



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
Directorate E – People

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY
Directorate C – Public Health

Flash report

Joint Meeting Shadow Health Configuration of the Horizon Europe Programme Committee and Steering Group on Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases

02 October 2020

On 2 October 2020, the Shadow Health Configuration of the Horizon Europe Programme Committee and the Steering Group on Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases held a virtual meeting, jointly chaired by the DG RTD and DG SANTE. The representatives of 27 Member States, Norway and Iceland attended the meeting together with a number of Commission services, and agencies¹.

EC activities on COVID-19

Participants were informed of the Joint Action on “Increasing capacities of National Focal Points (NFPs) for the implementation of the upcoming EU4Health programme”, which aims to support the implementation of the EU4Health Programme and to create synergies with other health-related actions under other EU funding instruments, the Horizon Europe in particular.²

The Commission then presented a summary of the recent EU activities related to COVID-19, including the Communication on the Short-term EU health preparedness for COVID-19 outbreaks to evaluate the COVID-19 response so far and to outline key measures for the coming months, as well as the bolstered EU4Health programme under which structural changes and health system resilience will be addressed.

¹ Directorates-General represented included Health and Food Safety, Research and Innovation, Environment, Reform, Economic and Financial Affairs, European statistics, Communications Networks, Content and Technology, Human Resources and Security, as well as the Joint Research Centre (JRC) and representatives from a number of EU decentralised and executive agencies such as European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, and Health and Food Executive Agency.

² The contact point from Chafea for the Joint Action on Increasing Capacities of National Focal Points responsible for Health Programmes is Marilena di Stasi (marilena.di-stasi@ec.europa.eu).

The ERAvsCorona Action Plan was explained, including the ten short-term research and innovation actions financed under Horizon 2020. This year's dedicated COVID-19 calls disbursed EUR 458.9 million to 103 projects. In addition, a total of 547 FP7 and Horizon 2020 funded projects were reoriented to fight the COVID 19 emergency. The ERAvsCorona Action Plan includes also the setting up of EU-wide clinical trial networks to strengthen the EU response to COVID-19 by coordinating planning and implementation of large-scale clinical trials across the EU.

Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and Mission on Cancer

The Commission informed about the progress of the Mission on Cancer and the handover of the Mission outline to the Commission on 22 September 2020 during the Research and Innovation Days.

The suite of citizen engagement activities and Board Members' Ambassador activities were highlighted particularly. The adoption of the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan is planned for the end of 2020. Stakeholder consultations are almost complete, and Member States were thanked for their input. Consultation with the Special Cancer Committee of the European Parliament may take place in October, and discussions with the Senior-level Working Party on Public Health are planned - under the German EU Presidency.

A possible format and mandate for a temporary subgroup on cancer under the SGPP was presented. It would provide advice to the Commission on achieving complementarity between actions of the two flagship initiatives - Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and the Horizon Europe Cancer Mission in order to ensure synergies and further cooperation with Member States and regional activities. The formal governance mechanisms of both EU4Health programme and Horizon Europe will be respected, and the subgroup would advise the Commission before work plans are drafted. Nominated experts from the health and research ministries would sit, with additional experts on an ad hoc basis. There followed lively and constructive debate.

Preparing Partnerships under Horizon Europe

The Commission provided an update on European Partnership on the Transformation of Health Care Systems. The presentation reiterated the benefits of coherence and complementarity of evidence-based health system policies on the one hand, and policy-informed health systems research on the other hand. The objective is to mobilise support and joint actions from interested Research and Health Ministries. The general objective is to ensure the transition towards more sustainable, resilient, innovative and high-quality people-centred health and care systems and that the regional dimension is very important in Member States. The composition of partners was outlined and the types of activities to be funded; the vast majority will be research and innovation actions with support to governance. Support actions would be, for example, training or sharing good practice.

Conclusions and Next Steps

The meeting was concluded by thanking participants for their valuable and enriching input.