

**REPORT**  
**SHORT TERM SCIENTIFIC MISSION**  
**27-05-2014**

**Host Institution:** Ferdinand Porsche Distance Learning University of Applied Sciences in Vienna (Austria)

**Duration:** from 12-05-2014 to 16-05-2014

**Supervisor:** Karin Waldherr, D.Sc. M.Sc.

**Participant:**

Jurate Grubliauskiene, Klaipeda University (Lithuania). Positions: PhD student in social sciences (educology), lecturer at Department of Public Health, and Director of Public Health Bureau in Klaipeda City together with colleague Rita Vaicekauskaite, Klaipeda University (Lithuania). Positions: Head of Research and Arts Affairs Office, Senior Research Fellow at Faculty of Health Sciences.

**STSM title:** Evaluation of health promotion interventions around appearance-related issues.

**The aim:** Development and evaluation of public health promotion and education: integration of appearance issues within public health promotion programs.

**Objectives:**

To know structure and management of public health promotion in Austria and Vienna city. To make comparative analysis on public health promotion in Austria and Lithuania.

To know about integration of appearance issues within public health promotion programs.

To know about methodological instruments to evaluate implementation processes and effectiveness of health promotion and education integrating appearance phenomenon.

**Activities:**

Meeting with staff in Ferdinand Porsche Distance Learning University of Applied Sciences. Supervision by Karin Waldherr.

Everyday discussions, overviews, comparative analysis, and narrative construction with Karin Waldherr.

Vienna Health Promotion (WiG). Meeting with Ursula Huebel, Coordinator Vienna Healthy City Project – Healthy Aging and Health Promoting Hospitals. Supervision by Karin Waldherr.

Ludwig Boltzmann Institute Health Promotion Research. Meeting with Wolfgang Duer (Director), Rosemarie Felder-Puig, PhD (Key Researcher Health Promoting Schools), and Edith Flaschberger, PhD (Senior Researcher Health Promoting Schools). Supervision by Karin Waldherr.

Women's Health Programme of the City of Vienna. Meeting with Prof. Beate Wimmer-Puchinger, Commissioner for Women's Health, City of Vienna, and Deputy Head Michaela Langer (MSc). Supervision by Karin Waldherr.

Everyday self-independent work with materials, field-notes.

**Joint developed meta-analysis of outcomes in activities.** We have experienced that the structure of public health promotion in Austria is less formalized than it is in Lithuania. Therefore in order to get a systematic picture and knowledge it was very important to talk to people who work in this field.

Both countries developed activities which are important for screening and monitoring on national and international levels. For example, both countries are engaged in international survey "Health Behavior in School Aged Children" (HBSC, by WHO). However, in both countries there is a lack of public and in particular political awareness of the data the monitoring can provide. We find out that in both countries it is difficult to make impact on political decisions level. Discussion with Wolfgang Duer helped to understand difficulties in making expected impact on political decision level.

Public health promotion and education cover full range in different ages of population and cover wide range of problematic areas as follows: children, healthy aging, women, and screening programs for women breast cancer prevention, networking for healthy schools, healthy hospitals, healthy workplaces and healthy kindergartens. Vienna Health Promotion participates in international Healthy City network since early 1990s; and had a leadership status for the first decade. Some programs connect different generations, i.e. elderly people taught children cooking. Some programs cover very specific problems that are prevalent among migrants' women.

Appearance issues are already integrated into health promotion programs which are helpful twofold: arise public awareness and provide help for individuals. We have learned about the very successfully developed telephone hotline for eating disorders which was implemented by Women's Health Programme of the City of Vienna in 1998 and now is part of the Vienna Health Promotion program. Vienna was the first European city which offered a low-threshold contact point for eating disorders. During ten years professional consultations on telephone were provided for 18.000 clients. The significant achievement is that clients have "shorter history" of eating disorder when they call for the first time; therefore, it is easier to help them and easier to be more effective. This is considered as significant achievement of the hotline. We consider the model and experience of the program as significant to apply in Klaipeda city through integration into already working hot-line for youth. Women's Health Programme also has many prevention activities. A competition in schools called 'We like everyBODY' focused on appearance issues. Pupils were asked to create a PR-campagne against the cult of thinness and for a healthy body image.

We were introduced with PhD work about health promotion in Austrian schools by Edith Flaschberger from Ludwig Boltzmann Institute Health Promotion Research. We are glad we

have got PhD material from Edith Flaschberger. Her work is very helpful to understand health education in schools, and healthy school networking using scientific insights.

We have discussed methodological background for eating disorders, body dissatisfaction, with Karin Waldherr. She explained her experience with questionnaires she worked and the validation of them. With Michaela Langer we discussed about questionnaires of body dissatisfaction in 11-16 years old children, and relationship between body dissatisfaction with participation in learning processes. We arranged to continue to talk about questionnaires using distance communication means.

We have learned that there are great variety of public health promotion programs for elderly people as target group in both countries. However, from discussions with Karin Waldherr we understood that programs regarding specific topics such as malnutrition, frailty and eating disorders are under development. Karin's experience tells that it is very difficult to work with elderly people, because they lack awareness of eating disorders as being serious one. As earlier eating disorders have not been under public promotion programs, there is a lack in continuity of these services. However, nowadays' services are building significant potential for future continuity in the eating disorders field. Ferdinand Porsche Distance Learning University of Applied Sciences in Vienna started to develop a Bachelor program for service management for elderly people. That will be helpful to strengthen scientific background and to extent scope of public health services for elderly people. That is a great potential for professionalization of evaluation for program effectiveness and efficiency. In addition, Ferdinand Porsche Distance Learning University of Applied Sciences in Vienna has plans to establish a Third Age University with distance learning programs. Klaipeda University has almost ten year experience of working with Third Age University. We could share good practice. We see that Klaipeda University in future collaboration of Ferdinand Porsche Distance Learning University of Applied Sciences could extend Third Age University programs on a distance learning, or blended-learning form.

Evaluation of public health promotion services have not been well defined yet in Austria. We discussed that evaluation is a problem in Lithuanian health promotion as well. In many cases evaluation is organized, firstly, around outcome of the action, which represents the piece of work that was produced, and secondly, the action itself is evaluated, meaning the actual processes that lead to the completion of the specific task. In some cases quality management systems are used for evaluation, in particular in such organizations as schools. Wolfgang Duer's insights helped to understand the need for *professionalization in evaluation*. This highlights the importance of creating systemic models, which should be based on scientific knowledge, such as theories, that help us to act and engage in our daily work life.

We have learned that public health promotion study programs in Austrian universities are scarce. Two universities offer postgraduate Public Health Master programs. A few Universities of Applied Sciences offer Bachelor and Master programs for health care management. That is one of the reasons why health promotion and education lack comprehensive discourse here in Austria. All aforementioned institutions demonstrate strong motivation and need to cooperate with scientists in planning and implementing health promotion programs. However, mainly separate scholars from psychology, sociology, pedagogy, and medicine are engaged in

collaboration. For further development of evaluation for health promotion interventions it is important to have more health promotion study programs at university level. Klaipeda University have BA and MA degree programs for Public Health Promotion, Management and Education for almost decades. We could share experience of public health study programs realization and impact they make for public health practice and evaluation.

We find out Austrian model of health promotion as praxeology-oriented, and that consists the main difference from Lithuanian model, which we consider management-oriented. However, evaluation continues to have common problems in Austria and Lithuania. In many cases evaluation is based on measuring *effectiveness* which simply describes whether a planned effect is achieved in the initially set goal. Thus, effectiveness is to be evaluated on a scale from zero to full achievement of the goal. Both countries challenge the lack of systematic tools to measure how *efficient* health promotion services are. Due to its economic roots, efficiency is a very important criterion for the evaluation. In both countries scientific knowledge are employed for measuring effectiveness and efficiency. Furthermore, more implementation studies should be conducted which analyze the processes regarding advantageous and hindering factors for health promotion programs in different settings.

**Results.** We have successfully achieved the aim and defined objectives during STSM.

**Personal reflections.** I am glad to know about good practices in public health promotion that focus on the effectiveness of programs and services. The experience and knowledge I have gained during STSM is very helpful to strengthen my leadership competencies which I am obligated to fulfill in my position as Director of Public Health Bureau in Klaipeda City. Leadership phenomenon is gaining significant attention in public health promotion development. I have learned significant insights from immediate communication about leadership and authority. Moreover, what I have learned about public health promotion services is important for expanding new and strengthening existing public health promotion services in Lithuania. In particular, I have learned significant experience for development public health promotion services for eating disorders, appearance dissatisfaction. As PhD student I have gained new ideas for PhD research development and more mature literacy in the field of health sciences. An interesting experience was to recognize how scientific knowledge are integrated with everyday services of public health promotion. I am glad to know certain cases when public health promotion services are based and evaluated employing scientific knowledge and research methods. As a scholar and as a practitioner I have learned about the need of professionalization in evaluation of public health promotion services. Throughout my participation in STSM I have gained significant experience for future scientific and professional activities cooperation. We were two colleagues in STSM and that enabled to make more significant insights and to make more mature gained experience. This STSM gave me above and beyond of what I expected.

**Future collaboration.** Over the course of the STSM we find out a real potential for research collaborations within the area of health promotion and education, integrating the issue of eating disorders, appearance dissatisfaction, and body image. We learned that aforementioned visited public health promotion institutions in Vienna have many consistent experience with Klaipeda University Health Sciences Faculty and Klaipeda's Public Health Bureau in the field of public health promotion and education. We see possibilities to create strategic partnership and/or knowledge alliance in a framework of Erasmus plus program. Moreover, we consider as

purposeful exchange visit to Klaipeda University from the side of Vienna, in particular by Karin Waldherr. This would be helpful to strengthen cross-cultural background with consistent awareness for strategic future collaboration.

**Final comments.** Overall, we found the STSM to be a very useful experience. We used this valuable opportunity to begin to strengthen exciting and to develop new important research collaborations. We are very grateful to Karin Waldherr, who organized interesting STSM for us. We have gained significant insights and experiences and we hope colleagues we have talked to enjoyed hearing about the experience from Lithuania. We look forward to our future research collaborations.

**Confirmation by the host institution of the successful execution of the STSM.** I declare that Jurate Grubliauskiene stayed at Ferdinand Porsche Distance Learning University of Applied Sciences during her STSM period and participated to all the above described activities. Her stay with our group was very satisfying both from the scientific and personal point of view.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Karin Waldherr", followed by a stylized flourish.