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EXPAND: Deploying sustainable cross-border eHealth services in the EU

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How to get interoperability projects from pilot stage to actual deployment in Europe? The EU has granted nearly a million euros to the EXPAND project to fill this gap.

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Over the years, the EU has been funding a number of interoperability projects such as [epSOS](#) ^[1] (Smart Open Services for European Patients) to tackle the challenge of sharing health information between EU countries, health professionals, pharmacies and other stakeholders.

Despite the successful development of such projects, experience shows that the passage from research project to pilot and from pilot to deployment has several challenges such as:

- Appraisal of the projects' results;
- Building trust in the outcomes and capacities for their continued maintenance and support;
- Interdependencies between MS priorities.

"It is quite challenging to exploit and really implement past project results like epSOS", project coordinator Henrique Martins explains. "A country really transposing project results on national level after the project ends may be hard to find. Reasons for that could be lack of trust in or awareness of the solution and limited capacity to obtain sustainable resources."

From piloting to deployment

The newly launched EXPAND ("Expanding Health Data Interoperability Services") project aims to fill this gap between piloting and deployment. It will exploit a number of selected eHealth assets developed in various initiatives, in order to move from a set of point-solutions to a large-scale deployment of cross-border facilities.

At the EXPAND kick-off workshop in Lisbon (Portugal) on 6 February 2014, project members already discussed how to secure the sustainability and expandability of the epSOS pilot services and similar mature assets.

Overall goal

The overall project goal of EXPAND is to successfully hand-over to an environment of sustainable cross-border eHealth services. This is being established at EU level by the [Connecting Europe Facility](#) [2] (CEF) and at national level through the deployment of suitable national infrastructures and services.

Project officer Benoit Abeloos of the European Commission says: "What we want to avoid, is that the results and assets developed by epSOS and other interoperability projects are left without maintenance before they are being used to deploy cross-border eHealth services with the CEF."

The EXPAND project is a Thematic Network co-funded through the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP) and started on the 1st of January, 2014. It is intended to be concluded in December 2015.

For detailed information visit www.expandproject.eu [3]

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- EU-contribution: 989.988 €

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[1] <http://www.epsos.eu>

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[3] <http://www.expandproject.eu>

[4] [http://henrique.martins@spms.min-saude.pt](mailto:henrique.martins@spms.min-saude.pt)

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