

Open meeting on a forming a Global Society at lunchtime on Saturday 19th May 2018

This proposal is for a new Global Society to integrate academic, professional and community work on the following interrelated fields: migration, ethnicity, race and Health. The meeting will offer an opportunity for participants to suggest other ways of achieving the same goal.

Rationale

The 1st World Congress is fostering an integrated dialogue on issues related to migration, ethnicity (and a focus on indigenous and Roma populations) and race, as they relate to health and health care. A major motivation for this Congress was that they are of central importance in public health and health care, especially in relation to equity and equality with the sense that these fields of study and practice, notwithstanding their differences, have much in common, warranting a global endeavour. The core idea behind a Global society and this proposal is that greater unity, cross-working, and cross fertilisation of ideas through dialogue would strengthen each field separately and hence also collectively.

The high participation and the richness of the contributions at this Congress, despite the sparse representation of some parts of the world (e.g. much of Africa, Russia, East and Southeast Asia and Latin America), provide the impetus for creating a Global Society to nurture and further the dialogue.

The question to be considered in this meeting is whether such a Society would add value in the current context where there are numerous organisations working in the field, sometimes in formal collaborations, though these are seldom global or encompassing all the identified fields. There are also serious and important questions about the mode of organisation.

To be practical, a new Society would likely need to be a coalition of organisations already working in the fields. Then the main objective of the new organisation would be to enhance cooperation and dialogue across them. There will be important challenges in relation to funding, sustainability and choices between activities.

Next steps

1. To discuss this proposal in open session to identify the important questions and gauge the degree of support for it.
2. If there is support, to reflect on the core objectives of the new Society and the mode of its organisation. The primary objective could be to promote a dialogue across the fields identified, hopefully allowing us to speak with a unified voice and influence global policies. One specific action might be to help catalyse future World Congresses of the kind we are currently participating in.

Our current Congress was an initiative of the Migrant and Ethnic Health Section of the European Public Health Association and incorporates the seventh European meeting of this section. This model may well work in the future i.e. identifying similar organisations in other parts of the world that run regional meetings and foster collaborations so their meetings can become, on occasion, global. In parts of the world where such organisations do not already

exist our Society might promote their development. The next Congress might possibly be in 4-years' time (2022), so it is a rare event and not clashing with other major meetings. There may be other objectives e.g. fostering networks, creating an internet presence, setting up a newsletter et cetera.

As indicated above, the mode of organisation would likely be to develop a coalition of existing organisations and societies working in the field. To our knowledge, none of these straddle the range of fields represented in our current Congress, and certainly not on a global scale.

While this needs to be negotiated, we would hope that the coalition partners of this new Society would help provide the relatively small-scale resources required to initiate the work of the Society for short periods of time e.g. two years.

3. Again, given support, we will need a Committee to oversee the work above. The first task will be to identify and communicate with coalition partners. Small-scale funds will be needed. If there is a surplus from this 1st Congress then that might be used for the new group. If not, we may need some seed funding from another funder. A good starting point might be to approach the sponsors of this current Congress.
4. The composition of the Committee needs to be agreed but given the range of fields identified and the global work of the Society it is likely that 15-20 people will need to serve. It would probably be best if these people represented national, regional and international organisations that are already working in these fields to avoid unnecessary duplication of work and to help build alliances.

The composition of the Committee is likely to follow standard approaches as follows:

Chairperson

Secretary

Treasurer

Members representing major organisations working in the identified fields e.g. APHA, EUPHA, RWJ Foundation etc.

Members representing academic, professional and community (NGO etc.) interests

In keeping with the rationale and fields of work the composition of the Committee should reflect the diversity of the populations to be served by the new Society.

In addition to the committee there may be advisory groups.