

POPULATION HEALTH INFORMATION RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE (PHIRI)

Health is a cross-border issue, recently demonstrated by the COVID-19 public health crisis. Especially in the area of **population health, a structured European mechanism for COVID-19 exchange** to organize and share information between countries is urgently needed. PHIRI allows for better **coordinated European efforts** across national and European stakeholders to generate the best available evidence for research on health and well-being of populations as impacted by COVID-19 to **underpin decision making**. In doing so, PHIRI lays the foundation for a federated research infrastructure on population health.

PHIRI aims to facilitate and support open, interconnected, and data-driven research through the sharing of cross-country COVID-19 population health information and exchange of best practices related to identification of data sources, access, assessment and reuse of data on COVID-19 determinants, risk setting and outcomes following ELSI and FAIR principles. PHIRI for COVID-19 has the following objectives:

1. To provide a **Health Information portal** with FAIR catalogues on health and health care data for structured information exchange across European countries. It facilitates access to and use of COVID-19 relevant population health and care data provided by EU countries' public health bodies represented in the PHIRI applicant consortium. It provides the services and tools necessary for researchers to link different data sources and to use Pan-European data in a GDPR compliant, federated way.
2. To provide **structured exchange between countries** on COVID-19 best practices and expertise. PHIRI shares public health and clinical management information and methodologies identified and allows researchers to provide relevant and evidence based information ready for use in research, and decision-making processes by citizens, clinicians, public health practitioners and policy makers.
3. To **promote interoperability and tackle health information inequalities**. PHIRI supports researchers and public health bodies to research queries related to COVID-19. It provides capacity building for both the data producers and data users.

PHIRI has launched its **Health Information Portal** in May 2021, with data sources, population health studies, training material and courses, considering ethical and legal aspects.

PHIRI adopts a **federated architecture**, that is piloted by four different **use cases of immediate relevance** on COVID-19 impacts in specific subgroups by conducting research. First results are expected in May 2022. PHIRI maps the state of play of European countries' health information systems (HIS) that monitor the wider effects of COVID-19 on population health (1 conducted in 2021, 8 planned for 2022).

PHIRI also develops a consolidated framework to assess the direct and indirect **impacts of COVID-19** on population wellbeing, morbidity and mortality. PHIRI gains insights in possible future health impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak by **modelling scenarios for national situations**. Several countries have started their own foresight study, supported by PHIRI.

Every two weeks, PHIRI organizes its **Rapid Exchange Forum** (27 editions since the start of the project) that provides swift responses to research and policy questions that are raised in countries to handle the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ultimately, by implementing a **sustainable federated research infrastructure on population health** PHIRI increases national and European pandemic **preparedness** through research. An integrated and sustainable EU-wide population health information system facilitates better **harmonized response** at EU level to the COVID-19 pandemic with far-reaching repercussions on citizens' health, wellbeing, mobility, and employment.

Timeline: 1 Nov 2020 – 3 years

Financing: DG RTD – 5M€

Coverage: 41 partners in 30 countries

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