Learning from each other’s health systems and service provision is an important help in identifying common solutions for the major challenges that Europe is facing. Especially with the need for health systems to become more sustainable and resilient, it is more and more important to identify solutions on how to organise health care in an equitable and efficient manner and to learn whether such solutions can also be implemented elsewhere.

An important window of opportunity to strengthen health services and systems learning is the project TO-REACH, funded as Coordination and Support Action within H2020 (SC1-HCO-06-2016). It aims to develop a European joint research funding initiative under the umbrella of a future EU research programme, on health services and systems, supported by the EC and EU Member States, to tackle the health care challenges ahead of us.

The current preparatory phase is directed towards developing a Strategic Research Agenda, to enhance cross national implementation research in this scientific field. This future collaboration will help decision makers to identify innovative solutions/care models able to respond to the increasing challenges of the healthcare sector and assess also their potential to be transferred in different settings.

To support these ambitions, the aims of this workshop are twofold:

- To assess how we can improve international comparisons in health services and systems research, with a particular focus on how to understand and predict the transferability of innovations from one setting or country to the other, and,
- To collect inputs from the European public health community on the priority areas where such innovation is mostly needed, and that need to be addressed in future research programmes at European and national level.

Format of the workshop is as follows:
13.30-15.00 Opening session: setting the scene and how to understand and use innovative solutions obtained in other settings

13.30-13.40 Welcome by the chair, Prof Walter Ricciardi, Past President of EUPHA and President of the National Institute of Health (ISS), Italy and Coordinator of TO-REACH

13.40-13.50 Presentation by Katarina Krepelkova, Scientific Officer Public Health Sector, European Commission - DG Research and Innovation

13.50-14.10 Presentation by Anna Ceccarelli, National Institute of Health (ISS), Italy of the TO-REACH initiative: what is it, what does it aim to achieve and what influence can the health (research) community have on this?

14.10-14.20 Round of general discussions

14.20-14.40 Presentation by Ellen Nolte, European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, on lessons on cross-comparative research including the transferability of organisational innovations

14.40-15.00 Structured discussion, also including pitch presentations from sister initiatives

15.00-15.30 Coffee break

15.30-17.00 Second session: assessing the priority areas where innovation is most needed and how research can support this

15.30-15.40 Introduction to the session by the chair

15.40-15.55 Presentation by Johan Hansen, NIVEL, The Netherlands, on a framework to assess research priorities in HSR and outcomes of a first mapping of the literature

15.55-16.40 Structured discussion, including subgroup discussions to assess priority areas that need to be addressed in the next 5-10 years at European level.

16.40-17.00 Overarching discussion on how to take a next step in international comparisons in health services and systems research in order to help (national) decision makers identify and implement suitable and responsive policies and practices.

Target audiences include health services and health systems researchers, health funding bodies, health ministries, European Commission and other stakeholders at national and European level.