

# EU Health Policy Platform: Thematic Network on Brain Health & Research

Pitch webinar | 24 June 2024



# Who we are...



# Standing together for the Brain



EUROPEAN PSYCHIATRIC ASSOCIATION



THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF NEUROSURGICAL SOCIETIES

- National Brain Councils
- Industry partners



# Fostering Innovation & Improving Outcomes



## Prioritize Brain Health

- Address full spectrum of brain-related diseases
- Promote holistic EU Vision and Mission on brain health
- Ensure COVID-19-related impact on patients is fully addressed
- Raise awareness on the cost of non-action
- Advocate for the expansion of NCDs to include brain health

## Foster Research & Innovation

- Promote collaboration and coordination in brain research
- Strengthen Horizon Europe, and other PPPs from basic to translational research
- Implement M&E framework / Build on EBRA
- Promote stronger ERNs
- Ensure safe and quality data use and exchange / EHDS

## Improve Access & Outcomes

- Support joint clinical assessments to reduce HTA fragmentation
- Raise awareness on efficiency of precision medicine
- Upgrade regulatory framework
- Advance research on RWE

## Implement an Integrated Approach

- Urge EU Brain Health & Research Plan
- Promote setup of Knowledge Hubs
- Promote Joint Actions
- Expand ERNs role
- Ensure EU Pharma Strategy is balanced

# **NO HEALTH WITHOUT BRAIN HEALTH**

**EBC 2024 Election Manifesto**

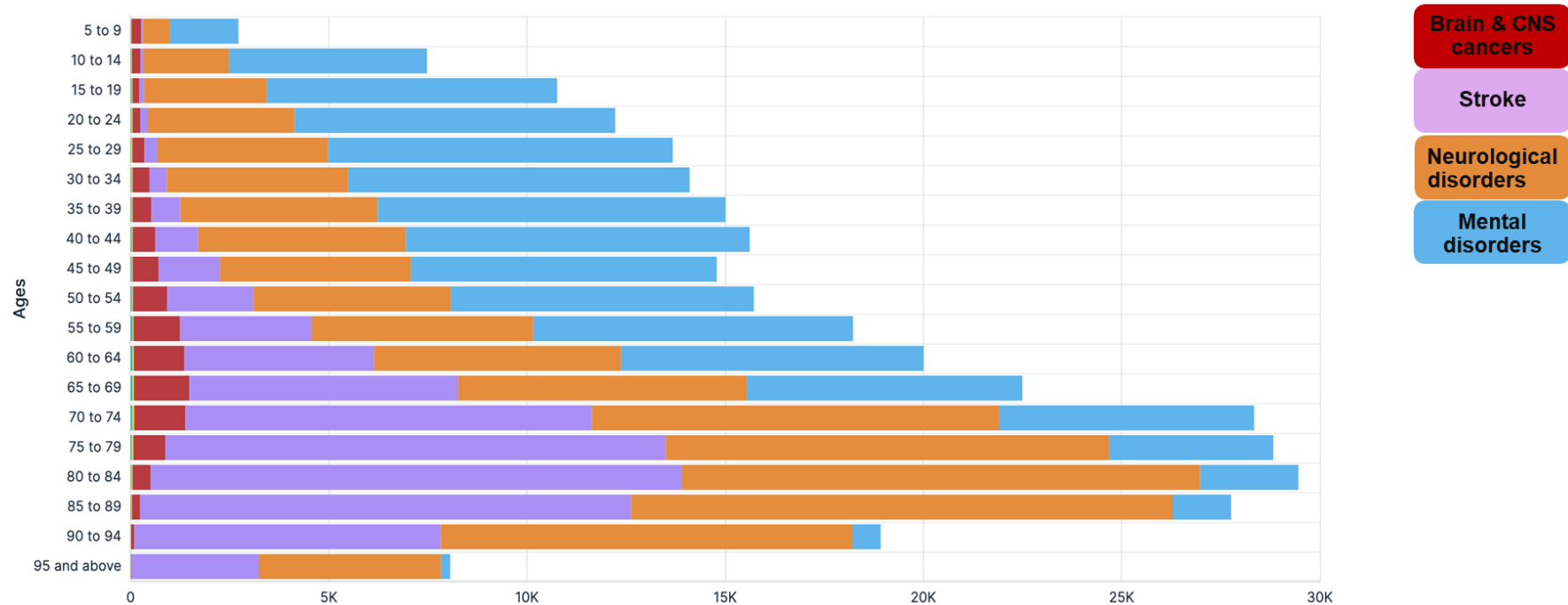
# Context



# Tackling the burden of brain disorders

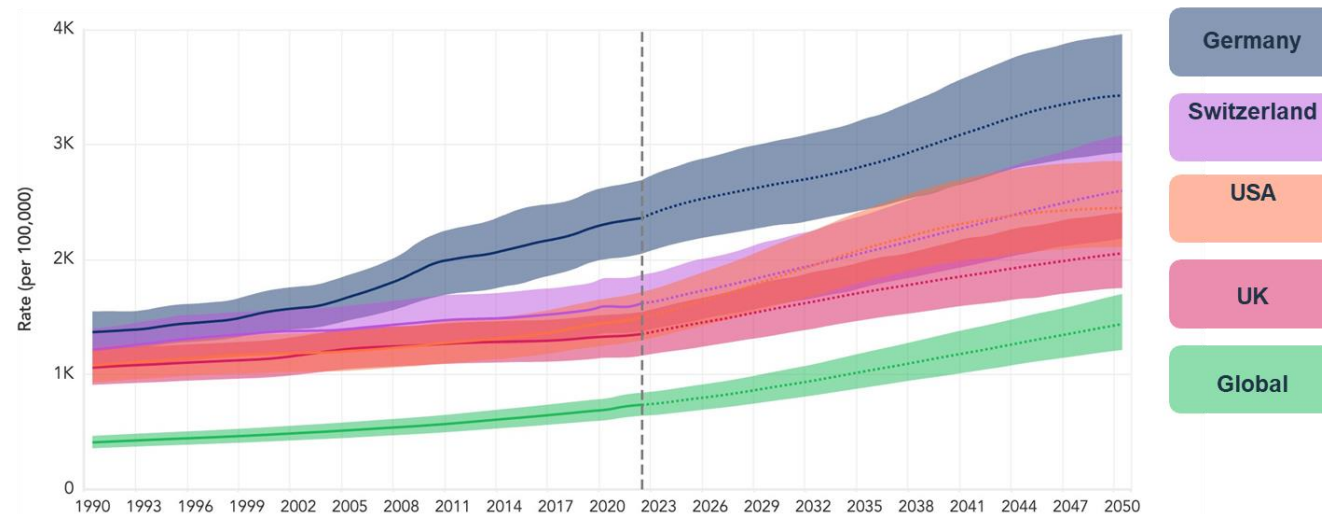
Meanwhile, mental disorders—which often strike the **young** and the **middle-aged**—are also creating very large disease burden globally.

*Age distribution of Disability-adjusted life caused by brain disorders, Finland, 2021*



# Tackling the burden of brain disorders

**Demographic shifts are driving large global increases in age-related disorders like Alzheimer's and others dementias.**



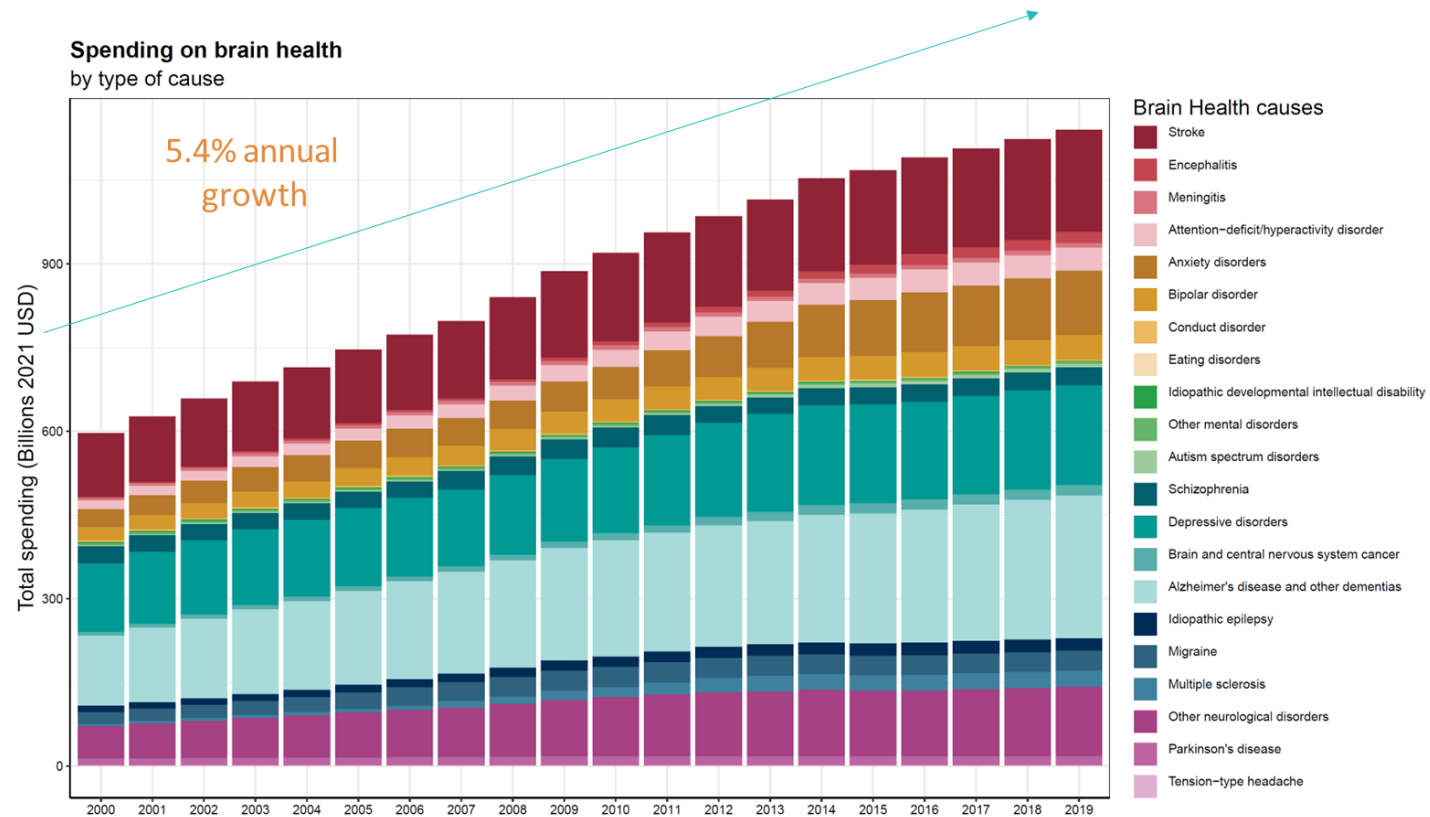
*Prevalence rates of Alzheimer's and other dementias, 1990-2050, Globally and for selected countries.*





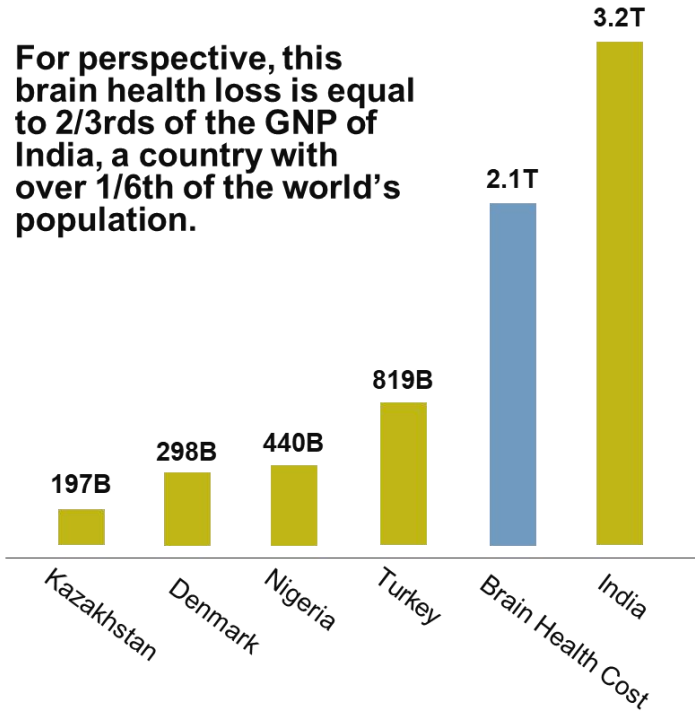
# Tackling the burden of brain disorders

**USD1.1T** of this total consists of direct health spending on brain disorders.



# Tackling the burden of brain disorders

**USD\$2.1 Trillion** annually: IHME's preliminary estimate of the economic impact of brain disorders at a societal level.

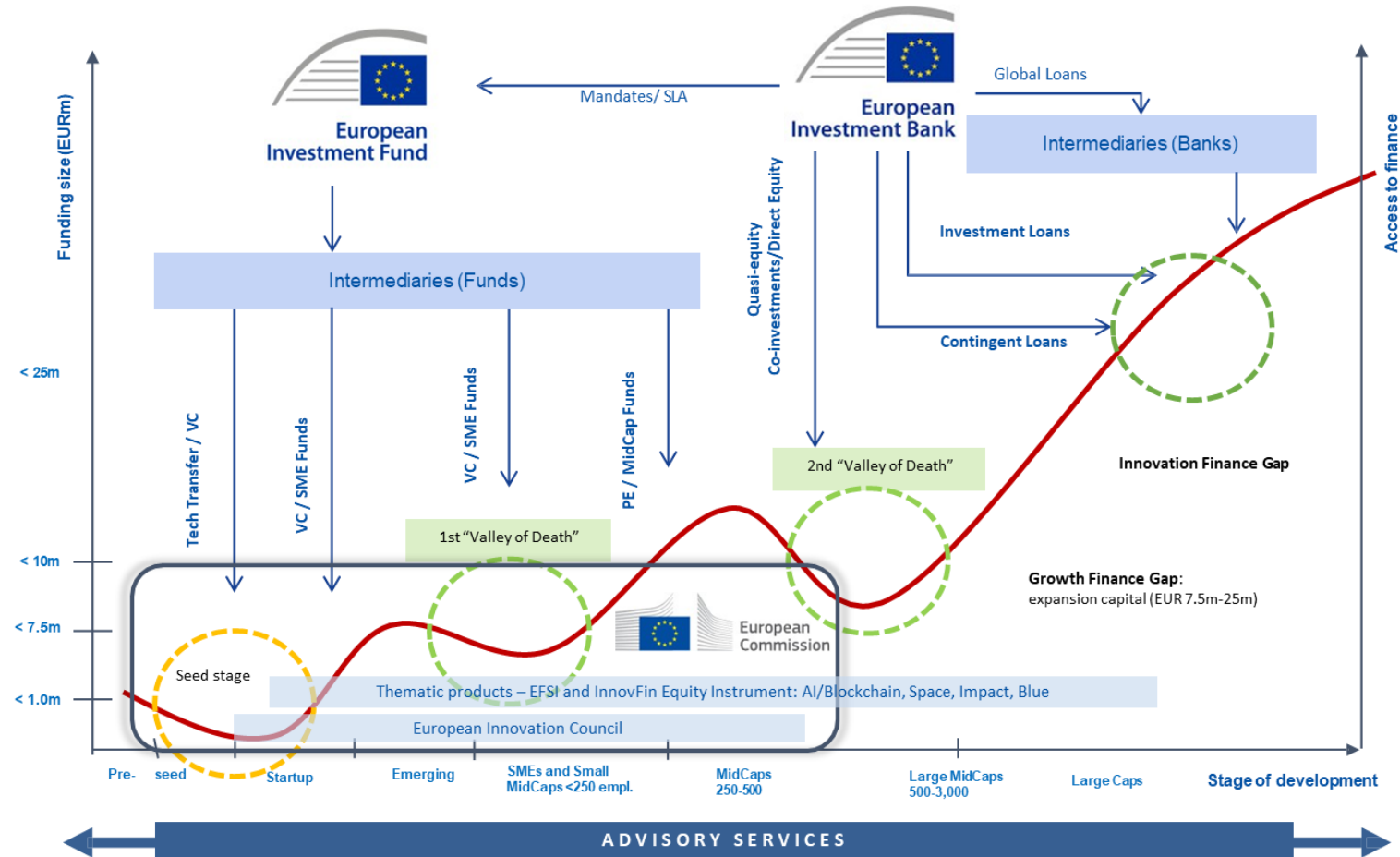


*Estimates on this slide are preliminary and subject to change.*



# Tackling the burden of brain disorders

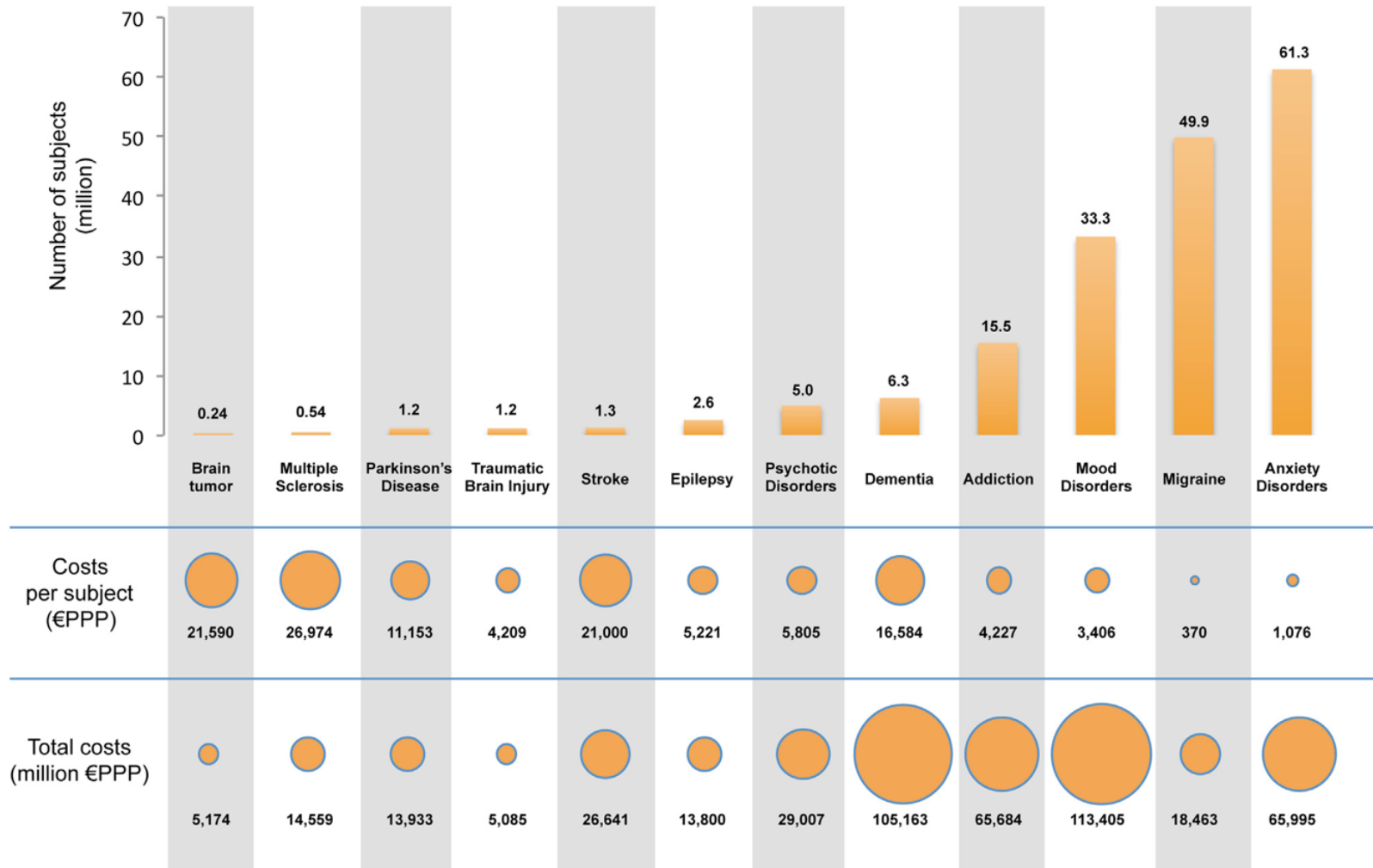
## EIB & EIF: SERVING COMPANIES OF ALL SIZES AND STAGES OF LIFE



# Synergies with on-going and planned EU activities



# Uneven distribution of costs across disorders

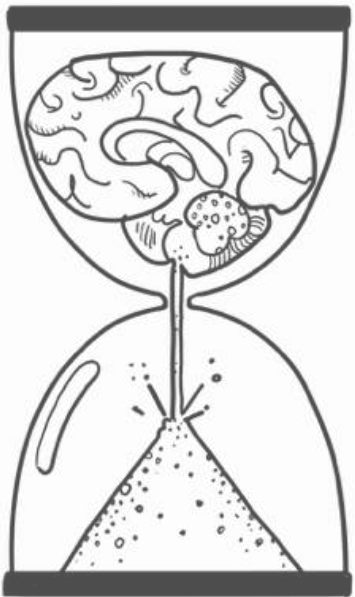


J. Olesen & M. Di Luca  
Neuron 2014



# Value of Treatment: Timely intervention is key!

Brain:  
Time matters!



Still no cure for most brain disorders, hence necessary to focus on:

- Risk reduction
- Address Stigma
- Prevention
- Early detection
- More research



# Objectives of the RETHINKING projects



Develop an **evidence-based policy narrative** on brain conditions to help create a sustained policy response in Europe



Draw from our findings **practical solutions** on how to implement policy recommendations



**Raise awareness** about the importance of optimising the management of brain conditions

# Healthier Together

## EU Non-Communicable Diseases Initiative



- Increase EU support in a coordinated way...
  - ...targeting country needs in key disease areas
- Implementation of policies, guidelines and interventions
- Reduction of health inequalities
- Foster ‘ambitious action’ in promotion-prevention and screening-detection



# Brain Research within Horizon Europe

## Pillar 1 Excellent Science

European Research Council

Marie Skłodowska-Curie  
Actions

Research Infrastructures

## Pillar 2 Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness

Clusters

- Health
- Culture, Creativity and Inclusive Society
- Civil Security for Society
- Digital, Industry and Space
- Climate, Energy and Mobility
- Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment

Joint Research Centre

## Pillar 3 Innovative Europe

European Innovation Council

European innovation  
ecosystems

European Institute of  
Innovation  
and Technology

## Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area

Widening participation and spreading excellence

Reforming and Enhancing the European R&I system

# Brain Health partnership in a nutshell

- A European Partnership on Brain Health is expected to start in Q1 2026
- The Commission together with partners of a preparatory coordination action (CSA BrainHealth) are currently developing a 'draft proposal' for the partnership

## **Brief description:**

- **Brain health** is to be interpreted broadly and includes **mental health**
- **Aim: accelerate** the delivery of **preventive, diagnostic, therapeutic and care solutions** to foster brain health in citizens and patients, including through a better understanding of the functioning of the brain
- Strengthen the **alignment** and **synergies** across European and global brain research initiatives
- Besides **capitalising** on existing EU-supported initiatives (JPND, NEURON, ERA-NETs, CSAs, EBRAINS infrastructure) it will need to **strengthen links** with other key entities
- Provide an **impetus** to brain research in Europe and strengthen Europe's position globally

# Brain Health partnership



- Goals of the partnership are framed within:
  - United Nation's **Sustainable Developmental Goal** (SDG) target 3.4 on non-communicable diseases and mental health
  - **'Healthier Together - EU Non-Communicable Diseases Initiative'**, which includes a focus area on 'Mental health and neurological disorders' (launched by the Commission in Dec. 2021)
  - **'Comprehensive approach to mental health'** Communication, announced by President von der Leyen in her 2022 State of the Union address (adopted by the Commission in June 2023)

# Brain Health partnership

**Directionality:** objectives & expected impacts

## Objectives

- Find **cures** for brain disorders & enable **early diagnosis**
- Ensure **access to affordable and personalised treatments** for everyone
- Promote **evidence-based prevention** at individual and community level
- Optimise the **clinical management** of affected persons, including the identification and diffusion of best practices and standards, structures and care

# Brain Health partnership

- Strengthened collaboration: **umbrella role of the partnership**

## Capitalising on existing initiatives

JPND, NEURON, HBP/ EBRAINS, EBRA

## Strengthening links with other key entities

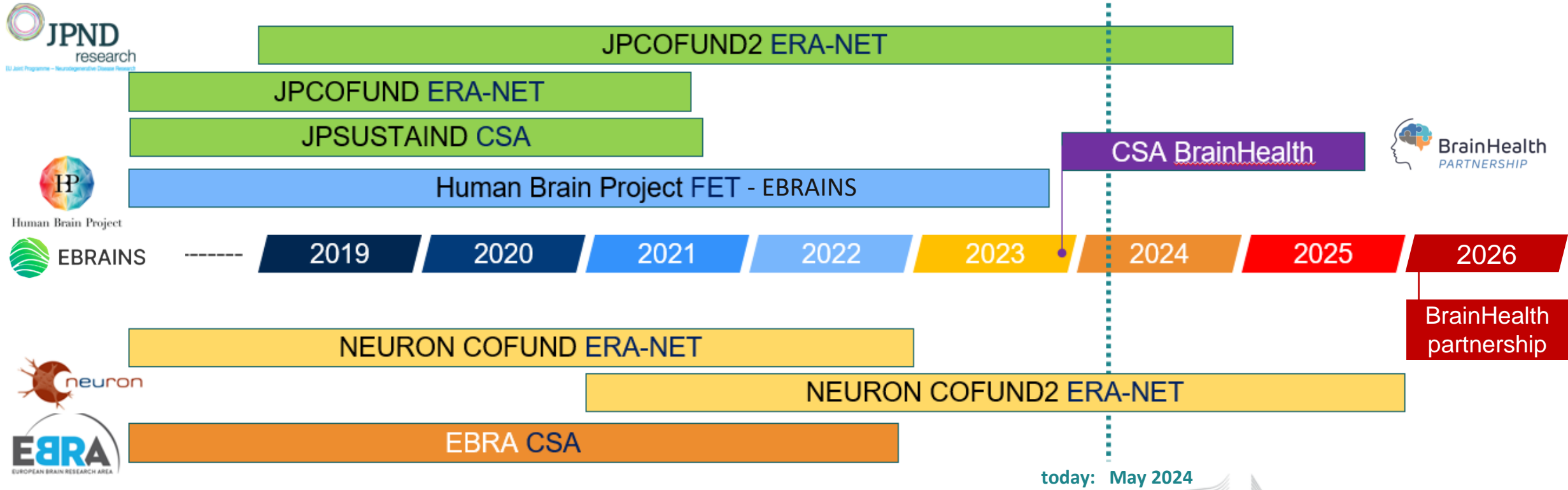
- IHI (public-private partnership), EIT Health
- other partnerships: Rare diseases; Personalised medicine; Transforming health and care systems...
- other infrastructures: biobanks...
- scientific societies, patient advocacy groups, citizens...
- healthcare providers...

## Considering international initiatives

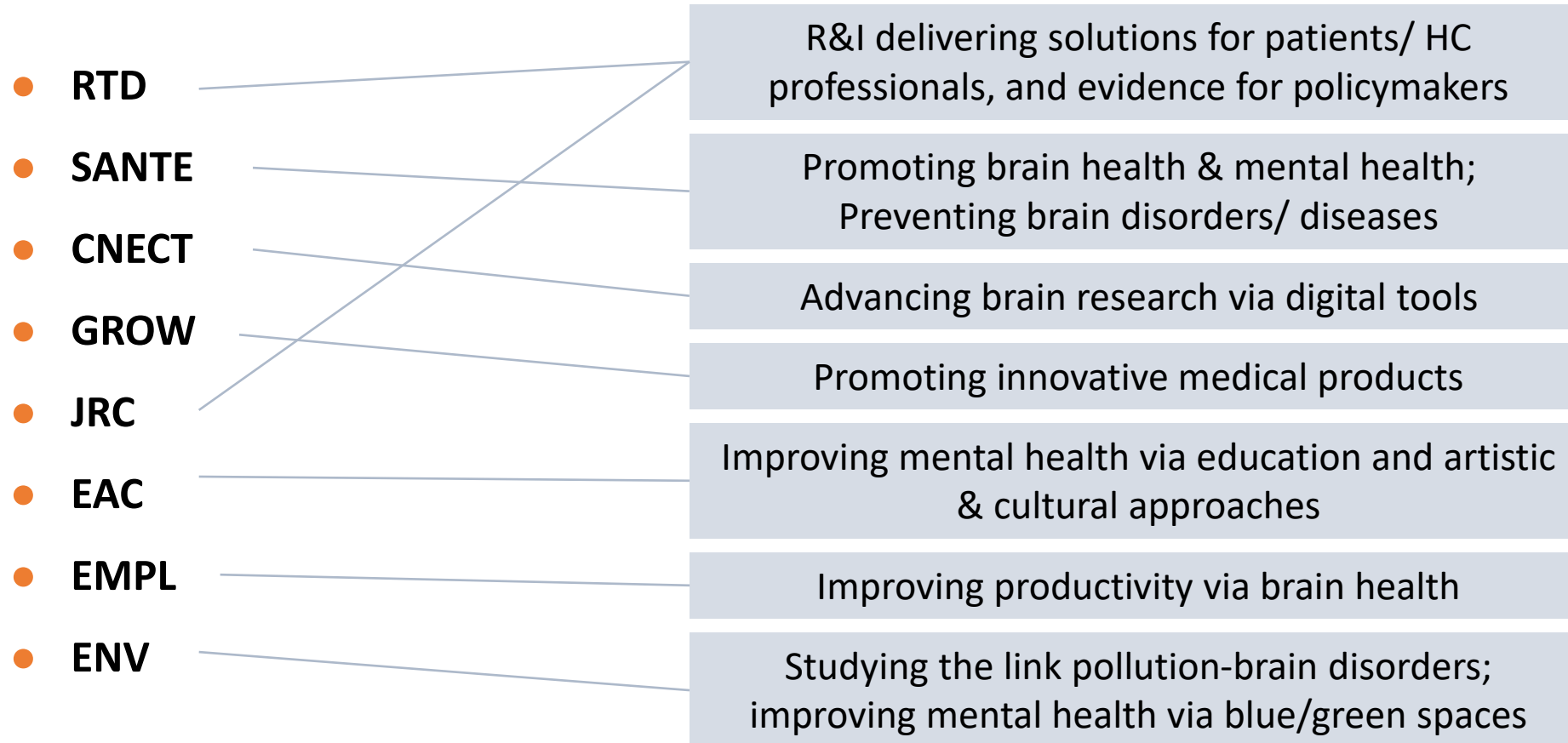
WHO, OECD, GACD, InTBIR, IBRO...

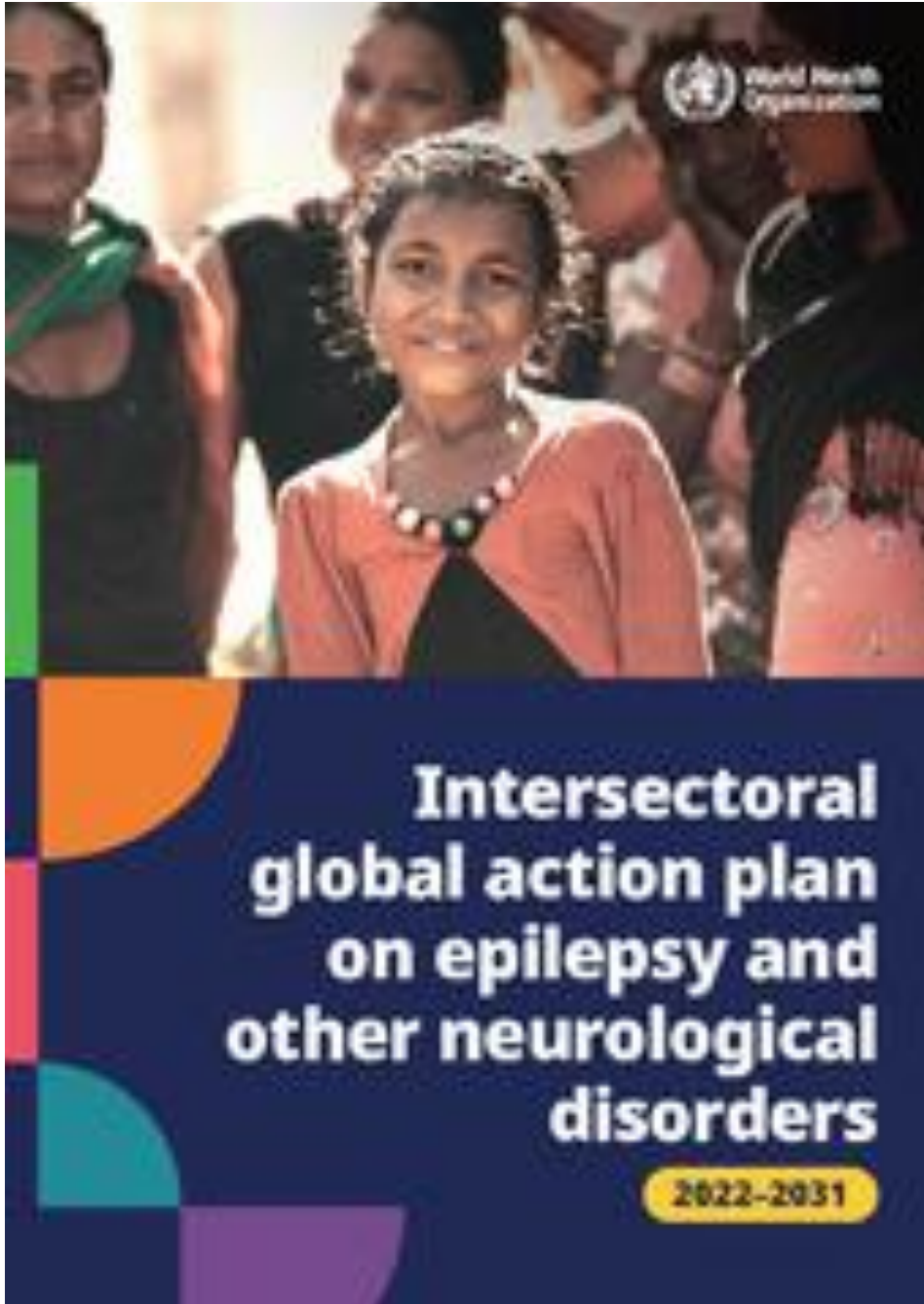


# Timeline of actions



# Brain Health partnership: A comprehensive Approach





Issues addressed:

- policy and governance
- effective, timely and responsive diagnosis, treatment and care
- promotion and prevention
- research, innovation and information systems
- public health response



# Synergies with on-going and planned global activities

## 2. WHO's Intersectoral Global Action Plan on epilepsy and other neurological disorders (IGAP)

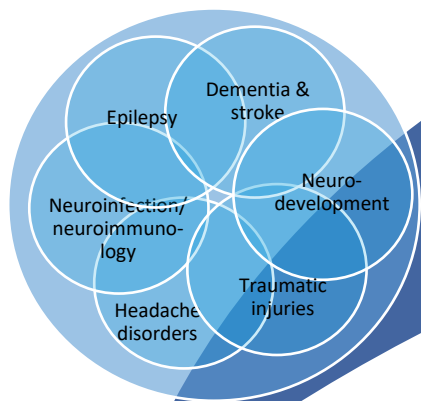
### Activities supporting implementation of IGAP



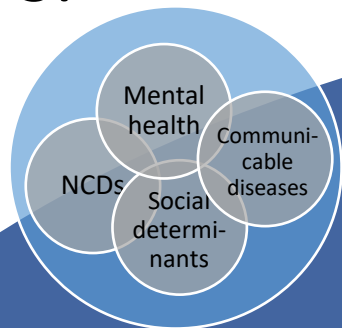
# WHO's integrated approach to mental health and neurological conditions

1.

Neurological diseases



3.



4.

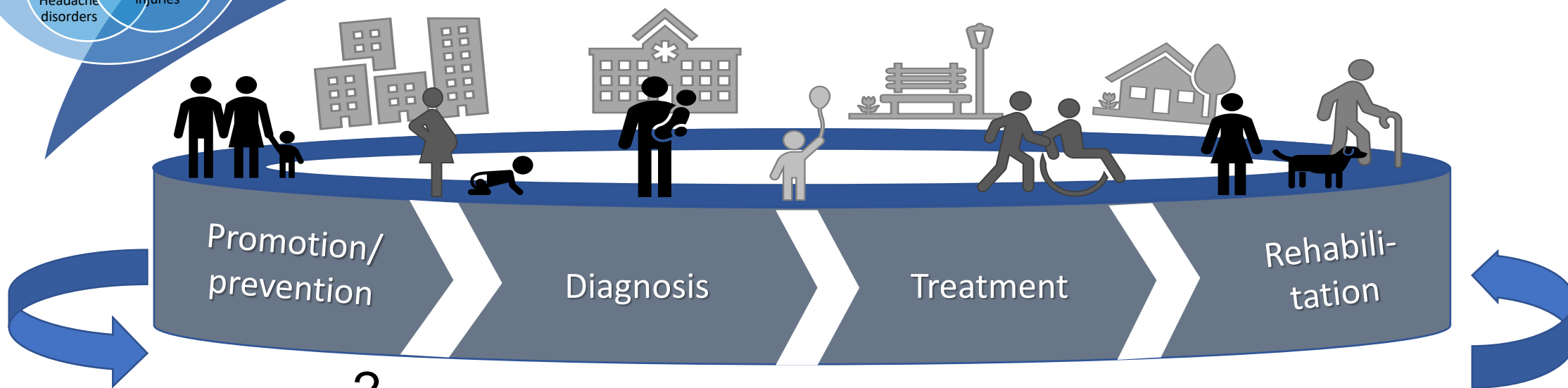
Across the life course

5.

Health and social care system

UHC /  
PHC

**Maximizing impact and outcomes for Brain Health → forthcoming global action plan and WHO position paper**



2. Integration continuum across the health and social care framework

# Status update on national plans

National Brain Councils  
National Brain Councils  
without legal entity

## Countries who already developed national brain plans:

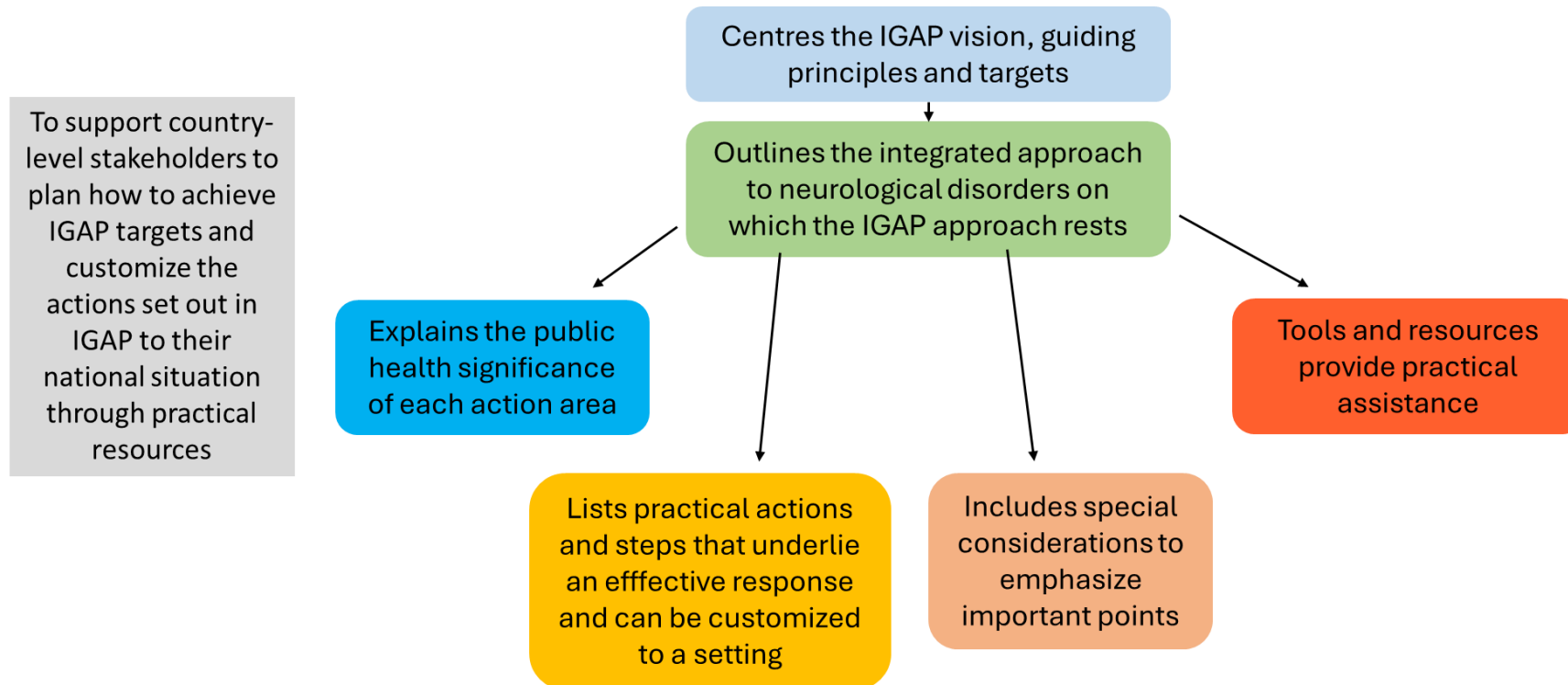
- GERMANY ✓
- POLAND ✓
- NORWAY ✓
- SWITZERLAND ✓
- SPAIN (ongoing process)



# Synergies with on-going and planned global activities

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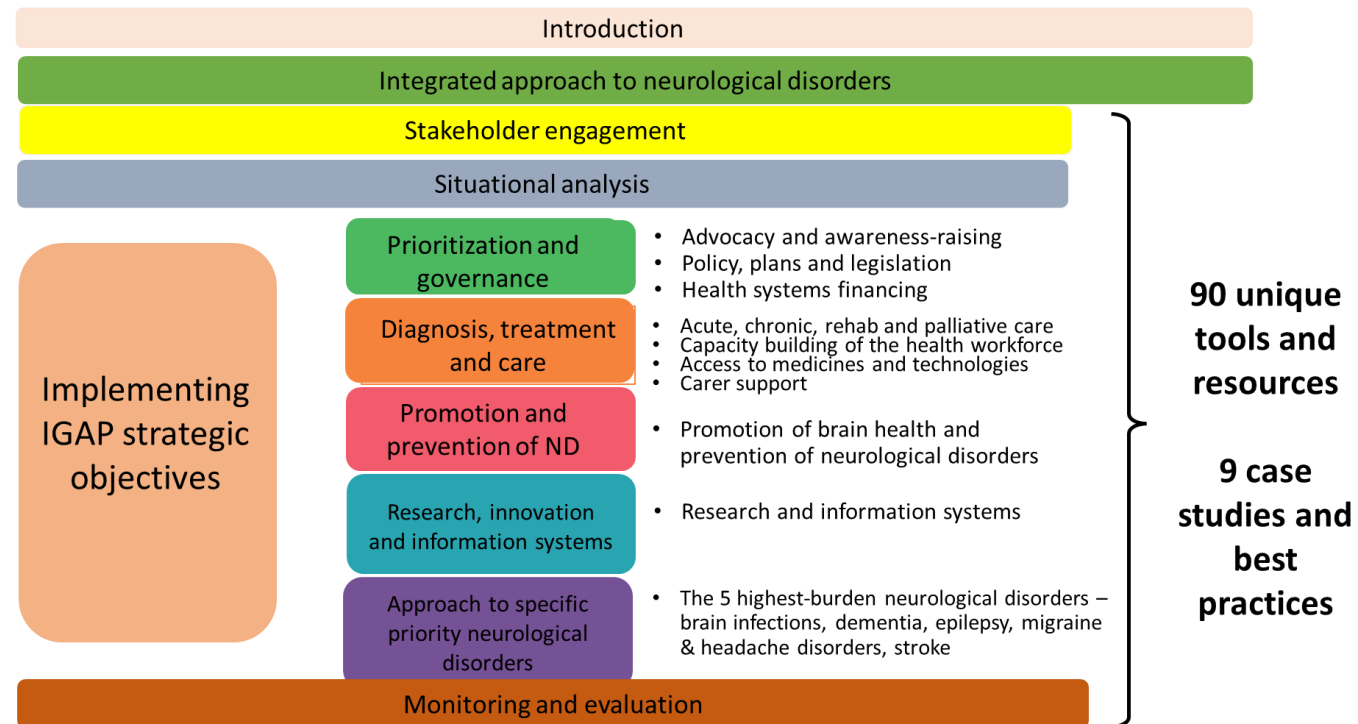
### The IGAP implementation toolkit – concept and structure



# Synergies with on-going and planned global activities

## 2. WHO's Intersectoral Global Action Plan on epilepsy and other neurological disorders (IGAP)

### Structure of the implementation toolkit



# In conclusion

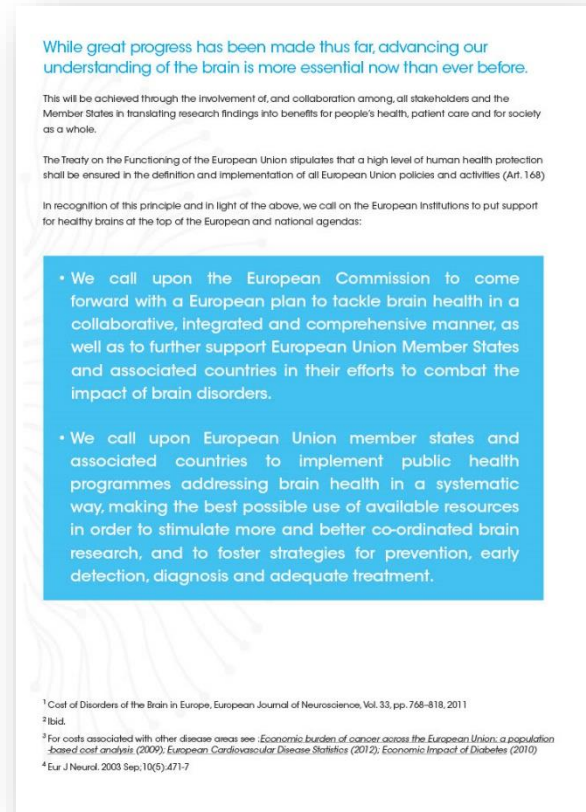


# Towards an EU Coordination Plan

- Echoing WHO's recommendations, EBC issued a Call to Action in 2015, urging:
  - The European Commission to come forward with a European plan to tackle brain health in a **collaborative, integrated and comprehensive** manner
  - EU member states and associated countries to implement public health programmes **addressing brain health in a systematic way**

A European Coordination Plan needs to be **holistic** and **overarching**

*Need to address brain health at global level to make it a priority.*



# No Health Without Brain Health

## ***Support the development of EU & National Brain Plans***

### Why?

- Align with WHO's IGAP recommendations,
- Integrated, coherent and holistic approaches for tackling the societal challenges associated with brain disorders,
- Leverage NBCs expertise & networks at national level.

### How?

- Liaising with National Brain Councils
- Dissemination of an advocacy toolkit
- Expanding on the Healthier Together joint action

## ***Set up an EU Parliament Intergroup on Brain Health & Research***

### Why?

- Facilitate informal exchanges of views on specific issues and promote contact between MEPs and civil society,
- Drive increased attention for brain health,
- Scale up existing policy initiatives while speaking with one voice.

### How?

- Gathering signatures from MEPs across different political groups,
- Identifying key MEPs to chair and co-chair the intergroup,
- Mobilizing the community and the general public.





# Brain Health and Brain Capital

Understanding the brain is not just to address a “burden”. It also allows people to thrive: to live in health and in happiness, to power our labour markets and economies, to innovate, and to build for future generations.

- **Brain Capital:** driving “innovation in a Brain Economy by optimizing employee brain health and performance. Broadly, any objective working toward strengthening the global economy must focus on building and sustaining productive capacity by stimulating investments in brain health research, education, prevention, and care”.
- **Brain Economy:** “one where most new jobs demand cognitive, emotional, and social, not manual, skills, and where innovation is a tangible “deliverable” of employee productivity.”



**Early intervention  
for first episode  
psychosis  
decreases the cost  
burden to society  
in a variety of  
ways**



**Health care**



**Employment**



**Education**



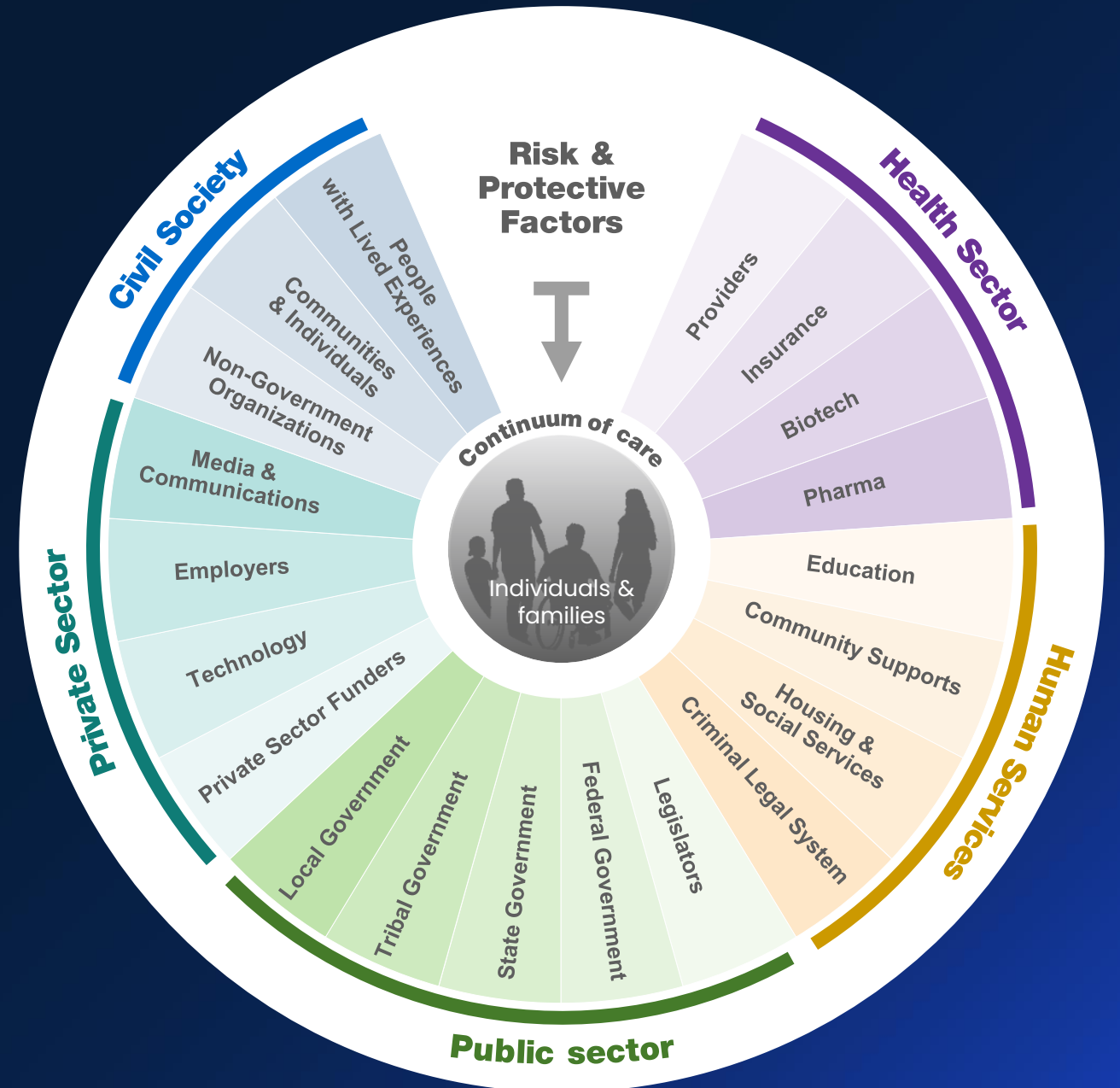
**Housing**



**Criminal legal system**



**Systems level change requires institutional and individual stakeholder action, and everyone has a role to play**





## Socio-economic Impact of Neurological Conditions (EFNA 2022)

- 69% of people miss days off work
- 76% of people experienced a negative impact on relationship with colleagues
- 83% of people experienced a negative impact on their finances
- 85% of people experienced a negative impact on their relationship with friends
- 86% of people experienced a negative impact on their relationship with family
- 94% of people experiences a negative impact on their social life
- **99% of people experience a negative impact on their overall wellbeing**

# Thank you

