

## Press Release

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### **EHDS2 Pilot - A European Consortium Pilot project, candidate for the future European Health Data Space**

A large European consortium bringing together 9 national health data platforms, 2 EU agencies, 3 research infrastructures and one association is applying for a European Commission's call for projects to set up a test version of European Health Data Space (EHDS), leading to major breakthroughs on European policies on secondary use of health data for research, innovation and healthcare systems improvements purposes.

#### **The *EHDS2 Pilot consortium* aims to be selected to build and test a first version of European Health Data Space for secondary use of health data**

Sharing data on a European scale is fundamental to develop research and improve citizens' health. It allows, for example, to build more efficient artificial intelligence algorithms for research, to improve the large-scale management of pandemics such as COVID-19, or to study rare diseases thanks to health data sharing.

This is why the ***EHDS2 Pilot consortium*** brought together **16 partners from all over Europe (national platforms, ERICs, research Infrastructures, EU agencies and associations in the area of health) to answer the European Commission's call for projects to set up a test version of the future European Health Data Space (EHDS)** for secondary use of health data.

On January 25th, the *EHDS2 Pilot consortium* submitted its application to **build this prefigurative EHDS by interconnecting data provider platforms, either national platforms, EU agencies or research infrastructures, in a network of nodes**. If the consortium is selected, the EHDS2 Pilot project aims to implement and **test a first user journey for creating, deploying and running health data research projects at EU level**: the main objective of the network is to allow project researchers to query the data catalogs of all the nodes, to request access to selected data via a single common form and, possibly, if needed, to transfer data at one place. In order to build this network, the EHDS2 Pilot will propose legal and technical frameworks based on concrete research use cases.

In the application, the consortium has proposed preselected use cases for the Commission to choose from, to illustrate the potential of transnational health data reuse. They will address, for example, topics such as the creation of predictive models of cardiovascular pathological events, the identification of the level and risk factors of thrombosis in patients with COVID-19 or the personalized risk assessment of colorectal cancer and the definition of predictive models for this pathology. If selected, the EHDS2 Pilot is aiming to fully operate the chosen use cases in order to demonstrate the potential powerful impact of mobilizing and exploiting health data from several countries for public health, research, innovation and policy and healthcare systems improvement.

The results of the call for projects are expected before the summer of 2022 and the winning candidate will start its work in September 2022 with a budget of 8 million euros financed up to 60% by the European Commission.

### Sharing health data on a European scale is a real game changer for research, innovation and healthcare improvement and a high priority for the European Commission

EU countries face similar challenges from the increasing incidence of diseases related to lifestyle and changing demography, to increasing unsustainable healthcare costs, and most recently the COVID-19 public health crisis, making health policies a cross-border issue.

Since 2019, the European Commission has identified the creation of a European Health Data Space as one of the priorities for European health policy. As a matter of fact, many European countries possess substantial health data assets, however very fragmented in Europe with varieties of data sources of uneven quality and different governance models and access policies for reuse and sharing. The aim of the EHDS is to facilitate access to the different types of data available in the Member States to develop research and innovations in the service of citizens' health.

Several prefiguration instruments have already been set up by the European Commission. This is the case of TEHDaS Joint Action (Towards a European Health Data Space), a reflection program bringing together more than 26 EU Member States and several *EHDS2 Pilot consortium* partners.

In March 2021, the **EU4Health Programme was set up to enable instruments and solutions to support Member States in building stronger, more resilient and accessible health systems**. In order to support the development of a common European Health Data Space, the EU4Health Programme has launched the "*EU4H-2021-PJ-06 - Action grants for developing a EHDS2 Pilot for an EU infrastructure ecosystem for the secondary use of health data for research, innovation, policy making and regulatory purposes*".

This is in this context that the EHDS2 Pilot consortium, coordinated by the French Health Data Hub, has applied to the action grant to demonstrate the feasibility and relevance of such a space to improve research and healthcare systems.

All consortium partners are very happy to collaborate together in this ambitious project and hope to be selected in order to provide their **different** expertises and build an effective and operational first version of EHDS.