

CYCLE 3 – Thematic Networks 2018



**Express your support for your
favourite Thematic Networks
at the EU Health Policy Platform!**

<https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/hpf/>

Every year, four Thematic Networks involving key EU health issues are selected. These temporary networks are open to all platform registered users and evolve into targeted discussions amongst health stakeholders, ultimately leading to the production of four Joint Statements. At the end of the cycle, each Thematic Network presents its Joint Statement during the EU Health Platform annual meeting. The purpose of these Joint Statements is to inform the European Commission of the expertise and perspectives of the European public health community and support it in its work.

In this booklet you will find the interesting Thematic Network proposals for the next cycle, starting in January 2018. A poll is open at the EU Policy Platform, where all registered users can express support for their favourite Thematic Networks.



#EUHPP
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Contact the EU Policy Platform Team

SANTE-HPP@ec.europa.eu



Network: Smart Healthy Age-Friendly Environments

Scope: Moving age-related topics to the big umbrella themes of Health and Digital Single Market is a vital process to pursue the societal scope of a Europe prepared to provide quality of life and well-being through the whole life cycle. The revitalization of Active and Healthy Ageing initiatives (preparing post2020) will imply high-level crossover discussion between different groups, networks, DGs, EIPs and even international organisations, understanding the symbiotic interdependence of these subjects towards a Healthy and Competitive Europe. This TM intends to create a high-level policy alignment of all these networks and initiatives towards Ageing subjects.

It aligns with **EU Health priorities** in creating synergies that will increase quality, innovation and sustainability towards the implementation of better health and care, economic growth and sustainable health systems inline with the *Blueprint on Digital Transformation of Health and Care*.

Objectives:

- Produce a Joint Statement 2018 that summarizes a common position on Smart Healthy Age-friendly Environments, priorities for funding and recommendations beyond 2020.
- Provide a forum to exchange policy priorities and technical expertise on Health, Technologies and AFE;
- Inform the Commission on knowledge available in stakeholder community about challenges, solutions and best practices;
- Promote common principles as person-centred interventions, protection of personal data, interoperability and quality standards, quadruple helix.

Partners: high-level representatives from DG Sante, DG CONNECT, WHO, OECD, AAL Programme, eHealth Network; European Covenant Demographic Change, groups D4 and C2 EIP-AHA, EIP-SCC, RSCN, Healthy Cities, Eurocities, European Framework Age-Friendly Housing, European Centre Social Welfare Policy, ELISAN, ENSA, EchaAlliance.

Leading organisation: Cáritas Coimbra - with close support from AFEdeMy,Ltd. (Willeke van Staalduinen)

Innovation criteria: a TM led by an NGO and an SME is centred in end-users and market, which intends to pull the discussion to clear and realistic outcomes.

Contact person: Carina Dantas - carinadantas@caritascoimbra.pt

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COCIR
SUSTAINABLE COMPETENCE IN ADVANCING HEALTHCARE

European Coordination Committee of the Radiological, Electromedical and Healthcare IT Industry

COCIR Proposal for Thematic Network **Early Detection of Cancer across the EU**

Title: Early Detection of Cancer across the EU

Scope:

More than 270.000 people in Europe die of Lung Cancer yearly. Lung Cancer is the most lethal of all cancers – in 2017 for the first time not only for men, but also for women. There is high level evidence that early detection programs can reduce the mortality of Lung Cancer by 20%.¹

After 15 years of experience with the three existing (breast, cervical, colorectal) cancer screening recommendations and guidelines and taking into account progress with regards to research and innovation in diagnosing and curing cancer, particularly ongoing work of ECIBC² and ECICC³, we now have the opportunity to not only optimize the existing screening guidelines, but to utilise this experience and expertise to design recommendation and guidelines to address the Lung Cancer.

Objective:

Develop a statement on the importance of the harmonised approach towards the Cancer screening across the EU Member States.

The statement would advocate on EU & MS decision makers to act on Lung Cancer (given the available evidence) as it was done on the three previous cancers (cervical, breast, colorectal), and to develop EU Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Early Detection of Lung Cancer based on the experience and expertise gathered during the 15 years following the Council Recommendation from 2003.

Identified potential partners:

- Patients (ECPC , EPF)
- Scientific society (ERS, ESMO,)
- Industry (COCIR , EFPIA)
- Insurance (AIM, ESIP)
- Doctors (CPME , ESTRO, ESSO, UEMS ,ESR)
- EAPM

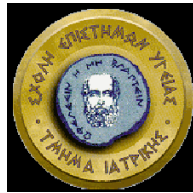
Proposed leading organisation:

COCIR (Magdalena Machalska @ machalska@cocir.org)

¹ Aberle, Denise et al.: Reduced Lung-Cancer Mortality with Low-Dose CT Screening, New England Journal for Medicine 365;5

² European Commission Initiative on Breast Cancer

³ European Initiative on Colorectal Cancer



“Vaccines are one of the safest and most cost-effective ways to ensure public health and avoid preventable disease, and decreasing public trust in immunisation poses a serious threat that cannot be ignored.”

Vytenis Andriukaitis, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety

**Proposed new Thematic Network in the Health Policy Platform:
Adult vaccination and immunisation (as life-course approach)**

Scope:

To develop a unified, life-course approach to adult vaccination and immunisation

Objectives:

- 1. Broker dialogue and establish consensus on the role of Primary Care (PC) and identify the synergies to Public Health (PH) and hospital care for adult immunisation, encompassing adolescent, adult, elderly and opportunistic vaccination;*
- 2. Identify communication gaps and needs at EU and Member-State level and develop roadmap to establish adult immunisation and vaccination as a high priority topic at European, national and local levels;*
- 3. Highlight relevant needs of vulnerable groups (incl. migrant and refugee groups, elderly, patients with chronic conditions, etc.) utilising best practices to overcome vaccination hesitancy, insufficient uptake and reduced access – previous EU-level project work established for crisis responses will be key in proposing a proactive rather than reactive approach;*
- 4. Identify commonalities and synergies to other relevant efforts, e.g., AMR, patient safety, and medical and PH training, to maximise individual and system level resilience;*
- 5. Highlight need for relevant undergraduate and postgraduate education, including teaching on aspects of behavioural change and promoting interdisciplinary care;*
- 6. Promote interdisciplinary care through collaboration for increased preparedness, and safe and effective adult immunisation, ensuring appropriate training and mechanisms are in place for rapid crisis response and to extend coverage with PC practitioners as frontline defence;*
- 7. Raise citizen and educator awareness (incl. vaccine literacy), with PC practitioners facilitating the co-creation of context-specific interventions, to tackle trust and communication issues and increase uptake;*
- 8. Promote PC as the cornerstone of the life-course immunisation approach, with clear links with PH and hospital care, for better monitoring and to identify emerging clusters of vaccine hesitancy and reduced uptake;*
- 9. Produce Joint Statement and Call to Action to facilitate EU leadership for all above points to support Member-State efforts to tackle vaccine hesitancy and uptake issues.*

Network & Partners: *EFPC, WONCA Europe, UEMO, EUPHA, PGEU and members thereof.*

Indicative nomination of supporting entities for the network; we invite anyone with a strong interest in this topic to join this network.

Proposed leading organisation: *European Forum of Primary Care (EFPC) in partnership with the Clinic of Social and Family Medicine, School of Medicine of the University of Crete, Greece*

Contact person: *E. Petelos (elena.petelos@med.uoc.gr and petelos@gmail.com) on behalf of the Clinic of Social and Family Medicine, School of Medicine, University of Crete, Greece and for the European Forum of Primary Care (EFPC)*

Proposal to the European Commission to launch a new Thematic Network at the EU Health Policy Platform by the European Public Health Association (EUPHA)

Thematic Network: Health workforce policy and development in Europe

The importance of a people-centred, sustainable and integrated health workforce is increasingly recognised in Europe. There are now comprehensive policy frameworks for action and better knowledge on what *should* be done to respond more effectively to changing population needs and to maldistribution of health human resources. However, it is not well understood *how* to make this happen. The network will enhance exchange of knowledge and experience across countries. It will help connecting the policy sectors of health and social care, the data sources and instruments of workforce education, planning and monitoring, and global and European health workforce development and policy reforms. The main objective is to align health workforce policy and planning with the needs of health systems, with a focus on health workforce innovations and their implementation in order to provide methodological frameworks and space for discussion regarding scalability and transferability of health workforce innovations from one setting or one country to another.

The network will provide a platform for dialogue between a wide range of stakeholders and health workforce issues. It will address diversity of regional workforce needs visible and help reducing inequality and maldistribution of health human resources and competencies within the European Union. The network will build on comprehensive expertise and established partnerships, for instance through the organisation of joint conferences and workshops. Next to leading national health workforce organisations these partnerships include collaborations between the European Public Health Association (EUPHA), the European Health Management Association (EHMA), the OECD, the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, and the WHO Regional Office for Europe Division of Health Systems and Public Health. The collaborating partners have established health workforce groups, contributed to major European health workforce projects and initiated policy dialogues. Leading organisation: EUPHA, contact: Floris Barnhoorn, email: f.barnhoorn@euphaoffice.org.





EU Health Policy Platform Proposal for a Thematic Network on Social innovation in healthcare in cross-border regions

Scope and purpose

There is a specific need for growth in border areas and interregional cooperation has a potential to contribute to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. The geographical working area for enterprises and their markets, healthcare providers and institutions, educational institutions and regional governments is often a lot smaller in border rather than in non-border regions, hence, use of healthcare provisions in the former is less efficient.

A number of national and regional policies and programmes have already been put in place to support the delivery of technological and social innovation in healthcare. In addition, many initiatives have been taken to stimulate cross-border cooperation in healthcare over the past years, including (social) innovation in healthcare. Most of these initiatives are cure-related: emergency care and hospital care. Even though there are good practices in cross-border care, cross-border cooperation does not include new challenges, such as differences in structures and legislation, fragmented roles and various responsibilities in healthcare, and a more complex setting for health care providers and their markets. Interregional exchange will therefore refer to exchange of knowledge between cross-border regions.

Aims and Outcomes

Main objective is to strengthen social innovation in healthcare in cross-border regions. This will be done by exchange of practices among stakeholders to develop, for cross-border regions, facilities and methods to support knowledge sharing, knowledge transfer and strengthen opportunities for social innovation in healthcare. These stakeholders include EU regions, local and regional authorities, public health authorities, healthcare providers, enterprises, research and development centres, the higher education sector and regional development agencies.

About the leader and network:

EUREGHA is a Brussels based reference network of European regional and local health authorities. Our mission is to promote collaboration amongst regional and local health authorities in Europe, within the framework of policies relating to public health and health care.

EUREGHA brings together a critical mass of knowledge and expertise, and encourage diversity with the purpose of “Bringing Regional and Local Authorities together for Better Health”. Partners of the thematic network will consist of EUREGHA members as well as interested stakeholders.

Contact person:

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Judith Kramer: judith.kramer@noegus.at



Proposal for a Joint Statement on urban health

Cities are home to more than 72% of all Europeans¹ and are crucial in delivering the Europe 2020 strategy. They determine health and well-being by creating the settings, in which people are born, grow, learn, work and age. Although they experience high levels of health inequalities, they are also best placed to address inequality through action on social, cultural, economic and environmental conditions. In tandem, a healthy population contributes actively in making cities more inclusive, safe and resilient.

The Joint Statement on urban health will highlight the need for improved urban policy coherence and better governance for health and well-being across all policy levels and sectors, especially those not usually included in the health agenda. It will take stock of existing political commitments, such as the WHO Shanghai² and Ostrava³ Declaration, the CoR opinion on Health in Cities⁴, the WHO European Healthy Cities Network⁵ statement. It will include and build on evidence from EU funded projects (e.g. INHERIT⁶) and link with the Urban Agenda for the EU⁷, the SDGs and the Mayors' Summit in 2018⁸.

The objective is to bring forward key evidence and identify the most relevant actions needed to integrate health in urban policies and initiatives across the EU. It will provide a tool to mobilise action and enable more efficient use of EU funds and local resources, improve health and well-being and ensure sustainable development and progress. It will address health across the social gradient and among vulnerable groups, including migrants.

Partners: EuroHealthNet (leader), City of Utrecht, Cities & Health⁹

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¹ <http://www.pbl.nl/sites/default/files/cms/publicaties/PBL-2016-Cities-in-Europe-2469.pdf>

² <http://www.who.int/healthpromotion/conferences/9gchp/shanghai-declaration.pdf?ua=1>

³ <http://www.euro.who.int/en/media-centre/events/events/2017/06/sixth-ministerial-conference-on-environment-and-health/documentation/declaration-of-the-sixth-ministerial-conference-on-environment-and-health>

⁴ <http://cor.europa.eu/sv/news/Pages/Urban-policy-makers.aspx>

⁵ Statement of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network and WHO Regions for Health Network presented at the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health Ostrava, Czech Republic, 13–15 June 2017, http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/343202/HC-RHN-Statement-Ostrava-final-as-delivered.pdf?ua=1

⁶ INHERIT, Identifying ways of living, moving and consuming that protect the environment and promote health and health equity, <https://www.inherit.eu/>

⁷ <https://ec.europa.eu/futurium/en/urban-agenda>

⁸ <http://www.euro.who.int/en/media-centre/events/events/2018/02/who-european-healthy-cities-network-mayors-summit>

⁹ Cities & Health journal, <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rcah20>



PROMOTING THE CONSUMPTION OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

Proposal for a Thematic Network:

The Commission would welcome a Thematic Network to summarise the knowledge of stakeholder organisations on best approaches and best practices to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables, in particular among vulnerable groups.

Up to 7% of EU health budgets are spent on diseases linked to obesity each year. 52% of the adult population in the EU are overweight or obese leading to increases in rates of associated diseases such as diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular disease. More costs result from lost productivity due to health problems and premature death (2.8 million deaths per year from causes associated with overweight and obesity).

Low intake of fruit and vegetables is among the top 10 risk factors for mortality in the world. According to the Global Burden of Disease Study, worldwide 3.4 million deaths can be attributed to low consumption of fruit and 1.8 million to diets low in vegetables. **Regular consumption of fruit and vegetables is considered as an important element of a healthy and balanced diet.** The recommendation by the World Health Organization is that individuals consume "a minimum of 400g of fruit and vegetables per day (excluding potatoes and other starchy tubers)".

The daily consumption of fruit and vegetables has been declining in Europe. **Only 1 in 7 persons eat the recommended 5 portions of fruit and vegetables daily and 1 in 3 does not eat any.** However, Europeans eat more than the recommended amount of sugar, meat, and, in many cases, dairy products. The daily consumption of fruit and vegetables differs between EU Member States, with those aged 15 or over not eating fruit and vegetables on a daily basis ranging from almost two-thirds of the population in Romania (65.1%) to slightly over 15% in Belgium (16.5%). On the other hand, the share of those eating at least 5 portions daily varied from a third in the United Kingdom (33.1%) to less than 5% in both Romania (3.5%) and Bulgaria (4.4%).

The daily consumption of fruit and vegetables seems also to be influenced by gender (with rates of one in four for girls and one in five, or less, for boys) and the level of education. The higher the education level is, the higher the share of the "5-a-day" population is. **Special attention needs to be given to vulnerable groups** including children, pregnant women, elderly and population groups with lower socioeconomic status and efforts must be done to ensure that fruit and vegetables are easily available, accessible and affordable.

Schools have a vital role in educating children in improving their food behaviour by making not only healthy food choices but also to extend and diversify these choices. The EU **School Fruit, Vegetables and Milk Scheme** is an important tool for promoting healthy diets in school children.

Encouraging fruit and vegetables consumption cannot rely solely upon public policy and the health sector. All stakeholders have a significant role to play. The Commission has been resorting to collaborative platforms to increase cooperation with all stakeholders on a voluntary basis: Member States (**High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity**) and civil society (**EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health**). The Commission managed two pilot projects ('Taste Booster' and 'My Healthy Family') to promote the consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables in Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland and Hungary.



International Network for
Health Workforce Education



Thematic Network Proposal: “Inter-Cultural Training for Health Professionals”

Increased mobility, changing demographics and high numbers of displaced persons within Europe necessitate that education of the health workforce is now much more than more simply guaranteeing clinical competence but also ensuring that health professionals can overcome issues of diverse language, communication, culture, religion and values. Intercultural education, effective communication and improved understanding between health professionals and patients is crucial for the overall functioning of the healthcare systems. Studies have shown that it has a positive impact on readmission rates, understanding treatment options, adherence to treatment and overall positive health outcomes for patients.

During a time of great change for European healthcare systems the future education of healthcare professionals is key to ensuring long term sustainability for populations. International institutions have called for policies that allow for the education of flexible health professionals capable of dealing with the ever-changing healthcare environment. A multi-stakeholder and inter-professional approach to tackling this issue is paramount to ensuring this takes place. The primary goal of intercultural education is to reduce health disparities and provide optimal care to patients regardless of their race, ethnic background, native languages spoken, and religious or cultural beliefs. Increased intercultural competences for the health workforce is a key pillar of creating a truly flexible and efficient health workforce for the future.

The proposed Thematic Network would be led by the International Network for Health Workforce Education (www.inhwe.org) and IASIS (<http://www.iasismed.eu>) while also directly supported by a number of our member associations who work at the cutting edge of intercultural education and research. The aim of the Thematic Network would be to build upon the core aims outlined in previous HPF groups (such as “migration & health” and “medical education”) to ensure that the latest developments in health workforce education remain high on the EU’s policy agenda.



Proposal of Thematic Network - AGORA

Scope: Discussion of healthcare policies for pharmaceuticals

Leading organisation: Medicines for Europe

Contact person: Adrian van den Hoven

Objective: discuss the EU Member States experiences on successful policy approaches to generic, biosimilar and value added medicines, and create a dialogue to share best practices on the most effective pharmaceutical policies.

Relevance for health in the EU Link to EU health policy agenda: During the last months, there were three momentums to discuss effective ways of investing in health. Pharmaceuticals should be key on this debate as we believe that generic, biosimilar and value added medicines are effective ways of investing in health. Generic, biosimilar and value added medicines can significantly increase patient access to medicines in an era of rising demands for healthcare services and budgetary constraints. Healthcare policies that accelerate and promote the use of these medicines, not only play a crucial role in the patients' health but also in the sustainability of healthcare systems. In particular, we would like to highlight the role of generic medicines to increase patient access and preventing medicine shortages through increased choice and availability of treatments. Please see here our literature review and key recommendations on how to prevent medicines shortages in a multisource market. We look forward to discuss these topics with all the stakeholders involved in healthcare.

Possibly network and partners involved: Medicines for Europe is ready to partner with the EU institutions, with the EU Member States, patients' associations, authorities (regulatory and payers), healthcare professionals, and other agents of the healthcare community to develop pharmaceutical policies that deliver benefits for patients and sustainability for healthcare systems.



Application for a Thematic Network on the Societal Impact of Pain

15 November 2017

Scope: Provide a roadmap for improving pain care around Europe and gather a broad coalition of organisations who wish to support the improvement of pain through European policies.

Objective: The Thematic Network on the Societal Impact of Pain will focus on improving EU policy-making via the creation of a stakeholder network which can share best practices, available data on the societal impact of pain and draft recommendations, with the ultimate goal to call for a European Framework for Action on Pain. In particular, the Thematic Network will explore the following actions:

- Pain as a quality health care indicator – exploring the instruments available to define, establish and/or use pain as an indicator in the assessment of health care systems quality and thus contribute to assessing the societal impact of pain.
- Pain in the workplace - requiring reasonable, flexible workplace adjustments by employers that can help people with chronic pain stay in work or reintegrate into the workforce.
- Pain research – identifying and analysing gaps in national and European funding for (basic science, clinical, epidemiological) research on the societal impact of pain and draft recommendations on how future EU framework programmes can fill these gaps.
- Education in pain – sharing best practices, identifying gaps and proposing recommendations to foster education of health care professionals, patients and the general public on pain across Europe.

Network: Thematic Group on the Societal Impact of Pain

Partners: European Pain Federation EFIC®, Pain Alliance Europe, Active Citizenship Network and Grünenthal GmbH. The scientific framework of the “Societal Impact of Pain” (SIP) platform is under the responsibility of the European Pain Federation, EFIC®. Cooperation partners for SIP 2017 are Pain Alliance Europe (PAE) and Active Citizenship Network (ACN). The pharmaceutical company Grünenthal GmbH is responsible for funding and non-financial support (e.g. logistical support). The SIP partners Pain Alliance Euro and European Pain Federation EFIC®, will take the lead of the Thematic Network on the Societal Impact of Pain.

Potential additional partners: European Academy of Neurology (EAN), European Association of Palliative Care (EAPC), European Brain Council (EBC), European Cancer Patient Coalition (ECPC), European College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ECNP), European Confederation of Care Home Organisations (ECHO), European Digital Peer Patient Alliance (EUDiPPA), European Federation of National Associations of Orthopaedics and Traumatology (EFORT), European Federation of Neurological Associations (EFNA), European Headache Alliance (EHA), European Network of Fibromyalgia Associations (ENFA), European Patient Forum (EPF), European Platform of Patients’ Organisations Science and Industry (EPPOSI), European Society for Regional Anaesthesia and Pain Therapy (ESRA).

Proposed leading organisation: European Pain Federation EFIC® and Pain Alliance Europe (PAE)

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