



## **Annual report 2022**

### **EUPHA Public Health Epidemiology section (EUPHA-EPI)**

#### **Goals for 2023**

The aim of this section is to enhance the EUPHA network and increase the knowledge base of epidemiologic principles, tools and practice that can be applied in public health research and practice. As such, many actors and disciplines from several research fields such as epidemiology, biostatistics and social sciences are involved. A relevant role of the section is also promoting educational initiatives in this context.

In 2023, we aim to further:

- Promote and strengthen the development and use of epidemiological methods in public health.
- Encourage the presentation at annual conferences of research activities and related outputs involved in the use of epidemiological tools in public health.
- Submit at least one workshop relevant to public health epidemiology.
- Arrange a pre-conference educational event for public health epidemiology researchers in connection with the EUPHA annual conferences.
- Work for a high scientific standard of studies on public health epidemiology.
- Encourage the publication of studies on public health epidemiology.
- Act in an advisory capacity for policy statements and papers to influence policymakers and politicians in line with EUPHA objectives.

#### **Collaboration with section members and activities at the EPH conference**

EUPHA-EPI actively collaborated throughout 2021 with section members and other sections of the EUPHA network. 'Join the Network' (JTN) meeting participants at the EPH Conference 2020 suggested some topics for the EPH conference 2021 workshops and pre-conferences. Among these, one that attracted much attention was the evaluation of policies using a natural experiment approach. Therefore, EUPHA-EPI organized a pre-conference entitled "Natural experimental evaluations for public policy and health systems: recent advances and updated guidance" with Dr Peter Craig and Dr David Ogilvie as the main speakers. The pre-conference provided an overview of natural experimental evaluations, including recent advances in designing, analyzing, and reporting natural experimental evaluations. The morning consisted of lectures and practical sessions outlining key concepts and the afternoon comprised applied examples of natural experimental evaluations for which a call for abstracts was issued in July 2021. The pre-conference was organized in collaboration with the EUPHA-HSR, EUPHA-ECO, and the EUPHA Research Pillar.



In addition, EUPHA-EPI, together with EUPHA Research Pillar, EUPHA-ETH, EUPHA-PHG, EUPHA-HTA, and the UK Faculty of Public Health, organized a workshop entitled “Quality of COVID-19 science: meta-research and the ethical implications for public health”. This workshop examined the role of meta-research in addressing some of the COVID-19 pandemic research challenges and gave an overview of the concept of “the science” as an idea used in public decision-making and policy.

EUPHA-EPI also contributed to the EUPHA cross-sectional workshop "Research Methods for Public Health Oriented Health Services Research – what works where and for what?" with a presentation on the use of traditional and innovative epidemiological study designs for public health relevant inferences. Contribution from the audience was sought during this workshop. In the round table "Health care systems, health service provision, and equity in health", co-organized with EUPHA-HSR, a proposal to integrate health systems, health services, and population health research was presented.

A collaboration with the World Health Organisation Regional Office for Europe has been envisaged during a pre-conference meeting with the Advisory Council on Innovation for Non Communicable Diseases. This collaboration could include the drafting of a joint policy brief and the organisation of a workshop on the topic of "Data and Digital Health".

### **Webinars**

#### *Qualitative Research: Tools for Understanding Community Needs and Amplifying Voices*

EUPHA-EPI hosted a webinar on qualitative research with Professor Rosie Frasso, from Thomas Jefferson University (USA). Attended by 300+ participants, this webinar aimed at exposing the European public health epidemiology community to innovative and traditional methods in qualitative data collection, report generation, dissemination and publication in multidisciplinary contexts. Qualitative research covers a fundamental role in assessing the needs of communities and understanding the perspectives of different social groups. Insights deriving from these studies can give voice to vulnerable and fragile categories, helping public health decision-makers in the development of effective public health policies and programs.

#### *Personalised medicine and public engagement*

Co-organised with EUPHA-PHG and during which the survey by the ExACT project on personalized medicine has been launched will be available soon in the EUPHA resources module. The aim of this survey is to gather the views of citizens in European Union member states on personalized medicine. Feel free to share it with interested stakeholders. The survey is available in English, as well as in Italian, Dutch and French.

### **Annual meeting**

The Section meeting in 2022 was held on Friday 11 November from 12:45 to 13:45 during the EPH Conference and only registered participants had access. The join the network meeting brought together delegates interested in public health epidemiology, covering details on our members and representatives, the aims of the section, pre-conference and workshop activities, the members’



survey, newsletter, ideas for workshop activities in the future, with suggestions from participants. During the meeting, some possible topics for the next conference arose: integration of qualitative methods in epidemiological research, observational epidemiology to inform public health response during the COVID-19 pandemic, social epidemiology, mixed and multilevel models. Participants were encouraged to participate in the organisation of the workshops and suggest other possible topics before 15 January 2023. Also, details on the pre-conference meeting with the World Health Organisation Advisory Council on Innovation for Non Communicable Diseases were shared. A collaboration with the World Health Organisation Regional Office for Europe has been envisaged during a pre-conference meeting. This collaboration could include the drafting of a joint policy brief and the organisation of a workshop on the topic of "Data and Digital Health". Finally, the search for a second Vice President for the section has been advertised.

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

In February 2022, we sent a newsletter to the members of the EPI section. The newsletter focused on encouraging members to submit relevant work as abstracts to be presented at the EPH Conference 2022. Also, we outlined the section plans for the next EPH conference, including having a pre-conference on policy evaluation through natural experiments. We further invited section members to the webinar on qualitative research hosted by EUPHA-EPI and with Prof Rosie Frasso as the main speaker. In July 2022, we sent a second newsletter inviting the subscribers to register for the EPH Conference 2022 and to visit the conference website to check the full parallel programme. In this newsletter, we also issued a call for abstracts for the pre-conference on Natural Experimental Evaluations and invited the subscribers to use the EUPHA resources module to watch the recently uploaded webinars. A third newsletter aimed at highlighting the main contents relevant to the EUPHA-EPI community in the next EPH conference was sent in October. An after-conference, fourth newsletter was sent in November to inform the section members about the outcomes of the EPH conference activities, including the JTN meeting discussion.