TO-REACH : what is it, what does it aim to achieve and how will this be done?
A short summary of a long history

This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 733274.

ERA-NET in Horizon 2020
Health systems and policy research in Europe: Horizon 2020

Kieran Walsh, Martin McKee, Mark McCarthy, Peter Groenewegen, Johan Hansen, Josep Figueras, Walter Ricciardi

Europe is a natural laboratory for learning about health policies and health systems. With diverse systems to finance, provide, and govern health care across the 27 member states of the European Union and the wider European region there are many opportunities for international comparative analyses and natural experiments. Health-care costs, quality, and outcomes vary widely, which strongly suggests that there is enormous potential for European research into health systems to enable countries
Why is the problem urgent and why is it important?

Health systems are facing common challenges:

✓ a changing disease burden coupled with population ageing
✓ accelerated advances in bio-medical technology
✓ growing consumer expectations and respecting people’s needs, wants and preferences
✓ the need to ensure that any such technology is used effectively and appropriately and at a cost that is affordable,
✓ shortages, frustrated and the uneven distribution of health and care professionals
✓ persistent and rising health inequalities and inequities
✓ financial pressures on economies

Source: Nolte et al. (2018)
Why is the problem urgent and why is it important?

Health systems differ widely among EU member States but share common principles:

✓ **Differences** in finance, organisation, outcomes (part of - and subject to - wider political, cultural, economic environment)

✓ European countries and their health systems **share common values** with regards to **patient safety, social protection, social cohesion and social justice as well as to sustainable development**.

✓ **The common goal** is to ensure accessible health care to citizens that is safe and reliable, of high quality, responsive, equitable, affordable and financially sustainable

Source: Nolte et al. (2018)
What has been already funded by the EU

- H2020 WP responding to the societal challenge 1 on health, demographic change and well being is focusing on **Personalised Medicine**

- Public Health Research Actions funded by the EU (540 millions € put for FP7 and H2020) in 3 main research areas:
  - Population health, among others relating to informed lifestyle choices
  - Health systems, among others relating to integrated care, health workforce needs, patient empowerment and comparative effectiveness research, also making better use of big data.
  - Global health, among others relating to universal health coverage, access to quality health care, maternal and child health and health systems strengthening
Towards a Joint Research Programme on health services and systems

**TO-REACH CSA**
(Coordination & Support Action)

**TO-REACH**
Joint Research Programme

Strategic Research Agenda (SRA) & Joint Funders Structure

New HSR studies to be funded in partner countries

Requires MS and European level alignment and commitment

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Project Management Team
Project Consortium

- Coordination and Support Action (CSA) - Horizon 2020
- Coordinated by Istituto Superiore di Sanita (ISS)
- PI Prof W. Ricciardi (ISS)
- 19 Government and Funding Bodies
- 6 National Research Organisations
- 3 European Level Organisations

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The consortium

28 partners
20 countries

Europe

USA and Canada
The TO-REACH consortium

Chairled by Prof Walter Ricciardi, President of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità), the EU-funded TO-REACH project consists of 27 partners, clustered around three main types:

- At the core are Ministerial and/or funding bodies from 15 EU Member States and 5 non-EU countries, all seeking to fund research that has the potential to change how care is being provided in the near or distant future.
  a. the Istituto Superiore di Sanità (the Italian National Institute of Health), coordinator,
  b. Ministero della Salute, Italy
  c. Agenas, national Agency for regional health services, Italy;
  d. ZonMw (Netherlands Organisation for Health Research & Development), the Netherlands;
  e. Austrian Public Health Institute (GÖG), Austria
  f. Academy of Finland, Finland;
  g. IReSP/ITMO santé publique, France;
  h. Health Research Board, Ireland;
  i. Latvian Council of Science, Latvia;
  j. Research Council of Norway, Norway;
  k. Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT) Portugal;
  l. National Institute of Public Health, Slovenia;
  m. Forte, Swedish Research Council for Health, Working Life and Welfare, Sweden;
  n. Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH), Switzerland;
  o. Health and Care Research Wales, UK;
  p. Regional Agency for Public Health and Social Well-being (PHA) HSCNI, Northern Ireland UK;
  q. CIHR Institute of HSPR, Canada;
  r. Israeli Ministry of Health, Israel;
  s. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), United States.

- National research organisations, able to identify methodological guidance for a future research programme and mapping shared priority areas between countries and stakeholders in those countries.
  a. NIVEL, Netherlands organisation for health services research, the Netherlands;
  b. National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), Finland;
  c. University of Riga (RSU), Latvia;
  d. University of Malta (UoM), Malta;
  e. Babeș-Bolyai University (UBBCU), Romania;
  f. Catholic University of Sacred Heart (UCSC), Italy.

- European level bodies, able to contribute to part of the scientific preparations as well as well-positioned to identify fellow bodies and initiatives which require alignment.
  a. European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies;
  b. European Health Management Association (EHMA);
  c. European Public Health Association (EUPHA).
Project Aims

1. To support **evidence-informed decisions** by focusing on domains that will dominate policy agendas in the coming years

2. To answer fundamental questions about the **conditions** and **contextual factors** that are required for a given solution working in one setting to also work in other settings, and therefore inform the **transferability, absorptive capacity, and scalability of innovation**
Project Objectives

1. To identify health current and future health services and systems challenges and priorities by synthesising European and national roadmaps, ongoing research and stakeholder inputs;

2. To develop an analytical framework and provide a knowledge synthesis on the identification of service and policy innovation and the conditions needed for transferring, absorbing, up-scaling and enhancing performance;

3. To enhance sustainable cooperation by research funding bodies and their link with other existing or upcoming funders networks and to prepare a common and sustainable platform for funding organizations;

4. To contribute to research agenda setting at European and Member States’ level by developing a Strategic Research Agenda (SRA);

5. To disseminate and communicate the process and results of TO-REACH both in a targeted and wide manner.
Project Deliverables

1. **Map and analyse priorities**, common themes and gaps in research on good models of care provision in Europe

2. Structure an **analytical framework and knowledge synthesis** on the identification, transferability and scaling up of good models of care

3. Support **sustainability, international cooperation** and links with existing health-related initiatives

4. Develop a **Strategic Research Agenda**
The SRA will influence a future EU Joint European initiative

A future EU joint programme should be beneficial to at least three perspectives:

- **a policy perspective**, by helping decision makers to take the right direction.
- **a funding perspective**, to align limited resources and avoid duplication,
- **a scientific perspective** as it can help the EC, the Member States and the researchers to best incorporate this “delivery” element into translational research designs.

**to-reach**

**agenda for health services and systems research**

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**identifying new solutions** able to respond to rising challenges

**understanding and predicting whether such solutions can be implemented and transferred effectively** in other settings.
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Fit within Horizon Europe (2021-2027)

Specific objectives of the Programme

- Support the creation and diffusion of high-quality knowledge
- Strengthen the impact of R&I in supporting EU policies
- Foster all forms of innovation and strengthen market deployment

Optimise the Programme’s delivery for impact in a strengthened ERA

Pillar 1
Open Science

- European Research Council
- Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions
- Research Infrastructures

Pillar 2
Global Challenges and Industrial Competitiveness

- Clusters
  - Health
  - Inclusive & Secure Society
  - Digital and Industry
  - Climate, Energy and Mobility
  - Food and Natural Resources

- Joint Research Centre

Pillar 3
Open Innovation

- European Innovation Council
- European Innovation ecosystems
- European Institute of Innovation and Technology

Strengthening the European Research Area

- Sharing excellence
- Reforming and Enhancing the European R&I system

Health

- Health throughout the life course
- Environmental and social health determinants
- Non-communicable and rare diseases
- Infectious diseases
- Tools, technologies and digital solutions for health
- Health care systems

A window of opportunity for MAKING IT HAPPEN
Health (Services &) Systems Research as a Multidisciplinary Field of Health Research

Source: http://www.who.int/alliance-hpsr/alliancehpsr_backgroundpaperconceptualbarriersopportunities.pdf
Why an European partnership and cooperation-based approach is needed?

- To help identifying underlying patterns and trends to understand the problems and develop common solutions

- To generate new knowledge on effective ways of learning across health sector domains, disease areas and population groups and the transferability of innovations between them: EU as natural laboratory

- To enhance the competitive position of Europe in this research field

- To maximise value of research investment (reduce duplication and failed implementation; ensure systematic prioritisation of research area).

- To build a community with the capacity of supporting the roll out/scale up/transfer of service and policy innovation
A Stakeholders engaged process

- National Research Funding Bodies
- Regions and Local Health Authorities
- Health care providers
- Payer and Insurance organizations
- Scientific Community
- European and International organisations
- Citizen and patient plus caregiver organisations
November 2018
- First meeting of the SRA Task Force
- 11th EPH Conference

December 2018
- Brussels based NGO meeting to inform stakeholders

January 2019
- First outline to be shared with TO REACH partners and Policy Advisory Council and Scientific Advisory Council Members

February 2019
- First published SRA
- Open Consultation Process to collect inputs from stakeholders
Contacts

Learn more

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