



1. Background

These Terms of Reference are the outcome of the decisions and agreements of the Intermediate Steering Group and the participants of the 1st meeting of HEPA Europe, held on 26-27 May 2005 in Gerlev (Denmark). Amendments have been endorsed at the 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 6th and 10th annual meeting, respectively.

2. Purpose of the Terms of Reference

The purpose of this document is to provide a framework for the establishment and the functioning of HEPA Europe, the European network for the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity (hereafter, the Network, www.euro.who.int/hepa/europe) and to describe the strategic, technical and operational focus of its work.

3. Vision, goals and objectives of the Network

The vision of the Network is to achieve better health through physical activity among all people in Europe. Its goal is to strengthen and support efforts and actions that increase participation and improve the conditions favourable to a healthy lifestyle, in particular with respect to health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA). The objectives are to:

- promote a better understanding of health-enhancing physical activity and give a stronger voice to physical activity promotion in health policy and in other relevant sectors in Europe, including support for workforce development;
- develop, support, and disseminate effective strategies and multi-sectoral approaches in the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity;
- foster the preservation and creation of social and physical environments as well as values and lifestyles supportive of health-enhancing physical activity; and
- together with other relevant institutions and organizations, improve coordination in physical activity promotion across sectors and administrative structures.

4. Programme of work

The programme of work provides an overview of the main planned events and activities of the Network. The programme is adopted by the members of the Network at their annual meetings, based on a proposal developed by the HEPA Steering Committee.

5. Target members of the Network

Membership is open to organizations and institutions of regional, national or international importance willing to contribute to the goals and objectives of the Network. These may include (non-exhaustive list):

- government bodies (e.g. ministries, agencies) at the national and sub-national level involved with the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity (e.g. ministries of health, sports, education, transport, agencies for health promotion, etc.);
- research and other scientific institutions; and
- nongovernmental organizations.

6. Membership of the Network

There are three types of membership, including:

- Members
- Individual members (upon invitation by the Steering Committee¹)
- Observers

All members have the same responsibilities towards the Network.

6.1 Organizational members

Interested organizations and institutions are eligible to become members, if they fulfil the following criteria of membership:

- Signature of the Letter of Intent
- Provision of the necessary information as specified in the application questionnaire
- Appointment of a contact person
- Compliance with the responsibilities of their membership as set out in these terms of reference

Organizations and institutions whose activities or goals are contradictory to the goals and standards of HEPA Europe and WHO are not eligible for membership in HEPA Europe.

Member organizations must not have any direct or indirect relationship with organizations or industries that counteract WHO's health aims, recommendations or ethical standards (e.g. tobacco industry or others). Applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

6.2 Individual members

Interested individuals are eligible to become members upon invitation by the Steering Committee¹. The same eligibility criteria apply for individuals as for organisations.

6.3 Observers

In exceptional circumstances, observer status will be granted. This may be, for example, to ensure strong links with other organisations or individuals, or in case eligibility for full membership is not given. Members of other global or regional physical activity promotion networks recognized by HEPA Europe can also apply for observer status in HEPA Europe. Observers do not have active or passive voting rights and are not eligible for reduced participation fees in HEPA Europe events.

6.4 Membership

Applications will be assessed by the Steering Committee. Successful applicants will be given a status of temporary members, until confirmation by the Network at its next annual meeting. Following that meeting, accepted Members will receive an official letter of acceptance.

Members of the Network are expected to contribute to the goals and objectives of the Network (see also point 7.4 below). Although the Network decided that no compulsory membership fee will be requested from its members, it strongly encourages and welcomes voluntary forms of contributions either on a regular basis or as a single contribution.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 WHO

The WHO Regional Office for Europe has been invited and has accepted to act as the Secretariat of the Network. The Secretariat commits to ensure that appropriate resources are available to fulfil the defined tasks. The role and responsibilities of the Secretariat are described in separate Terms of Reference of the Secretariat.

7.2 Steering Committee

The role and responsibilities of the Steering Committee are described in the separate Terms of Reference of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is accountable to the Network.

¹ All criteria of membership and responsibilities apply also to interested individuals, but for the sake of clarity, only institutions and organizations are mentioned in the text.

7.3 Task Forces and Working Groups

Ad-hoc task forces and working groups may be established based on a proposal by the Steering Committee to be endorsed by the annual meeting of the Network, for example to facilitate the implementation of specific projects and activities, as agreed in the programme of work of the Network. The Terms of Reference of these task forces and working groups will be defined according to the specific needs of the tasks to be implemented.

7.4 Members of the Network

By joining the Network, members express their willingness and commitment to contribute to the goals and objectives of the Network.

By joining the Network, members also agree to:

- fulfil the criteria for membership;
- apply for membership by providing the information required in the application form;
- contribute to the Network, through technical or other contributions as appropriate, to support the implementation of the Network activities, as described in the programme of work; and
- disseminate resources (information and other products) from the Network to their partners.

For members for which no current contact person could be identified within six months (see also point 6), membership will be terminated.

Members can refer to their membership on their organization's websites and in their annual reports. In both cases, the mention should be factual and should be made in a technical context related to work in the area of HEPA Europe. The mention should not be made in a manner that suggests an overall endorsement by HEPA Europe of the activities of the member organization. Accordingly the mention should not be in the opening page of a website, or on the cover of an annual report, or otherwise in a promotional manner. The mention should not include the use of the WHO emblem.

Commercial and other members of HEPA Europe may not use their membership status in a way that is contradictory to the goals and standards of HEPA Europe and WHO.

Members of the Network have the right to withdraw from the Network any time if they do not wish to continue their membership by giving one month's notice in writing.

8. Resources

The network has no compulsory membership fee. However, the network strongly encourages and welcomes voluntary contributions, either on a regular basis or as a single contribution, such as:

- financial contributions;
- in-kind contributions in terms of time and expertise, e.g. through the participation in the Steering Committee, working groups or projects;
- hosting of meetings of the network or working groups;
- clearing house function for the collection of documents or case studies; or
- representation of the HEPA Europe network at expert meetings and conferences.

Contributions made to the Network do not imply a commitment for further contributions by the donors.

The general financing strategy is described in a separate document.

9. Interactions and meetings

9.1. Annual meetings of the Network

The Network members are invited to the annual meeting of the Network which is usually hosted by a member. The purpose of these meetings is to:

- review and discuss recent, relevant international developments as well as national approaches with regard to physical activity (PA) promotion,
- accept new members;
- elect the members of the Steering Committee;
- decide upon changes in the Terms of References of the Network or its financing;
- adopt the annual work plan;
- review progress on ongoing activities;
- establish new ad-hoc task forces and working groups (see 7.3) as necessary.

9.2 Meetings of ad-hoc task forces and working group

Under the coordination and guidance of the secretariat, meetings will be organized as needed.

9.3 Collaboration with other relevant international organizations and institutions

In order to support collaboration with other international organisations and institutions, the Steering Committee may establish new structures and organisational bodies to promote linkages, communication and regular exchange.

9.4 Other, topic oriented meetings

Other topic oriented meetings, e.g. congresses or conferences, can be recommended, supported, or organized by the Network upon decision by the Steering Committee.