



**BUILDING ACADEMIC CAPACITY  
IN GLOBAL HEALTH IN THE EASTERN  
EUROPE - CENTRAL ASIA REGION**



Eurasian Academic Alliance for Global Health



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

## ***Quarterly Bulletin of the Eurasian Academic Alliance for Global Health Quarter 3, 2023***

The Eurasian Academic Alliance for Global Health was established under the auspices of the project - *Building Academic Capacity in Global Health in the Eastern Europe & Central Asia Regions (BACE)* - supported by the European Commission's Erasmus+ programme. In the context of the Alliance - *Eurasia* is defined as a group of countries located in the Baltic Sea, Eastern Mediterranean, Black Sea, Caspian Sea and the Central Asia regions.

BACE is implemented by a partnership of eleven academic institutions:

- Heidelberg Institute of Global Health, Germany (Coordinator)
- Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Kazakhstan
- Astana Medical University, Kazakhstan
- Batumi State University, Georgia
- Bergen University, Norway
- National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, Ukraine
- Tbilisi, Institute of Global Health, Georgia
- Tbilisi State University, Georgia
- Ternopil National Medical University, Ukraine
- University of Georgia
- University of Tromsø, Norway

BACE is aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- Developing curricula and delivering new courses on priority global health topics with specific focus on countries in the Eurasia region;
- Developing curricula and delivering new courses on global health research methods at BACE beneficiary universities;
- Establishing the Eurasian Academic Alliance for Global Health.

The Alliance serves as a collaborative platform on global health education and research among academic institutions of the Eurasian region. Academic institutions from and outside the region, interested in expanding collaboration on global health education and research, are encouraged to join the Alliance. Information is available on the Alliance's web page:

[www.allianceforglobalhealth.net](http://www.allianceforglobalhealth.net)

The Quarterly Bulletin is a dissemination instrument for updates on the Alliance's activities and BACE implementation, as well as various developments in the area of global health.

The Alliance looks forward to welcoming new members and to establishing productive collaboration with interested partners.

## Updates from the Alliance

The term of the current board chair and the secretariat of the Alliance approaches its conclusion in the upcoming months. The Alliance eagerly waits for the anticipated shift in the leadership. We believe a new era of management will continue making progress in fostering a robust professional network.

The board meeting will be held online on December 12, 2023. The main agenda of this meeting is to select a new board chair and secretariat to serve for the next three years.

The Alliance, a dynamic network comprising both organizations and individual members engaged in global health initiatives, operates on a global scale with its roots in the Eastern European and Central Asian region. For a comprehensive overview, kindly visit the Alliance's official website at [www.allianceforglobalhealth.net](http://www.allianceforglobalhealth.net).

## International Partnerships in Global Health



# EUROPEAN HEALTH FORUM GASTEIN

Established in 1998, the European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) stands as an independent organization with a distinct mission. It serves as a neutral and inclusive platform, fostering discussions among key stakeholders to contribute to the progression of health, solidarity, and equity not only within the European Union but also on a global scale. Since its inception, EHFG has been dedicated to its goal, hosting a myriad of events, including conferences and forums, with up to 900 delegates in attendance. These delegates collectively represent a diverse spectrum, encompassing civil society, academia, media, as well as public and private sectors.

EHFG actively engages in various projects and events that attract professionals from across the globe. Noteworthy ongoing activities in 2023 include the European Health Leadership Award 2023, the European Health Union initiative, the Women in Global Health, and the Health Futures program. In addition to these initiatives, the Young Forum Gastein (YFG) has emerged as a supportive avenue for young professionals seeking forum membership. This initiative aids over 550 individuals in harnessing benefits for their professional development.

For comprehensive details about EHFG, membership particulars, and additional opportunities, please visit the official website: <https://www.ehfg.org/>.

## **Emerging Challenges of Global Health Importance**

Mental health has emerged as a substantial contributor to global health challenges, impacting individuals with illnesses, disabilities, and premature mortality. Those with mental health disorders often confront severe human rights violations, enduring stigma, and discrimination, leading to social isolation, a compromised quality of life, and, in certain instances, economic setbacks.

According to data from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, 970 million individuals, approximately 13% of the global population, were affected by mental health disorders in the pre-COVID era (2019). Predominantly, anxiety, depression, and developmental disorders were the three most prevalent conditions, affecting 31%, 29%, and 11% of the population, respectively. Moreover, there has been a notable increase in alcohol and substance use disorders globally. As the global population ages, an additional burden of mental health issues, including dementia and Alzheimer's disease, is observed among the older demographic.

Recent global events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and severe regional conflicts, particularly impacting the Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) region, compound the challenges faced by those with mental health disorders on a global scale.

For further exploration of global mental health agenda, please visit the following websites:

Mental health metrics from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation:

<https://www.healthdata.org/research-analysis/health-risks-issues/mental-health>

WHO “Mental health of refugees and migrants: risk and protective factors and access to care”:

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240081840>

WHO “World mental health report: transforming mental health for all”

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240049338>

## **Innovation in Global Health**

### **Telehealth in Mental Health Services**

Altopax stands at the forefront of innovation, leveraging telehealth to address the challenges associated with accessing mental health services. This groundbreaking approach opens avenues for individuals seeking mental health support to engage in group therapy online, facilitated by avatars equipped with 3D real-life mimics. This transformative methodology ensures that patients receive effective mental health services while overcoming geographical barriers and safeguarding confidentiality.

The founders of Altopax propose that this innovative platform can achieve the following:

- Construct highly specific groups by prioritizing confidentiality, as they create a secure platform that facilitates the formation of highly specific and tailored therapy groups.
- Deliver measurement-based care
- Deliver better-matched care with a specialty network driving strong therapeutic alliance.
- Assign personalized homework, psychoeducation, and skill-building. The platform goes beyond traditional therapy by assigning personalized homework, offering psychoeducation, and facilitating skill-building exercises to enhance the overall therapeutic experience.

Visit the website for more information:

<https://www.altopax.com/>

### **Innovation in the Management of Brain Health**

As the global population ages, the demand for specialized healthcare services to address age-related chronic diseases, particularly mental and cognitive disorders, continues to rise. Unfortunately, effective curative solutions for many of these conditions remain elusive. Consequently, a growing number of older individuals experience a diminished quality of life, leading to a substantial economic burden.

Mindmaze addresses these challenges by combining its FDA-cleared digital therapeutics, combining them with motion analytics, artificial intelligence, and cloud technologies. The overarching aim is to establish a comprehensive platform for promoting brain health."

Visit the website for more information:

<https://mindmaze.com/>