

The Expected Outcomes

The eHealth Coordination Action will

- contribute towards greater transparency across Member States and other participating countries on eHealth strategies, research policies, innovation-oriented research and technology development (RTD) activities and implementation plans/activities
- support the development of national eHealth roadmaps
- support the development of a shared Member States' roadmap for innovation-oriented eHealth RTD
- prepare sustainable mechanisms to deliver evidence-based decisions on priorities for viable and effective trans-national RTD between all or clusters of participating countries
- make information on programmes, initiatives, and activities available widely through an eHealth ERA portal.

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Towards the
**Towards the
Establishment of a
European eHealth
Research Area**

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A European Union Research Coordination Action
in the context of the Research Framework Programme 6



The Challenge

Today, eHealth in Europe is characterised by an uneven European research landscape, unsatisfactory uptake of eHealth research and technology development (RTD), and limited coordination among Member States of both research and implementation in eHealth.

A number of Member State governments have launched national initiatives for the large-scale introduction of eHealth infrastructures and key eHealth applications. Unless coordinated, this could actually hamper the free movement of citizens and patients across Europe due to non-interoperable systems.

The Goal

The goal of this European Coordination Action project is to harmonise planning of national innovation-oriented eHealth RTD as the basis for a common roadmap. It will identify opportunities for joint RTD activities.

Reducing the fragmentation of current planning will have a strategic impact on regional, national and trans-European eHealth infrastructures, improve the quality of medical services and the quality of life of citizens in Europe.

It is expected that the eHealth ERA project will provide a platform also for interacting with other projects and activities that support both the further development and implementation of the European eHealth Action Plan and national level eHealth activities. It thereby contributes to the development of a pan-European eHealth Research and Innovation Area.

The Steering Committee

This Coordination Action emerged from an initiative, involving European Union Health Ministries, accession and European Economic Area countries, to improve RTD coordination and exploit the potential for European synergy. All 25+ participating Health Ministries form an informal Steering Committee to support this Action. They are expected to identify strategic priorities for collaboration and joint RTD activities that are sustainable in the longer run.

The Concrete Objectives

The Action will pursue the concrete objectives of:

- analysing facilitators and barriers of uptake of eHealth RTD and implications for a future, integrated European Research Area in eHealth
- identifying priority RTD needs common to all Member States or to subgroups of Member States
- engaging in analysis of any open issues in eHealth RTD and innovation roadmaps
- supporting the structuring of demand-defined RTD components and locating cooperation opportunities for joint research across Member States
- identifying good practice among national plans for RTD and innovation in eHealth, initiating and structuring the exchange of experience in developing and managing RTD programmes
- focusing in depth on two topics selected for the strength of their expected impact on identified national priorities, including a review of those elaborated in the European eHealth Action Plan.

