



## **European Forum for Primary Care**

### **Activity Report, July 2021 – June 2022**

#### **Introduction**

The European Forum for Primary Care (EFPC) was established as network organisation in 2005, and is a formal association under Dutch law since 2011. In 2021, it consisted of 85 institutional members and 32 individual members from diverse professional backgrounds and 32 countries.

The aim of the Forum is to improve the health of the population by promoting strong person-centred, community oriented integrated Primary Care, provided by an interdisciplinary network of professionals in close collaboration with the community. This is done by advocating for Primary Care, by generating data and evidence on Primary Care and by sharing and exchanging new ideas and information on between its members.

The Association year runs from July to June. This Activity Report covers the period July 2021 - June 2022, presented to the members by the Executive Board at the General Assembly of the EFPC.

#### **General Reflection**

Despite the difficulties the EFPC encountered due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we can look back at a fruitful and active year. Financially speaking, the second half of 2021 was difficult for obvious reasons: again the cancellation of the EFPC annual conference, this year in Bergen, little activity within the network due to all kind of COVID related regulations and as a consequence reduced interest for EFPC membership. However, where in December 2021 we were at the edge of our funding, extreme efforts of the secretariat and Board members have resulted in new extra funding for the EFPC for a period of five years which makes the prospective for the coming years much better.

Extra investments in online activities and connections, including the organisation of a series of interactive webinars were necessary to keep the attention of members, who themselves were struggling to overcome the pandemic difficulties. Retainment of members is still a challenge.

EFPC Working Groups were stimulated and some were very active, resulting in three important policy papers which were presented during a very nice small life conference in Bergen; it was a delight to finally have the opportunity to meet and discuss in person with other members, researchers and students.

A strategic plan for the next 5 years was accepted and the Strategic Task Force installed during the general assembly in September 2021, which was a useful initiative to identify new opportunities to engage with potential sponsors and members. The search for funding was already quite successful in this past year, but we will continue looking for funding through participation in projects as well as through attracting new members. Besides this ambitions for funding, the strategic plan describes activities to Strengthen our visibility and acknowledgment and the building of networks in particular with patient representatives organisations. During the board meetings in Gent we will discuss this topic further. Several other activities will be further developed over the next year. One of these is to establish a EFPC consultants group who can advise WHO and other organisation on specific matters related to Primary Care.

With the prospect of a well-attended life conference in Ghent in September, and the start of the new PRIMORE project we are looking forward to a prosperous future of the EFPC.

## Highlights 2021-2022 according to the EFPC Executive Board members

### Advocacy and Policy activities:

#### Statements

- Oral statement at the virtual 13–15 September 2021 WHO RC71 for Europe: Maria van den Muijsenbergh on Reinventing primary health care in the post-COVID-19 era on behalf of 24 organisations and all our EFPC members <https://euprimarycare.org/2021/09/13/efpc-at-the-who-regional-committee-for-europe/>
- The EFPC prescribed a healthier future for Europeans within the EU conference #TheFutureIsYours campaign with the title: “Primary Health Care (PHC) is an indispensable good for equitable and high-quality care in Europe and beyond!” <https://euprimarycare.org/2021/11/22/phc-indispensable/>
- EFPC statement regarding the war against Ukraine <https://euprimarycare.org/2022/03/01/efpc-statement-ukraine/>

#### Representation

- EFPC with Advisory Board member Elena Petelos was selected as a member of the HERA Civil Society Forum <https://euprimarycare.org/2022/06/14/elena-petelos-member-hera-civil-society-forum/>

### Generation and dissemination of evidence

- EFPC 2021 Online Conference jointly organised with the team of Centre for Care Research in Bergen, Norway <https://euprimarycare.org/efpc-2021-bergen-conference-5-7-september-2021/>
- PRIMORE Masterclass in Bergen 16 June on Interprofessional PC Research plus final meeting PRIMORE phase I on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June <https://euprimarycare.org/2022/06/17/efpc-primore-meeting-2022/>
- Approved funding for our PRIMORE phase II project to establish an Interprofessional Primary Care research network (weblink to be prepared)
- A series of EFPC lunch-webinars tackling topics like “European primary care”, the 2004 Dutch Health Council report <https://euprimarycare.org/2021/08/24/webinar-european-primary-care-dutch-health-council-report/>, "Participation of Patients and Communities in Primary Health Care" <https://euprimarycare.org/2021/08/01/webinar-patients-participation/>, “Primary Care and the Patient Perspective” <https://euprimarycare.org/2022/03/11/efpc-webinar-series/>
- EFPC Position Paper The health of detainees and the role of primary care published in PHCRD <https://euprimarycare.org/2022/06/02/prison-health-wg-pp/>
- Editorial for the COVID-19 special issue of PHCRD by Andrea Canini, Maria van den Muijsenbergh, Diederik Aarendonk and Sally Kendall <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/primary-health-care-research-and-development/article/editorial-for-the-covid19-special-issue-of-phcrd/FC8D38F12FD5D7253F7B3BF715BD8F3A>

## Report 2021 - 2022

The objectives and vision of the EFPC are described in the Statutes and operationalised in our 5 year strategic plan 2021 – 2026 that was approved of in the general assembly in September 2021. They feature on the website of the EFPC. This report details the activities of the EFPC in these 12 months (July '21 – June '22), against the background of its organisational aims.

### Main activities.

#### Advocacy and Policy activities

##### Statements

- Oral statement at the virtual 13–15 September 2021 WHO RC71 for Europe: Maria van den Muijsenbergh on Reinventing primary health care in the post-COVID-19 era on behalf of 24 organisations and all our EFPC members <https://euprimarycare.org/2021/09/13/efpc-at-the-who-regional-committee-for-europe/>
- The EFPC prescribed a healthier future for Europeans within the EU conference #TheFutureIsYours campaign with the title: “Primary Health Care (PHC) is an indispensable good for equitable and high-quality care in Europe and beyond!” <https://euprimarycare.org/2021/11/22/phc-indispensable/>
- EFPC statement regarding the war against Ukraine to urge upon all parties involved to respect human rights and lives at all times; to receive refugees with open arms and to allow access and support to health care workers and others who strive to help the wounded and ill, and preserve health as good as possible under these circumstances.  **Conference on the Future of Europe**  
<https://euprimarycare.org/2022/03/01/efpc-statement-ukraine/>
- HealthyClimate Prescription: The EFPC together with its' allies called on the governments of European Countries to ensure that pandemic recovery investments support climate action and reduce social and health inequities, to update their national climate commitments under the Paris Agreement to commit to their fair share of limiting warming to 1.5°C, to build health into those plans and to high-income countries to also provide the promised transfer of funds to low-income countries to help achieve the necessary mitigation and adaptation measures.

##### Other policy activities

- Collaboration with WHO European Centre for Primary Health Care with which we agreed on an exchange letter which describes the way of increased and further collaboration between the centre and the EFPC
- Collaboration with European Public Health Dentist on effectuating the WHO declaration on oral health

#### Generation and dissemination of evidence

- The 16<sup>th</sup> EFPC yearly conference was held in September 2021, Online with an interactive program

- The PRIMORE phase I project finalized its' activities with an onsite Masterclass in Bergen in June on Interprofessional Primary Care research aiming at early career researchers to further develop their professional and research skills and a final event with workshops of the active working groups on Healthy Aging, Prison Health, Mental Health and the Organisation of Primary Care.
- With financial support of the Robert Bosch Stiftung the 5-year PRIMORE phase II project started in spring 2022
- Internship of Christopher van der Linden supervised by Judith de Jong and Diederik Aarendonk doing research on the challenges of interprofessional collaboration in primary care
- Workshops and presentations at various (inter)national conferences of related networks such as Oral Health Europe, WHO Regional Committee for Europe, WONCA Europe, listed below under the activities of the advisory and executive board.
- Editorial for the COVID-19 special issue of PHCRD by Andrea Canini, Maria van den Muijsenbergh, Diederik Aarendonk and Sally Kendall
- Publication of the EFPC Position Paper "The health of detainees and the role of primary care" published in PHCRD in Primary Health Care Research & Development (PHCRD), the official journal for the EFPC. Main authors: Peter Groenewegen, Anja Dirkzwager, Anke van Dam, Dina Massalimova, Coral Sirdifield and Lauren Smith
- A variety of EFPC webinars with a range of topics like "European primary care - the 2004 Dutch Health Council report", "Participation of Patients and Communities in Primary Health Care", "Primary Care and the Patient Perspective", "Early Detection of Prostate Cancer", "COVID: threat or opportunity for quality improvement (QI) in primary care?".
- At the Global Public Health Week (GPHW) the EFPC organised a webinar on "What is your take on Equity? A debate on the results of on-line questionnaire of participants of the WFPHA."
- Advisory Board role in the EU project AHEAD: Action for Health Equity Against medical Deserts led by the Dutch EFPC member WEMOS
- The EFPC collaborated with the Universities of Kent, Ghent, and Lille to hold the '3i Collaboration: Promoting Community Health through Primary Care (ProComm)' event in which they explored themes of common interest in Community Orientated Primary Care that can lead to new cooperation in research, education, or practice.

#### **Inspiring, representing and supporting Primary Care professionals – our members:**

- EFPC fortnightly newsflash (already running from May 2006 onwards) and the use of Social Media, like LinkedIn PC Forum (6407 members) and an EFPC Twitter account with 2255 followers.  
At LinkedIn we now also established our open corporate LinkedIn page with in less than a month more than 250 followers.
- EFPC with Advisory Board member Elena Petelos was selected as a member of the Health Emergency preparedness & Response Authority's (HERA) Civil Society Forum
- Responses to international consultations like the Expert Panel on effective ways of investing in health (organisation of resilient health and social care following the Covid-19 pandemic) and EMA (ICH Guidelines).
- Confirmation of remaining a member of the Healthcare Professionals Working Party (HCPWP) for the term 2022 to 2025

## Governance, growth and (financial) sustainability of the organization

### Governance, Executive & Advisory Board

The EFPC held its 2021 General Assembly on September 6 via an online meeting. The current Executive Board (Maria van den Muijsenbergh, chair; Harry Longman, treasurer; Alessandro Mereu, member; Toni Dedeu, member; Judith de Jong, member; Andrea Canini, member) has met 6 times, one onsite meeting in Bergen and the other on-line meetings.

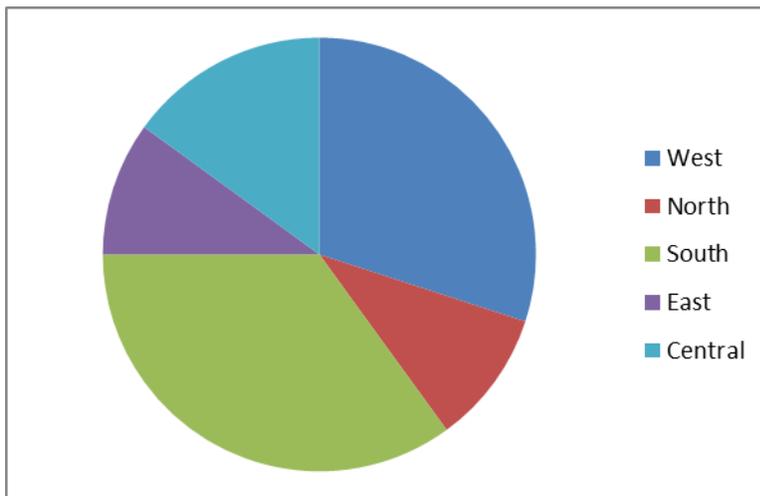
The Advisory Board, consisting of 20 members met twice online (6/9/21 and 25/3/22) and once in a hybrid version on 16 June 2022.

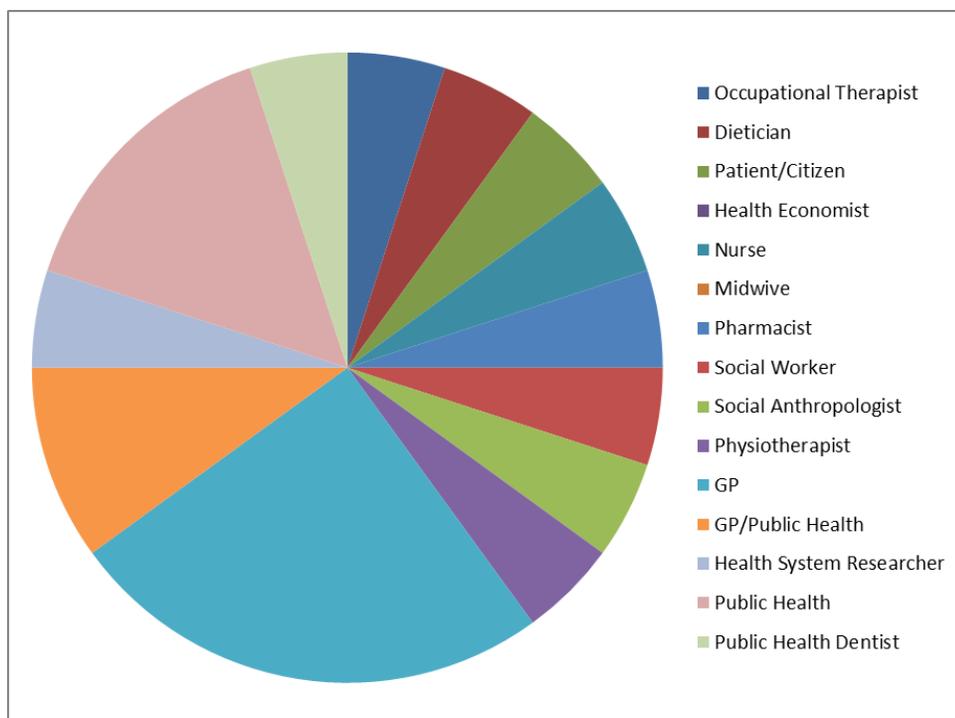
The role of the Advisory Board members showed its added value for international consultations. The Advisory Board members succeeded to mobilize their network, making sure many and valuable contributions were communicated including seeking for new funding.

The next Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for the 25<sup>th</sup> of September as an onsite meeting in Ghent. In this meeting six Advisory Board members will end their activity in the Advisory Board. They have played an outstanding role in pushing the EFPC further as an important network when it comes to improvement of the health of Europeans.

A balanced geographical and professional - including patient/citizen representatives - distribution among the Advisory Board members is important and will have its positive effect on acquiring new members, an increase of discussion via online platforms leading to more profound ideas on how to move forward in developing health systems and also in invitations from other networks to present our vision.

The current geographical (Europe) and professional distribution within the Advisory Board is presented in the graphs below:





From a professional and stakeholders perspective we have achieved a rather balanced advisory board composition after so many years.

From a geographical perspective we need more Northern and Eastern European representatives.

With six vacancies for new Advisory Board members at the upcoming General Assembly this balanced geographical diversity can be reassured.

The EFPC secretariat and board members performed presentations for various conferences/meetings:

- 71st session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe – Maria van den Muijsenbergh & Diederik Aarendonk
- CEEDO (Council of European Chief Dental Officers) Workshop: 'THE RESOLUTION ON ORAL HEALTH, WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR YOU?' – Maria van den Muijsenbergh
- WHO-Europe Non-State stakeholder- Quarterly non-State actor engagement session Friday 12 November 2021 – Diederik Aarendonk
- Medical Deserts - AHEAD consortium led by WEMOS – Advisory Board meeting 26 November 2021 – Diederik Aarendonk
- EU DG Sante on Ukrainian crisis 4 March – Diederik Aarendonk
- EQuIP Conference 11 March 2022 OnLine – Toni Dedeu
- Talk Show on Leadership for PHC transformation, 28 March Online – Harry Longman & Toni Dedeu
- WFPHA Global Public Health week 2022 - Wednesday, 6 April : Achieving health equity – Maria van den Muijsenbergh, Sarah Burgmann, Maria Louisa Busuttill & Maria Papadakaki

- Royal Society of Medicine - Global Interprofessional Conference: Transforming General Practice - Exploring Sustainability and Workforce Development, 11 May 2022 – Metka Zitnic
- 3i Cross-border Collaborations, meeting in Kent 18-20th May 2022 – Christopher van der Linden
- 27th WONCA Europe conference, 28 June - 1 July 2022 London – Maria van den Muijsenbergh & Sarah Burgmann

### **Governance, secretariat**

Diederik Aarendonk continued his role as coordinator of the EFPC running the secretariat at the NIVEL premises in Utrecht, the Netherlands, for 2021/2022.

Due to the extra budget received for the PRIMORE phase II project, we were able to recruit again a junior coordinator, Christopher van der Linden, for two days per week per May 2022.

The administrative support comes from Irene Cubells based in Barcelona.

With this size we re-established a secretariat with sufficient organizing capacity although a full time position for the junior coordinator would be ideal.

The secretariat spends 20 % of its time on purely administrative matters and 80 % on organising (contributions of) members and content matters of the EFPC. This includes attendance of meetings and network events, preparation of policy statements and development of project proposals.

The salary administration is executed by a private service based in the Netherlands.



### **Growth**

The growth of the EFPC is mainly measured in terms of number of members. This year the number of small institutional members dropped once more which is a concern as institutional members are the backbone of our association. The number of medium institutional showed a rise but this was mainly due to the German PORT members sponsored by the Robert Bosch Stiftung. Also a small drop for individual members was seen. (See below ad 3, membership fees)

It remains always difficult to assure visibility and showing our membership and potential members the added value of our work which is often invisible. Certainly the last two years with the COVID19 regulations which hampers the activity of the association. This will be a continuing challenge for which the “Strategic Task Force” has developed a plan which might provide growth in the coming years.

### **Financial sustainability of the EFPC**

The separate financial report details the financial status of the EFPC. Balancing income and expenses will remain a particular challenge as it was in the previous years.

On the expenses side: the EFPC secretariat has tried to keep running costs like travel, premises, communication, etc, low resulting in 1461 euro less costs compared to the budget.

The premises is rented from NIVEL including ICT support which was offered for free this last year.

Other expenses are limited now in COVID-19 mode although normal overhead like insurances, communication, etc remains a substantial expense.

In general, the EFPC has the following sources of income:

1. Institutional funding
2. Project activities
3. Membership fees.

The income from membership fees provides the EFPC a guaranteed and long-lasting income with a large freedom in the way EFPC operates in comparison with institutional and project funding. We are happy with this business-model as it remains a rather confident source of funding, compared with for example project funding or the positive balance from a yearly conference. If the latter would have been our main source of income we would have been in big trouble after again a cancelled conference this year. Still additional funding is needed to let the association flourish and to increase the capacity of the secretariat with a full-time junior coordinator.

Ad 1

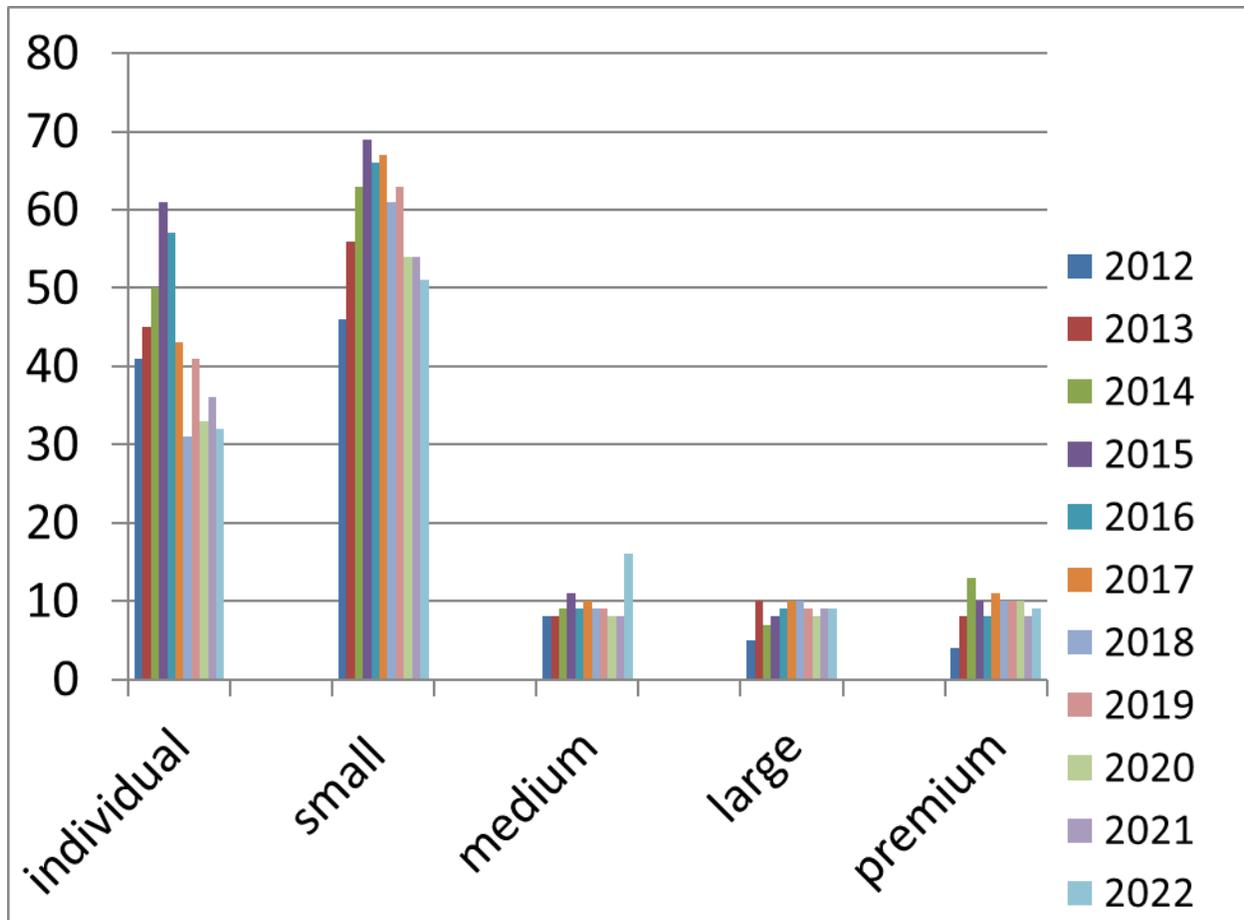
The EFPC did receive institutional funding from the German based Robert Bosch Stiftung

Ad 2

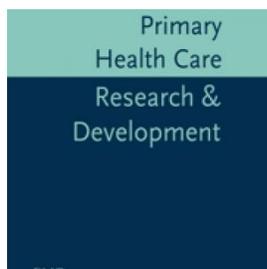
The EFPC's conferences, webinars and development of Position Papers are main activities. The EFPC is again involved in an EU funded project called BE-WELL.

Ad 3

The number of members now counts 85 institutional members. The total number of individual members is 32. (see below the graph of the number of the different member groups for the EFPC Association).



The numbers of institutional and individual members remained stable with an increase of medium institutional members due to 13 new members from Germany supported by the Robert Bosch Stiftung. Although it was difficult to offer interesting activities due to the COVID restrictions in the previous years, we managed to keep members on board due to extra efforts from the secretariat and with the help of many motivated members.



Primary Health Care Research & Development (PHCRD) of Cambridge University Press (CUP) remains our preferred journal for publication. Prof Sally Kendall remains editor in chief of PHCRD and is our liaison with also long lasting EFPC member Mehmet Akman taking part in the editorial board. The EFPC Prison Health Position Paper has been published in the journal.