

A Strategy for the EUPHA Migrant and Ethnic Minority Health Section 2020-2022

Introduction

The EUPHA Section of Migrant and Ethnic Minority Health (MigHealth) has existed for more than a decade – for many years primarily as a framework for organizing the European Migrant Health conferences and pre-conferences at the European Public Health conferences with other sections, and to encourage research in this field.

In recent years the Section has increasingly become a means for other kinds of networking and communication and for taking new initiatives like the working group on “the economic argument”, the World Congress of Migration, Ethnicity, Race and Health and the initiation of a new global society.

The Section has also become a close partner of the WHO Europe Migrant Health Office in Copenhagen in different activities such as the WHO summer school and Knowledge Hub on migrant health, or contributing to various technical reports. Additionally, the Section has supported EUPHA in policy issues regarding migrant and ethnic minority health by commenting on hearings and joint policy initiatives with other institutions, participating in meetings on behalf of EUPHA etc.

These activities have developed over the years without a defined strategic plan. In spite of this the Section is clearly seen as one of the most active EUPHA Sections. In order to strengthening the further development of the Section the Steering Committee decided in 2019 to draft a strategic plan for discussion among Section members which could serve as a guidance for the Section activities during the coming years. This draft was distributed among the Section members and discussed and approved at the Section Meeting in Marseille, on the 20th November 2019.

Main elements of the strategy

1) Strengthening Migrant and Ethnic Minority Health (MEMH) elements in the annual EPH conferences

The section will work to increase visibility, quantity and quality of MEMH at the annual conferences by identifying potential keynote speakers and communicate about this to the organizing and scientific committees of the EPH conferences; by encouraging and initiating submission of workshops developed jointly with other sections; by stimulating submissions by project leaders responsible for national and international projects; and by encouraging and supporting individual submissions of presentations by young researchers (partly by involvement in the EUPHA young investigators initiatives).

2) Strengthening the communications to section members

The communication to members has until now been ensured through somewhat irregular news mails from the Presidency through the EUPHA mailman system. The Section should more systematically distribute regular Newsletters (like the HSR section) informing members about MEMH related news and initiatives. This could be ensured by setting up a small editorial group, for instance including 1 member of the Presidency, 1-2 Steering Committee members and 1-2 other section members who could take responsibility for the content and distribution.

3) Serving as an active and supportive agent for creating a more global focus on MEMH issues.

This focus was initiated by organizing the successful global congress in Edinburgh 2018 and pursued in developing a global society with the support of the EUPHA office and the planning of further global meetings/conferences – the next one as a pre-conference to the World Conference on Public Health in Rome 2020. When the Global Society is in place this will obviously serve as the main organizer of the future global MEMH conferences, but the EUPHA Section can play an active role in the further development of the Global Society representing EUPHA as one of its engaged members. Linking with researchers from low- and middle-income countries should thereby become one of the priority areas for the Section, directly and through its engagement in the Global Society activities. An element of this effort will be to further strengthening the role of the section in integrating issues across the agendas of migration, ethnicity (the creation of multi-ethnic societies), and the racism that arises from concepts around race.

4) *Taking a stronger role regarding European MEMH policy issues and initiatives*

The Section has been the driving force in developing the EUPHA statement on MEMH in 2018 and has been supporting coordinated actions with other organizations on behalf of EUPHA on policy topics related to MEMH. The Section could still more actively take own initiatives regarding EUPHA based European policy issues and advocacy alone or with other relevant organizations, thereby strengthening the links between policy, practice and research.

5) *Broaden the involvement of section members in Section initiatives by establishing more working groups*

A working group on the so-called “Economic Argument” has been active over some years as a result of a EUPHA Section preconference on this topic. This has involved an active group of Section members who have organized meetings and workshops and published commentaries/viewpoints in the EJPH. Similar working groups on other topics could be established in order to support the strategic objectives of the Section. The members should include at least one Steering Committee member and the objectives and tasks of the committee should be approved by the Section Presidency.

6) *Establish stronger links with other relevant European and national organizations/agencies in order to achieve better synergy and common activities.*

The Section has taken an active role as a partner for WHO Europe on migrant health activities including the WHO Knowledge Hub and the WHO Summer School on migrant health in 2017, 2018 and 2019. The collaboration with WHO Europe could be further formalized and ensured and similar formal and informal collaborations with other organizations could be developed (such as IOM, the Lancet Commission, ASPHER, EPHA, the Red Cross etc) focusing on policy initiatives (as described in 4), research activities, documentation and MEMH training and education of health professionals.

An important focus area could be to ensure better science communication by promoting synergies to other European research networks and improving availability and accessibility of data.

The Section has until now only had limited collaboration with migrant and ethnic minority organizations and communities in Europe (such as the Roma communities), but should seek more contact and direct involvement of these in the Section activities – including the conference planning.