

First Public Health Early Career Researcher Day, Center for Public Health, 26/01/2023

The First Public Health ECR Day was opened by welcoming words from the Head of the Center for Public Health, Prof Anita Rieder, highlighting the value of continuous peer-exchange and fostering opportunities for research collaborations in the interdisciplinary landscape of Public Health.

To break the ice between attendees, we started the event with an 'Icebreaker session'. Every five minutes two ECRs paired up and were asked to introduce themselves to colleagues based on suggested questions provided by the organising team. For 45 minutes, we all were able to learn more about our peer's research, favourite work snacks, their future autobiography's title, or attempted to explain our research as if we were talking to a 5-year-old. Taken together, the Icebreaker session has been a great success in connecting ECRs across departments and institutions and in making the next sessions less anonymous.

The first presentation session of the ECR day included three speakers (all of them either Public Health PhD students or preparing to enrol), who gave 10-minute overviews of their prospective PhD projects. Isabel Santonja spoke about the association of meal-timing patterns and chronic disease prevalence based on Austria data. Carmen Rehm presented results from her work on vibrio cholerae at Austrian bathing sites. Lastly, Maria-Christine Mautner introduced her planned project about the impact of nutritional, physical and psychological interventions on (pre-)diabetic patients. All presentations inspired questions and comments from the audience that led to discussions.

Writing and winning competitive research grants is getting an increasingly important skill for ECRs. We therefore invited Susanne Friedl

and Astrid Pils of the Research Service (Medical University of Vienna) to introduce Austrian and EU-wide funding opportunities for ECRs. Their presentation not only provided valuable information but was also encouraging attendees to realise their own research ideas by applying for funding opportunities (with surprisingly high success rates). Next in this session, Igor Grabovac was invited to share his experience of the ingredients of a successful grant proposal: finding a network, ECRs, time, call parameters & grey literature, courage & persistence, and, lastly, how to force some luck.



In the second ECR presentation session, Susanne Drexler presented her results of a systematic literature review about patient reported experience measures (PREMs) and patient reported outcome measures (PROMs) in primary care and talked about future steps of her research project. Silvia Wojczewski presented the concept of the MigraCare project which is about to start in 2024. This project focuses on the working conditions and well-being of migrant live-in care workers. In the last session, Selam Woldemariam presented her study proposal on the effect of frailty on disability trajectories in community-

dwelling older adults using data from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE). Each presentation was followed by short discussions wherein the presenters had the opportunity to brainstorm with the audience about any emerging ideas regarding their research projects or where they could receive additional input.

Wrapping up the day, a session of 'Powerpoint Karaoke' was organized for a smooth transition from the scientific to the social part of the event. Brave volunteering attendees were randomly chosen and assigned a slide deck they had never seen before. They were then asked to use their improvisational skills for an (inevitably) entertaining presentation. All members performed their task admirably which led to a humorous end of the ECR day's last session.

Finally, we concluded the day in a café where attendees had a chance to continue discussions, brainstorm ideas, or simply have a good time.

The organising team thanks the Center for Public Health for supporting this event and is looking very much forward to hosting the second Public Health ECR Day. Stay tuned!

The organising team

Claudia, Daniel, Dennis, Kyriaki, Moritz, Paul, Stefanie (in alphabetical order)