

## **EUPHA Law and public health section (EUPHA-LAW)**

### **Annual report 2023**

#### **Goals for 2023**

The core aims for EUPHA-LAW in 2023 were as follows.

- To continue defining the Section identity more clearly. EUPHA-LAW focuses on public health law and policy rather than healthcare law, with a particular (though not exclusive) emphasis on Europe.
- To increase Section membership. EUPHA-LAW is seeking to increase its membership through general and targeted messages. To this effect, we launched a members' survey at the end of September 2022 to help shape activities over the next year; we arranged a JTN meeting specifically devoted to increasing our membership at the 2022 EPH; and we have kept in regular email contact with our members to keep them updated of our activities (not least the conference we held in Liverpool in June 2023 and the series of webinars organised with the UK Faculty of Public Health).
- To increase collaborations. To develop effective regulatory responses to complex public health challenges, EUPHA-LAW works with a variety of sub-disciplines in law and public health to help build greater legal capacity. We also acknowledge the imperative for both multi-disciplinary and multi-level responses, and have continued to develop collaborations with other EUPHA sections and external partners to increase the impact of our work (on climate change strategic litigation, on nutrition, food environments and the commercial determinants of health...).
- To continue focusing on two key themes of wide appeal. EUPHA-LAW has decided to continue developing the work it has started on two key themes: (1) strategic litigation, human rights and public health; and (2) trade and public health. These themes remain priority areas for lawyers interested in public health, whilst they also have a sufficiently broad remit to give coherence to our portfolios of activities without however preventing individual initiatives.

#### **Collaboration with other sections**

- Collaborations have been identified, initiated and/or strengthened with the Global Health, Ethics, Food and Nutrition, Environment, Health Impact Assessment, Health Promotion, and Sexual and Gender Minority Health sections.

#### **Activities at the European Public Health Conference 2023**

- It is fair to say that the Law and Public Health Section contributed significantly to the EPH Conference 2023 and punched well above its weight.
- It contributed to the plenary session on the Commercial Determinants of Health. We warmly welcomed this invitation firstly because we had noted last year that the plenary sessions of the EPH in Berlin did not have enough content on such issues; and secondly in light of the focus of the conference – the theme of food environments being one in which the Section has been particularly active in these past three years. However, we would have liked this plenary session to be more firmly driven by established expertise: several of the speakers did not have the experience required to make the contributions one would expect at a public health event of this nature.
- We have co-organised multiple workshops and other events in conjunction with external partners and other Sections. Including:
  - Workshop: (Re)imagining food: representations of food to move towards more sustainable food cultures

- Round table: European Union policies: the basis for EU legislation and the case of the EU HTA regulation
- Workshop: Public health interventions to counteract unhealthy diets towards a better consumer knowledge
- Round table: The role of EU bodies and European Health Union policies, and implications for the Pandemic Treaty
- Round table: How can the public health community contribute to better alcohol policies through trade law?
- Round table: Legal determinants of health - what do (global) public health professionals need to know?
- Round table: Is public health possible when LGBTQI+ individuals are criminalised? A roundtable and call to action
- Round table: An exploration of the EAT Lancet Commission on healthy diets for sustainable food systems
- Round table: Food marketing regulation and civil society mobilisation
- Round table: Public health and climate change: a litigation toolkit for public health practitioners

### Other activities

- Strategic Litigation and Public Health Conference, Liverpool, 15 and 16 June
  - This major conference explored how strategic litigation can contribute to the promotion of better health for all.
  - Hosted by the University of Liverpool, in conjunction with a variety of partners, including: the O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law at Georgetown University, the Centre for Health Law at the University of Groningen, the Law Centre for Health and Life at the University of Amsterdam, MCI, as well as the PETRA Network on Health and Trade, the UK Faculty of Public Health and ASPHER.
  - The event was funded by the University of Liverpool, EUPHA, the O'Neill Institute, the Law Centre for Health and Life, the Groningen Centre for Health Law.
  - The conference included a reception after the keynote lecture, a walking tour of Liverpool and other sessions intended to promote informal networking.
  - The conference was hybrid (though most participants joined the event in person).
  - Bursaries were given to early career researchers.
- Climate Change Litigation: A Guide for Public Health Professionals
  - ['From analysis to action: climate change litigation. A guide for public health professionals'](#) was written by the Faculty of Public Health (UK), and the Aletta Jacobs School of Public Health & Groningen Centre for Health Law (Netherlands), 2023. See the online [feedback form](#) and request for technical assistance.
  - The Section has led the development of this Guide, which was launched at the European Public Health Conference in November 2023.
  - This Guide has received the support of various institutional signatories, including the UK Faculty of Public Health, EUPHA, WFPHA, ASPHER... See the Guide for the full list.
  - The Guide is being widely disseminated, including through this editorial: Giovanna Mazzola, David Patterson, Farhang Tahzib, [Public health role in litigation to address climate change](#), *European Journal of Public Health*, 2024: <https://doi.org/10.1093/eurpub/ckad221>
- The Section continued to lead EUPHA's work on front-of-pack nutrition labelling (FoPNL). We led the development of a EUPHA working group which issued a position [statement](#) on FoPNL in March 2023 calling on the EU to move forward with food labelling proposals. This led to authoring an [editorial](#) for the *European Journal of Public Health* (Volume 33, Issue 5, October 2023, Pages 751–752).

- The Section contributed to the development of a WFPHA / EUPHA [statement on LGBTQI rights](#) in May 2023 following legal developments in Uganda.
- World Congress on Public Health, Rome, May 2023
  - Members of the section attended the World Congress and submitted abstracts on legal aspects of public health. In particular, the Section organised the workshop: 'How can the public health community support litigation to protect public health in the context of climate change and other environmental threats to health?'
- The Section strongly supported the development of the new section on Global Health and look forward to a fruitful, sustained collaboration.
- The Section has expanded its Steering Committee to be in a position to diversity its activities. In particular, it invited EUPHAnxt to nominate a suitable early career individual to join the Steering Committee (nominee: Andre Rus). We have also welcomed Dimitra Lingri and Dr Sujitha Subramanian. The Section's webpage has been updated accordingly: [https://eupha.org/section\\_page.php?section\\_page=262](https://eupha.org/section_page.php?section_page=262)

#### **General communications with section members**

- EUPHA-LAW has used the EUPHA monthly Newsletters to communicate with its members and other EUPHA members as needed, as well as one-off emails to promote specific events.
- EUPHA-LAW has developed an open, online database (Google Sheets) to have a better overview of member and to encourage more engagement. More than 50 members have uploaded their data.
- A new Twitter account, launched in 2022, is used regularly: @EUPHA\_LAW.
- The EUPHA-LAW Section Steering Committee continues to explore ways to engage Section members actively in the work of the section.

#### **International participation in events on behalf of EUPHA**

- All of our events are international and include speakers and delegates from across the world.