

The second meeting of the EHP on Risk Reduction in the School Environment

Healthy schools: from evidence base to intervention

online meeting (draft agenda)

Coordinator: National Center for Public Health and Pharmacy, Hungary

Date: 8–9 May 2025

Time: from 14:00–17:00, 8 May 2025 to 9:00–13:00, 9 May 2025 (CEST)

Scope and purpose

Healthy school environment is fundamental for the protection of children's health and for optimising learning outcomes. SDG 4a. calls countries to "build and upgrade education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all". The WHO European Environment and Health Process also prioritises children's health since 2004. By adopting the Budapest Declaration at the 7th Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, environment and health ministers of the pan-European Region committed to improve indoor air quality to reduce children's exposure to chemical hazards and to ensure equitable access to safe water and sanitation services in all settings.

The evidence of school environmental impacts on health and learning outcomes is well established, through a extensive international research. Through the work of WHO and its partners, this knowledge – both on indoor air quality and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) – has been translated into practical tools and other resources that are available to all countries in the WHO European Region. However, the uptake of good practices lags in many countries.

At the 7th Ministerial Conference, a new mechanism was established to support the implementation of the regional commitments in the form of Environment and Health Process (EHP) Partnerships. The EHP Partnership risk reduction in school environments was established with the leadership of Hungary to support peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing on existing good practices between countries and other partners. The current partners are Belarus, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Luxemburg, Montenegro and the Republic of Moldova. The present meeting is an opportunity for identifying such good practices on regulating, monitoring and improving school environments and means of awareness raising of school staff, parents and pupils.

Draft agenda

Chairs: Éva Csobod, Marta Vargha

Day 1 - 8 May	
14:00-14.15	<p>Welcome and introduction</p> <p>Orsolya Surján, deputy chief medical officer, National Center for Public Health and Pharmacy</p> <p>WHO Regional Office for Europe representative (tbc)</p> <p>Haris Hajruhalovic, head of the WHO Country Office of Hungary</p> <p>Francesca Racioppi, Head of the WHO Bonn Office</p> <p>Introduction: scope, objective and expected outcomes of the 2nd meeting Tamás Pándics, director, National Center for Public Health and Pharmacy, Hungary</p>
14:15 -14:45	<p>Setting the scene: Healthy schools in the European Environment and Health Process, speaker: Irina Zastenskaya, senior expert, WHO Europe, Bonn Office,</p>
	<p>Session 1: Building on the evidence base</p> <p>Environment and health research: activities and projects in schools in the WHO European Region. <i>Dr. Tamás Pándics</i></p> <p>Case study of a European international project in schools. <i>Éva Csobod, Hungary</i></p>
15.20- 16.50	<p>Session 2: National case studies</p> <p>Good practices on indoor air quality, drinking water and sanitation in schools (including cooperation of the environment, health, education, transport, energy, etc sectors). Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belarus: Alena Drazdova (subs.Tanya Pronina Nikolaevna): Water and Health in schools • Georgia: Robizon Tsiklauri: Environment and health in schools in Georgia • Germany: Wolfram Birmili: Indoor quality in public buildings in Germany – current challenges and ways for improvement • Hungary: Anna Páldy: Children’s respiratory health - nationwide surveys (tbc) • Luxemburg: Caroline Eicher (subs.Laurence Wurth):Indoor air projects in schools in Luxemburg • Moldova: Ion Salaru: WASH in schools in Moldova • Montenegro: Borko Bajić: Sanitation - good practices in preschool settings
16.50-17.15	<p>Moderated general discussion and closing of the day.</p>

Day 2 - 9 May	
9.00- 9.15	Opening of the day: EHP Partnership on risk reduction in school environment (indoor air quality, drinking water and sanitation). Short summary of the Day 1.
9.15- 10.15	Session 3: Tools and mitigation measures (methods, monitoring, data bases for assessment), speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive guidance for schools in Germany, Wolfram Birmili (tbc) • Guidelines and checklist for schools, Dr. Tamás Szigeti, Hungary • WASH tools developed under the Protocol on Water and Health, WHO Bonn Office (tbc) General discussion: Existing good practices which could be taken up by the partners.
10.15-10.45	
10.45- 11.00	Coffee and health break
11.00- 11.45	Session 4: Risk communication and awareness raising (for teachers, children, parents, technical staff of schools, etc). Speaker: tbc Moderated discussion: Main country priorities for risk communication. What is the role of media?
11:45 -12:15	General discussion: What are the proposed future activities of the partnership?
12:15 -12:30	Wrap-up and closing.