

PARTNERSHIPS AND PUBLIC HEALTH

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Introduction: Partnerships in public health play a critical role for effectively addressing public health issues and challenges, improving outcomes, ensuring preparedness and responding to emergencies and pandemics. A partnership is a collaboration that brings together different stakeholders and partners, various sectors within the government and outside it with academic institutions, private industry, international and national agencies and civil society and community groups that combine expertise, resources, and reach different groups to address complex public health issues.

Objectives and Methods: The aim of work is to present the work of key partnerships in South East European region and their role in public health in this region.

Results: The main stakeholders in the region are government with ministries of health and social affairs or welfares and public health institutes, ministries of agriculture and veteranry issues and veteranry or food safety institutes and other emergency operation agencies that set health policies, lead public health initiatives, and coordinate responses to health crises.

International public health agencies such as WHO, ECDC, HERA or others such as CDC, USA, SEEHN or SECID are part of global health partnerships governments partner with to combat global health threats such as infectious diseases, pandemics coordinate research, and share resources.

Universities and research institutions are also at the forefront of public health research, contributing to the development of diagnostic tools, vaccines, therapies, and health policy or strategic solutions. Academic institutions often collaborate with health agencies to analyze epidemiological data and inform policy decisions or prepare policy documents.

Others such as NGOs, civil societies and grass roots organisations play a critical role in providing healthcare services, advocacy, and capacity-building, especially in under-resourced areas. They also help to bridge gaps in public health systems.

Conclusions: Government agencies have enforced public health measures, allocated funding, and mobilized resources during emergencies (e.g., COVID-19 and the vaccination efforts). Academic partnerships have provided evidence-based guidance, developed new technologies, and trained future public health professionals. While international partnerships have helped to face crisis and further develop our public health surveillance systems.

Collaboration between governments, NGOs, research institutions, industries, private sector and communities enables a more comprehensive and effective approach to addressing public health challenges. These partnerships are particularly critical in times of crisis, such as during pandemics, when a coordinated, multi-sector response is essential to save lives and mitigate health risks. But we need to establish them before the crisis is going on.