

Swiss TPH



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ASPHER's European List of Core Competences for the Public Health Professional

5th Edition

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What is ASPHER?

- Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region
- membership organisation
- Aim: strengthening the role of public health by improving education and training of public health professionals

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Historical Perspectives

- 1st edition started in 2006 (chair Anders Foldspang, Aarhus University Denmark)

Table 3. Editions of ASPHER's European List of Public Health Generic Core Competences for the Public Health Professional.

2008	1 st Edition	Based on contributions from about 100 European teachers and scientists.
2008	2 nd Edition	With contributions from European conferences and practitioner-teacher workshops.
2011	3 rd Edition	Concepts crystallised. Endorsed by WHO Europe member states (2012).
2016	4 th Edition	Mapping of the competences-EPHOs relationship.
2018	5 th Edition	With advisory contributions from expert groups within: epidemiology and biostatistics; sociology; environmental health; health economics; leadership; nutrition; communicable disease prevention and control.

Process

- Expert groups within some of the main themes of public health: epidemiology and biostatistics; sociology; environmental health; health economics; leadership and systems thinking; public health nutrition; communicable disease prevention and control.
- Contributions were formatted in balance with the full list
- The sub-discipline of *communicable disease prevention and control*, additionally represents an extract of the list of competences developed by the European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC), Stockholm

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Structure of the list

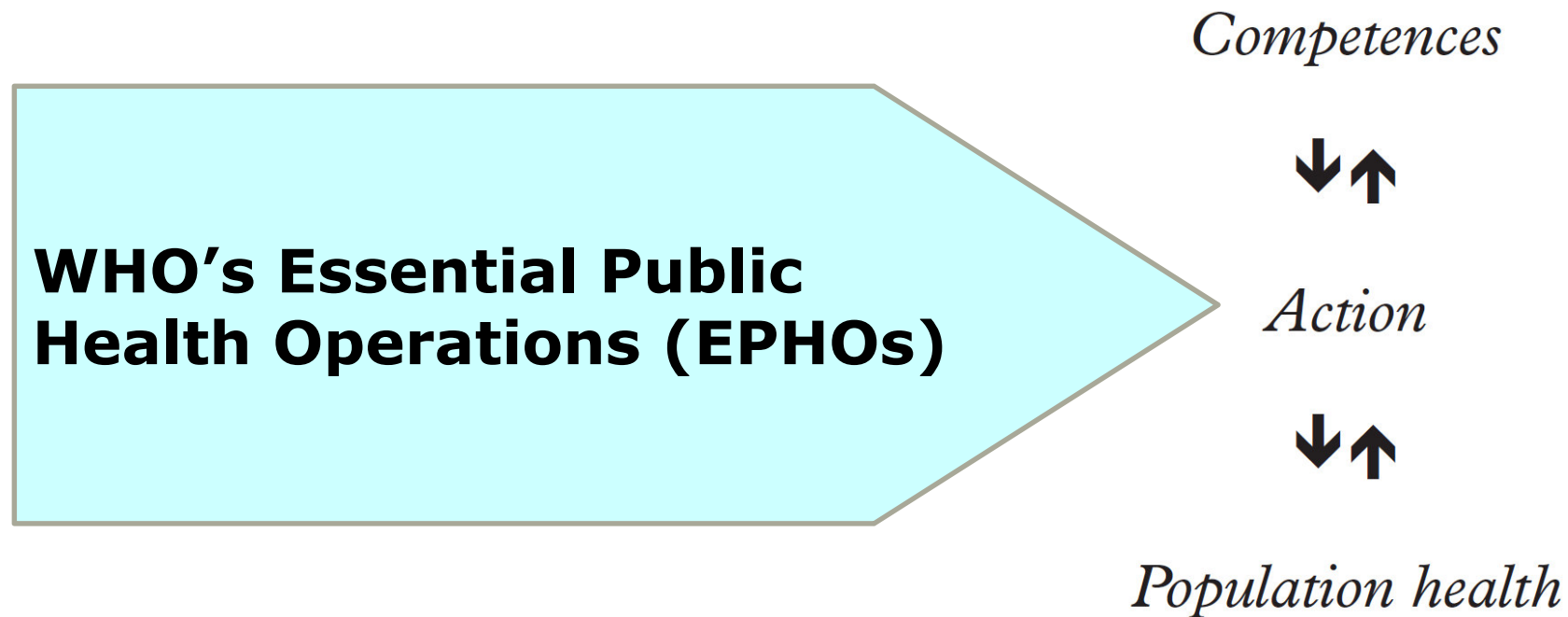
Table 1. Main chapters of ASPHER's European List of Public Health Generic Core Competences for the Public Health Professional.

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1. Methods in public health – quantitative and qualitative methods
 2. Population health and its social, economic and political determinants
 3. Population health and its material – physical, radiological, chemical and biological – environmental determinants
 4. Health policy; economics; organisational theory, leadership and management
 5. Health promotion, health protection and disease prevention
 6. Ethics
-

Each chapter divided into:

- **Definitions**
- **Intellectual competences:** *“The public health professional shall know and understand”...*
- **Practical competences:** *“The public health professional shall be able to”...*

Philosophy



Essential Public Health Operations (EPHOs)

Table 2. Main categories of WHO's Essential Public Health Operations (EPHOs).

Intelligence EPHOs

- EPHO 1 Surveillance of population health and wellbeing
- EPHO 2 Monitoring and response to health hazards and emergencies

Core services delivery EPHOs

- EPHO 3 Health protection, including environmental, occupational and food safety and others
- EPHO 4 Health promotion including action to address social determinants and health inequity
- EPHO 5 Disease prevention, including early detection of illness

Enabler EPHOs

- EPHO 6 Assuring governance for health
- EPHO 7 Assuring a competent public health workforce
- EPHO 8 Assuring organizational structures and financing
- EPHO 9 Information, communication and social mobilization for health
- EPHO 10 Advancing Public Health research to inform policy and practice

How to use the list?

- The list is intended to play crucial roles in the development of the European public health workforce, as indicated in WHO Europe's Health 2020 Strategy.
- Should be further developed and updated in the future. (E.g. topic Health & Law, under discussion, lead WG Dominique Sprumont)
- It will suit a bachelor-and-master programme lasting 5-6 years.
- “Aiming lower than the highest standard of university programmes in, for example, medicine, law or economics/political science, is simply not appropriate, when the importance, size and complexity of the public health discipline are taken into account. This **may pose a challenge** to shorter, comprehensive programmes in public health, **like the classical 1-2 year Master of Public Health (MPH)** in combination with, a medical degree or a degree in nursing or in some other discipline.”

Let us scroll through the list (p. 18-52)

Competences

A.1. Intellectual competences:

The public health professional shall know and understand:

A.1.1. Health

- A.1.1.1. Basic definitions, models and concepts of health and disease.
- A.1.1.2. Concepts of mental and somatic diseases and their practical implications, including diagnostic systems and diagnoses and the role of such systems in the assessment of community health status, diagnosis, and prioritisation of interventions.
- A.1.1.3. The contested nature of definitions, models and concepts of health and disease.

A.1.2. Public health

- A.1.2.1. Major definitions of public health.
- A.1.2.2. Significant aspects of the history of public health theory and practice.

A.1.3. Philosophy of science

- A.1.3.1. Major definitions of philosophy and philosophy of science.
- A.1.3.2. Essentials of philosophy of science as relevant to public health.
- A.1.3.3. Basic theories in philosophy and philosophy of science, and concepts of importance for public health science and practice, e.g. concepts such as hypothesis, theory, explanation, understanding, objectivity, evidence, method, deduction, induction, utilitarianism, qualitative and quantitative studies, observations and operationalisation.

A.1.4. Epidemiology, demography and biostatistics

- A.1.4.1. Major definitions of epidemiology as a science.

Example: environmental health

Definitions

- Environment: This consists of the external elements and conditions, which surround, influence, and affect the life and development of an individual or of a population.
- Environmental Health: Is the science of controlling or modifying those physical, radiological, chemical and biological conditions, influences, or forces, which surround human communities, with the purpose of preventing disease and promoting, establishing, and maintaining health.

Environmental health

Intellectual competences (small selection):

- Basic concepts of the natural sciences, especially:...
- Basic concepts and terminology of empirical scientific disciplines....., e.g. toxicology, epidemiology, exposure assessment, exposome, etc.
- The level and trends of main physical, radiological, chemical and biological exposures in European countries, and their relationship to health
- Population health consequences of these main physical, chemical and biological exposures (health impact assessment)
- The burden of disease, injury and fatality associated with physical, radiological, chemical and biological environmental exposures in national and European populations
- Population health consequences of climate change

Environmental health

Practical competences (small selection):

- Monitor and interpret environmental exposures as to its potential consequence on health on individual and population level
- Perform risk and health impact assessment associated with components of the physical, radiological, chemical and biological environment, including the effects of climate change
- Perform appropriate population dietary assessments, including data collection, analysis and interpretation
- Develop public health strategies, including risk management programmes, based on evidence from empirical environmental studies
- Design, conduct, analyse and report on a study or an intervention or an observational study, concerning relationships between the material environment and health