



The formation of the

# **European Forum for Health Promotion Research (HP Forum)**



## Colofon

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Publisher: HP Forum

Authors/editors: Bjarne Bruun Jensen, Siw Tone Innstrand and Geir Arild Espnes

Design: Morten Petersen, [www.reflektdesign.dk](http://www.reflektdesign.dk)

Print: Frederiksberg Bogtrykkeri A/S

ISBN: 978-87-92759-28-3

The European Forum for Health Promotion Research (HP Forum) brings together health promotion researchers across Europe to further develop and strengthen health promotion research.

The network will foster synergy between different actors by developing common theoretical and methodological grounds and facilitate collaboration between researchers in the field of health promotion.

The HP Forum also aims to inform politicians and policy makers in the European Region of advancements in health promotion practices, programs and research. It is open to researchers from all European institutions engaged in health promotion.

The HP Forum is initiated by the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE), the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) and Steno Diabetes Center Copenhagen (SDCC). It is supported by The European Public Health Association (EUPHA), EuroHealth-Net, WHO/Europe and the UNESCO Chair for Global Health and Education.

## Why a new initiative?

A new forum for health promotion research is needed to effectively address several health challenges. Changing patterns of disease and health in Europe and globally are driving dramatic increases in non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including diabetes, heart disease, cancer, chronic lung diseases and mental health disorders. NCDs are affecting a rapidly increasing number of people and directly affect their health, quality of life, and productivity. As such, they pose a threat to the economies and stability of countries in Europe – and around the world.

In addition, global migration, increased aging in European populations, inequalities in health, as well as pressure from commercial industries, are challenging health and healthcare systems in Europe. These new challenges demand new solutions.

WHO defines health promotion as the *“process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health”*. It moves beyond a focus on individual behaviour toward a wide range of social and environmental interventions. Strengthening research on how to foster health promotion in societies and increasing the resources of individuals simultaneously enhances people’s

health and well-being and prevents NCDs.

However, despite its history of more than 30 years, the current state of health promotion practice in Europe is still not fully driven by sound evidence. Health promotion will benefit from a clearer identity and more robust evidence of effectively helping to solve identified problems, such as NCDs.

By bringing together health promotion researchers, the HP Forum aims to impact policy and promote health development, preparing Europe to better tackle present and future challenges.

At present, several organizations in Europe, including the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE), the European Public Health Association (EUPHA), EuroHealthNet and the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER) include health promotion and public health in their portfolio and provide suitable venues for discussing health promotion and public health policies and practices at conferences.

However, despite the value of these efforts, health promotion in Europe still lacks an arena for discussing the fundamental basis of health promotion and

health promotion research: theoretical foundations, models, definitions, research methodologies and translation of research into practice. While there is a strong capacity for health promotion research in Europe, different research traditions co-exist across countries and cultures, and without a central anchor collaboration and synergy are difficult to achieve.

## What do we want to achieve?

The challenges that public health is facing in Europe, and the formulation of the UN millennium development and sustainable development goals, create a strong momentum for health promotion. We have the opportunity to build on the substantial existing research capacity and to unite research traditions and initiatives to strengthen the evidence base for health promotion. The existing capacity for health promotion research is deeply rooted in existing international organizations and the goal of the HP Forum is to build on these existing initiatives and to provide a platform in Europe to increase the effectiveness and impact of health promotion research and practice.

The HP Forum will provide a strategic resource for knowledge production, knowledge transfer and capacity building at the European level. This will

occur through the creation of a “think tank” enabling the joint development of theories and models and joint interdisciplinary projects leading to new and implementable evidence. Key outputs of the HP Forum in the longer run are increased capacity and concrete health improvements in Europe. The HP Forum will contribute to the knowledge base, build European research and innovation capacity, and develop solutions needed for more effective promotion of health and disease prevention. Thus, the main objectives are to:

- Develop a common understanding of health promotion across Europe;
- Facilitate collaborative efforts to build capacity for health promotion research and support the development of research centers;
- Initiate joint research projects through large funding applications that focus on the most effective health promotion practices in various cultural contexts;
- Facilitate knowledge transfer from research to policy and practice via various international networks;
- Align and de-fragment national research activities through structured thematic joint programmes focusing on researcher exchange programmes, joint deliverables etc.;



- Engage health promotion in the fight against social injustice, poor health and health inequalities;
- Contribute a solid knowledge base to the training of students, leaders and practitioners in the newest health promotion evidence, using summer schools, Massive On-line Open Courses (MOOCs) and multi-institutional European programs focusing on teacher, student and researcher exchanges; and
- Develop joint publications in highly ranked peer-reviewed international journals, fact sheets for policy makers and similar high-impact communications.

### Organization and governance

The idea to establish a European Forum for Health Promotion Research has been developed by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE) and Steno Diabetes Center Copenhagen, with the support of EuroHealthNet, WHO/Europe, EUPHA and the UNESCO chair for Global Health and Education.

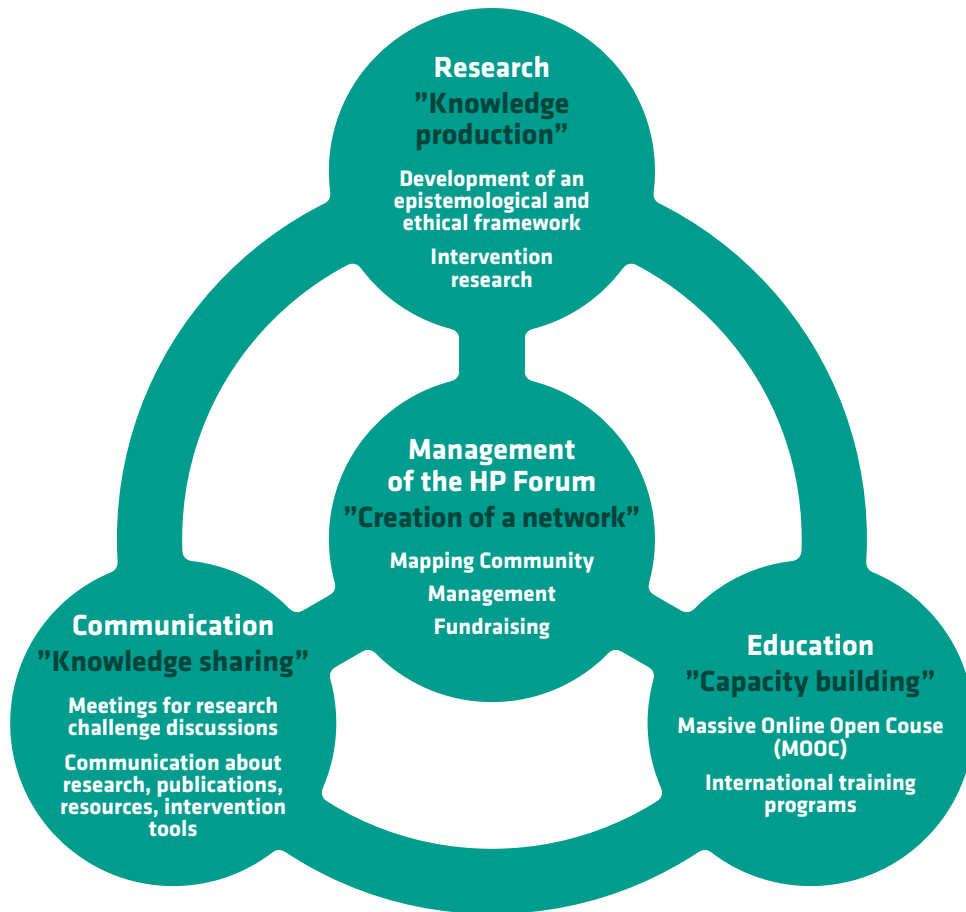
Key mechanisms for reaching the goals and objectives described above are bi-annual meetings and regular workshops and seminars. Meetings will be organized by member organizations and, when possible, held in conjunction with established conferences, such as those of IUHPE, EUPHA, WHO and NTNU. The added value for HP Forum members will be increased recognition and visibility of their work, wider dissemination of their research results, enhanced collaboration, capacity building, inspiration, and support for research funding.

Researchers in institutions and organizations involved with health promotion research and health promotion are potential members of the network. To emphasize the open and flexible structure of the Forum, an institutional letter of commitment and assignment of a contact person for the HP Forum will constitute membership. Young researchers will be particularly encouraged to participate to ensure the future impact of health promotion research and health promotion.

In the first year, the HP Forum work will be organized around four themes: 1) Health services, 2) Learning and development, 3) Work life and 4) Local communities. During the first phase of the

HP Forum, its members will develop a more comprehensive and formal management and organization structure. In the first year, the HP Forum and its activities will be jointly facilitated

and coordinated by the NTNU Center for Health Promotion Research (the secretariat) and the Unit for Health Promotion at Steno Diabetes Center Copenhagen.



Four key components of the European Forum for Health Promotion Research

## Activities that have already been planned for the coming year

1. 24-26 September 2018: Launch of the HP Forum in Trondheim.
2. 10-11 October 2018: Presentation of the HP Forum during the Launch of the UNESCO Chair for Global Health and Education in Paris.
3. 28-30 November 2018: First HP Forum meeting in connection with EPH conference in Ljubljana. Theme: Overlaps and synergies between PH and HP, initiation of joint projects and planning of future seminars and workshops.
4. 16 May 2019: Second HP Forum meeting and joint seminar with UNESCO Chair on Global Health and Education at Steno Diabetes Center Copenhagen in Copenhagen. Theme: state of art of HP and HPR in Europe.
5. 20-23 November 2019: Third HP Forum meeting in connection with EPH in Marseille. Theme: Mapping of HPR in Europe and key challenges for future HPR

How to sign up for the HP Forum? Send an e-mail to representatives from the Center for Health Promotion Research, NTNU (next page).

## Institutions and people behind the initiative

### NTNU Center for Health Promotion Research

**Geir Arild Espnes**, Professor and Director  
[geir.arild.espnes@ntnu.no](mailto:geir.arild.espnes@ntnu.no) and

**Siw Tone Innstrand**, Professor and Deputy Director  
[siw.tone.innstrand@ntnu.no](mailto:siw.tone.innstrand@ntnu.no)



### SDCC Health Promotion

**Peter Bentsen**, Senior Researcher and Teamleader  
[peter.bocz.bentsen@regionh.dk](mailto:peter.bocz.bentsen@regionh.dk) and

**Bjarne Bruun Jensen**, Professor and Head of Health Promotion  
[bjarne.bruun.jensen@regionh.dk](mailto:bjarne.bruun.jensen@regionh.dk)



### International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE)

**Bjarne Bruun Jensen**, Professor and Vice President for Europe

[bjarne.bruun.jensen@regionh.dk](mailto:bjarne.bruun.jensen@regionh.dk) and

**Stephan Van den Broucke**, Professor and Vice President for Capacity Building, Education and Training  
[stephan.vandenbroucke@uclouvain.be](mailto:stephan.vandenbroucke@uclouvain.be)



### UNESCO's Chair for Global Health and Education

**Didier Jourdan**, Professor and Chair holder  
[didier.jourdan@unescochair-ghe.org](mailto:didier.jourdan@unescochair-ghe.org)



### European Public Health Association (EUPHA)

**Luis Saboga-Nunes**, Associate Professor and President for Health Promotion Section  
[Sabago.nunes@gmail.com](mailto:Sabago.nunes@gmail.com)



### EuroHealthNet

**Monica Aberg-Yngwe**, Associate Professor and Senior Research Coordinator  
[M.Aberg-Yngwe@eurohealthnet.eu](mailto:M.Aberg-Yngwe@eurohealthnet.eu)



## **European Forum for Health Promotion Research – synergy and innovation to tackle health challenges in Europe**

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NCDs are affecting a rapidly increasing number of people and directly affect their health, quality of life, and productivity. As such, they pose a threat to the economies and stability of countries in Europe – and around the world.

By bringing together health promotion researchers, the HP Forum aims to impact policy and promote health development, preparing Europe to better tackle present and future challenges.

The HP Forum will provide a strategic resource for knowledge production, knowledge transfer and capacity building at the European level.

The overall aim of the HP Forum is to engage health promotion in the fight against social injustice, poor health and health inequalities – in Europe as well as globally.