees and speakers to network may generate other unexpected outcomes.