



19TH eHEALTH NETWORK 3 JUNE 2021, BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

COVER NOTE

9.1 Portuguese Presidency Priorities

1. Issue at stake

On 1 January 2021, Portugal took over the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for 6 months, succeeding the German's Presidency and being succeeded by the Slovenian's Presidency, partners of this trio of presidencies.

In the future, health will be digital in nature. The effect of digitalization in society needs to be steered towards the sustainable development of a European health data space, as a consequence of national digital health networks joint cooperation.

2. Summary

Current developments towards the envisioned European health data space mainly focus on legal and organizational matters with the aim of modernizing regulation on data usage so to achieve an improved and scientific-based healthcare delivery.

Nonetheless, emphasis should also be given to technical and operational matters to ensure the long-term sustainability of the health sector building blocks.

- **Capacity Building** – The characteristics and skills required for a digitally enabled workforce and citizens that carry out an approach focused on health promotion.
- **Digital Enablers** – The reuse of health data and technological autonomy based on EU principles and values, in particular ethical safeguards.
- **Interoperability** – The uniformity of data sharing and clinical information in a structured way, both at national and European scale
- **Governance** – The organizational commitment, including the legal and financial framework, with regard to e-health policy cooperation.

As the relationship between people and technology becomes central to societal development, it becomes clear that governments must establish efficient processes to regulate future technologies whilst ensuring EU values are taken into account.

On this basis:

- i. fostering better coordination on cross-border healthcare, therewith
- ii. capacity building on digital talent and culture, and
- iii. accelerating the digital transformation whilst harnessing the power of data and artificial intelligence;

Stand as cornerstones of the envisioned European health data space. In this regard, focus should be given to the achievement of a common approach for capacity building on the exchange of medical information, as well as on how to access and reuse health data for better research and public health outcomes. This will allow National and European eHealth services to function harmoniously and in a coordinated way, and citizens to leverage from the use of telehealth.

3. Format of procedure in the meeting

For information.