

ATTENDANCE

EMILIA-ROMAGNA	Ishiwa Aki Graziana Galati
LOWER AUSTRIA	Birgitte Van der Zandern Kerstin Kittenberger (via video link) Judith Willert (via video link)
SCOTLAND	Toni Dedeu
PODLASKIE	Bogdan Dyjuk Michal Szczepura
REGION SKÅNE	Tommy Josefsson
TUSCANY	Antonella Pollazzi
VYSOCINA	Jan Metzl
VGR	Anita Brnic Linnea Nilsson
EUREGHA SECRETARIAT	Ingrid Jansson Freja Hagsund

VIA PROXY

FLANDERS	Solvejg Wallyn
REGION SKÅNE	Mikaela Nordenfelt
VYSOCINA	Jan Skala

1. CHAIR'S WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The Chair, Toni Dedeu, welcomed everyone to the EUREGHA Annual General Assembly (GA) and a presentation round was held where all attendees briefly presented themselves.

2. EUREGHA TREASURER

The Secretariat informed that David Ritchie, representing North of England EU Health Partnership (NEEHP) has resigned as Treasurer. His resignation was thereafter endorsed by the General Assembly. As the regular elections of the positions of Chair, Vice-Chairs and Treasurer will not take place until March 2016, an interim Treasurer will be needed. These tasks are currently being handled by the Secretariat who will still manage the day-to-day tasks. The role of the Treasurer thus demands less than before and mostly concerns the general overview of the budget.

As no new candidate was put forward, it was decided that a specified role description of interim Treasurer will be circulated during the week of 14-18 September and members were invited to contact the Secretariat should they be interested in taking on this role.

3. BUDGET UPDATE AND CLOSURE

Ingrid Jansson informed that the budget had been circulated to members in advance and went over the overview of the accounts of 2014, which have been finalised by the accountant. The profit of 2014 is €7643, together with the profit of 2013 that gives a total carry-over of €15451. She further informed that to date there are no exact figures for the financing and pre-financing from the SUNFRIL and RegHealth-RI projects for 2015. However, financing from the projects are expected during the year.

Regarding staff costs, the Secretariat was expanded through the full-time employment of Freja Hagsund in May 2015, whose post as “Communications and Membership Officer” is financed by the project incomes.

Regarding office space, Ingrid Jansson thanked Västra Götaland Region for having hosted the Secretariat during the past year and a half. She informed that the Secretariat is enrolled in discussions with Tuscany who has kindly offered to look into possibilities of hosting the Secretariat in their premises. She emphasized that since EUREGHA has a strong Italian membership, it would indeed be beneficial to sit with the Italian members.

Currently, a temporary office solution has been found through the kind offer from the Gothenburg office located in the same premises as Västra Götaland Region, which will host the Secretariat until 31 December to a total cost of €2105 (all charges included). This is the only budget post that will be added to the prediction for the 2015 budget.

Tuscany explained that they are indeed in favour of hosting the Secretariat, either on the same floor as their office or at the 8th floor in the same building, but that there are still some administrative issues to figure out. Notably, their head of office is retiring and they are currently in the process of recruiting a replacement who will need to be informed of this decision. Another issue is the legal details, as Tuscany would prefer letting the Secretariat stay for free, something which will have to be put forward to their legal services. They informed that they should have an answer by December about this possibility. Podlaskie also informed that they might have the possibility to host the Secretariat and the Chair suggested to follow what will happen with Tuscany and to keep Podlaskie as an option.

Lower Austria suggested to make a budget post for office rent, in case none of the solutions would work out. Ingrid Jansson informed that such a post existed previously, but has been taken out from this year’s projection. She confirmed that the Secretariat will go through the budget to follow up on this suggestion and investigate if there is space to create a budget post for rent. This solution was endorsed by the present members.

Further, the Secretariat informed that the possibility of hiring an intern for a few hours per week had been brought up by Skåne and Flanders due to the increased workload of the Secretariat following

EUREGHA's participation in European projects. It was proposed to approach different universities to see what opportunities they may offer.

The closure of the 2014 budget and the approval of the 2015 budget were officially endorsed by the members, as was the discharge of responsibilities of the Chair, Treasurer and the Executive Board Members for the activities of 2014.

4. EUREGHA HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE 2015

The Secretariat proceeded to discuss the EUREGHA high-level conference which will take place in December. A proposed theme, which had been previously discussed during summer, was "Chronic diseases and Frailty". This theme would fit in well with EUREGHA's involvement in the CHRODIS Joint Action and in the SUNFRAIL project. Moreover, frailty is an upcoming focus area of the Commission considering the upcoming Joint Action on Frailty which will be launched next year. No objections or alternative themes were suggested by the present members.

The Secretariat further proposed to link the high-level conference with EUREGHA's commitment in CHRODIS, which is to organise a regional workshop on chronic diseases by 2017. Organising a joint EUREGHA-CHRODIS event would enable us to make use of the CHRODIS budget, to make use of the CHRODIS platform to boost participation and to avoid organising a similar event on the same theme next year. Furthermore, it would link to our commitments in the SUNFRAIL project, where EUREGHA, as lead partner of the dissemination Work Package, is committed to create links to other projects and actors. An alternative would be to organise the event as a EUREGHA event, but to invite a CHRODIS representative as speaker. The Secretariat proposed to draft two agendas in which CHRODIS would have different roles and to circulate the proposals to the members.

Regarding how to narrow down the, indeed broad, topic of the meeting, this could be envisaged either by a subtitle, or by the selection of good practices. The Chair suggested to make an open consultation among the members regarding how to specify the topic.

The deadline for sending in best practices in the prevention and management of chronic diseases and frailty is 16 October. On the basis of the submitted practices, some will be selected to present during the meeting. As during previous years, all best practices will be published in a booklet that will be distributed during the conference. Emilia Romagna indicated that they would be interested in presenting a best practice on the frailty risk index on how to assess and manage high risk patients.

Regarding the date of the meeting, the Secretariat informed that ideally the conference should take place around the EIP Conference of Partners, which usually takes place during the first week of December. However, thus far no date has been set for this conference and in order to move forward, the Secretariat will circulate a Doodle for the members to indicate their availabilities.

Regarding the meeting venue, two options discussed were the Committee of the Regions (CoR) and the Emilia Romagna premises. Emilia Romagna informed that they will need possible dates as soon as

possible in order to book the conference room. Tuscany said that the best option would be the CoR, but that there are also premises at their office.

Previous conferences have been organised through an Organisation Committee put together by the members. The Secretariat has suggested to do so also this year and invited especially the Brussels-based members to participate. The tasks of the organisation committee will be to develop an agenda and deciding on speakers etc. while the practical arrangement such as invitations and booking of venue will be handled by the Secretariat. Thus far, only Vysocina has announced interest and interested members were invited to contact the Secretariat to take part in the Organisation Committee as soon as possible.

6. CoR HEALTH INTERGROUP MEETINGS

The Secretariat informed that the next meeting of the CoR Interregional Group on Health and Wellbeing will take place on 14 October 14h30-16h30. This is the same week as Open Days, thus hopefully enabling both CoR members and EUREGHA members to attend. A draft agenda has already been developed and the Secretariat will circulate it during the week.

The topic of the meeting will be “Migration and Health” and the two confirmed key note speakers are Ms. Roumyana Petrova-Benedict, Senior Regional Migration Health Manager for Europe and Central Asia, at the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), and Ludovica Banfi from the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). The opening presentations will be followed by regional presentations. Thus far, there are confirmed presentations from Västra Götaland Region and Tuscany. A few Italian regions have indicated interest to present and sent their best practices and a decision will be taken soon. Lower Austria suggested to also invite a German region to speak considering the proportion of refugees that Germany welcomes compared to other EU countries. The Secretariat took note of this and will invite also a German region to present.

The forthcoming meeting of the Interregional Group will take place in December. This meeting will probably be on the theme “Active and Healthy Ageing” following the Group’s Work Programme and expressed interest from the members. There has especially been an interest in hearing about the Active Ageing Index (AAI) and the Secretariat has been in contact with DG EAC about this. Moreover, we have been approached by the EIP AHA to present the maturity matrix on integrated care. The exact date for this meeting is not yet confirmed, but it will take place during the first week of December.

7. WORK PROGRAMME

The Secretariat proceeded to briefly present the Work Programme 2015-2017 that has already been informally adopted. The priority policy areas, which were previously the Working Streams, are: integrated care, research and innovation, chronic diseases, mental health, cancer, eHealth, health equity and cross-border healthcare. The three areas in which EUREGHA is currently the most active are integrated care, research and innovation and chronic diseases as these are related to our commitments in Joint Action CHRODIS and the European projects in which we take part.

Lower Austria expressed a strong interest to revive the work on cross-border health, which was set aside for some time following the maternity leave of Carina Kainz who previously led this work. Cross-border health is potentially a very encompassing issue possibly incorporating not only cure, but also prevention, knowledge and experience exchange, cooperation on rare diseases, infectious disease control, antibiotics etc. Lower Austria proposed to draft a plan for future EUREGHA actions within the field of cross border healthcare which will be circulated to the Secretariat and the members.

The Chair was very positive to the idea and mentioned that it is in the Commission's roadmap to follow the consequences of the directive at regional level. Since previously, EUREGHA has good relations with the new head of the unit in DG SANTE responsible for cross border affairs, Ms Maria Iglesia-Gomez. She has previously shown interest in collaborating with EUREGHA and it could perhaps be possible to set up a plan in cooperation with DG SANTE. Ingrid Jansson mentioned that there was a round-table with the Commission prior to the transposition of the directive and that there has been discussions of a follow-up ever since, something that the Commission has shown interest in.

Lower Austria also mentioned that they are looking for partners to an Interreg project aiming at comparing how the directive has affected different border regions. There will be a project meeting in January 2016 to bring together the project partners. The Chair proposed that EUREGHA could participate as a network due to its communication and dissemination opportunities. Individual regions that are interested in participating are welcome to contact the Secretariat we will forward the contact to Lower Austria.

8. MEMBERSHIP FEES

Next followed an update on the new membership fees. As EUREGHA has received some requests from local authorities, a new membership fee structure has been developed. The membership fee for regions and provinces will continue being €5000. For local authorities, municipalities or cities with a population of more than 100 000 inhabitants, the membership fee will be €2500. For local authorities, municipalities or cities with a population of less than 100 000, the fee will be €1000. The local authorities will have access to the same services as the regions as the fees are dependent upon size of the entity and not on the services included.

The Chair explained that the rationale behind the new fees are twofold. First, they may spark interest among local authorities as EUREGHA so far has been less successful in reaching local authorities than regional members. Second, it is important to involve local authorities since, in some Member States, much of the health competency lies on the local level. He also mentioned that both Liverpool and greater Manchester have already expressed interest in joining EUREGHA.

The new fees will be launched and marketed through the EUREGHA website, Twitter and through targeted e-mails.

9. PROJECTS

The Secretariat provided some updates on the progress of the European projects EUREGHA take part in.

RegHealth-RI (The European Regions Network for Health Research & Innovation) is a two-year project with a strong focus on health research and innovation funded under Horizon2020. The Secretariat, the Chair, Robert Sinclair (VGR) and Stuart Anderson (Scotland) participated in the first project workshop in Madrid on 17-19 June. The second workshop will be held in Trieste on 25-27 November. As EUREGHA has the possibility of inviting members to these workshops, the Secretariat encouraged members to express their interest to do so. Currently, the number of places available to EUREGHA members to attend the second workshop is not certain, but this information will be passed on to members as soon as possible.

SUNFRAIL (Reference Sites Network for Prevention and Care of Frailty and Chronic Conditions in community dwelling persons in EU countries) is a 30 months' project funded by the Third Health Programme. EUREGHA acts as lead partner of the dissemination work package. SUNFRAIL had its kick-off meeting in Luxembourg in May, which the Secretariat attended. A transnational workshop will be organised in Bologna, probably on 10 December. The Secretariat will inquire in the possibilities to extend the invitation to regions that are not directly involved in the project.

CHRODIS Joint Action (Addressing Chronic Diseases and Healthy Ageing Across the Life-Cycle) is the biggest Joint Action to date, where EUREGHA participates in the Work Package on dissemination. Recent activities include the coordination of translations of the CHRODIS information brochure into partner languages, these include Spanish, German and French. EUREGHA is also responsible for the organisation of the final conference.

10. PENDING PROJECTS

The Secretariat informed that EUREGHA receives increasing invitations to participate in project proposals and that EUREGHA as Secretariat only engage in dissemination.

Tenders

We are currently awaiting results from two tenders: *SANTE/2014/C4/034 - "Pilot project related to the development of evidence based strategies to improve the health of isolated and vulnerable persons"* and *SMART/2015/0039 - "Support to scaling up of innovations in Active and Healthy Ageing"*. The results from the SMART tender has been delayed and are expected in approximately 2 months.

Project selection

Participating in projects creates a good visibility for the network and is a good opportunity for members to be involved without having to engage and contributing with resources themselves. The Secretariat asked for ideas on how to better communicate results of the project, emphasising the importance that members feel like it is advantageous for EUREGHA to participate in projects.

Västra Götaland Region proposed to develop the website and create a special project section where these updates could be found. Newsletters often do not get read due to the sheer amount of them.

The Secretariat further proposed to formalise the selection procedures regarding which projects EUREGHA should participate in through setting up a project committee of three or four members who would have the support of the other members to process the requests. Up until now, project requests have been decided on through approval by the Executive Board. The Chair said that the rationale behind this would be to democratize the process and make it more transparent. This is also a question for the future if we want to be more proactive in participating in projects. He mentioned that this is done in Scotland through a regular scanning of Horizon2020 and the Health Programme. Something similar could be envisioned for EUREGHA.

The idea of writing a long-term strategy for the network was brought up by Västra Götaland Region, especially considering that EUREGHA is expected to grow with the new membership fees. Procedures, routines and formal decision-making processes should be set up not to create ambiguities in the future. Lower Austria endorsed this idea.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Brussels-based meetings

The aim is to organise meetings with the Brussels-based members once every two months. The last meeting took place in July. The Secretariat will circulate a Doodle to set a date for the next meeting during the end of September.

AAL forum in Ghent

During the AAL (Active and Assisted living) Programme Forum in Ghent, a side event on twinning and scaling up of EIP-AHA practices will be organised by ERRIN, EUREGHA and CORAL.

Open Days

During the Open Days week of 12-16 October, both Västra Götaland Region and Podlaskie will organise workshops.

Västra Götaland will participate in the event “Opportunities for demographic change” taking place on 14 October (09h00- 13h00) and treat public services in demographically challenged areas. Västra Götaland will discuss demographically challenged areas with a perspective on health equity, presenting an example from a neighbourhood within the City of Gothenburg that has a high proportion of migrants and a higher proportion of chronic diseases and heart problems as compared to other areas of Gothenburg.

Podlaskie will participate in the event “Healthy Strategies for Smart Regions’ Partnership – Rising impact of healthcare innovation on regional economy” also on 14 October (09h00-12h30). The workshop which will be moderated by Toni Dedeu and explore how the health sector can impact on the regional economy. Thus far, the event has over 110 registrations. Podlaskie asked for assistance in communicating during the event and has already prepared facts to tweet.

The Secretariat will circulate invitations to these events to all members.

European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP AHA)

The Chair updated everyone on the activities of the EIP AHA, where the Action Groups are currently developing new action plans for 2016-2020. While the experiences of the partnership have been positive in general, there are some lessons learned. A major point is that since the EIP is a bottom-up initiative with representatives from regions cooperating with no proper guidance and no funding from the Commission, partners have had to commit their own resources and time. This has led to a progressive decline in participation, whilst the coordinators (9 per action group) have continued meeting every two weeks, with high costs to their organisations.

EUREGHA's role in the EIP also needs to be revised as Toni Dedeu, who has represented EUREGHA as coordinator in the B3 Group on Integrated Care, may step down. There needs to be a discussion on EUREGHA's continued role within the Partnership, which to date has proven to be very fruitful for the members. It is at this point still unclear whether the Commission is motivated to continue the EIP considering that many of the key Commission officials have left their posts following the Commission's rotating scheme. A public activity report is currently under development and should be public in December.

Study Visit, Hälsostaden in Ängelholm, Region Skåne

On 21-22 October, Skåne will organise a study visit to Hälsostaden in Ängelholm which is a model for integrated care and showcased as a best practice in the EIP. EUREGHA will attend and circulate a report from this event. An idea for the future is to organise our own study visits among the members, starting from next year.

END OF MEETING