European public health research will lead the way in providing evidence for the best population health and health systems practices. It will make use of various types of data, collaborate across different sectors and countries, and emphasise long-term impact. The needs of patients and citizens will lead the way in shaping the research agenda and policy. Prevention-based healthcare and community inclusion will lead to an improved quality of life.

Health & environment & lifestyle

DG Research and Innovation continues to support research on health promotion in order to expand our knowledge of the barriers to adopting healthy lifestyles, and to use this understanding to develop innovative interventions. Almost 80 million EUR have been invested through FP7 (2007-2013) and Horizon2020 (2014-2020) framework research programmes. This represents a broad range of research in the design, development and implementation of health promoting interventions and health programmes, aiming at the adoption of a healthy lifestyle.

Mental Health

Public mental health research is funded from the framework programme for research with 75 million EUR in FP7 and 11 million EUR in Horizon2020, and focuses on developing effective action for mental health promotion, designing preventative measures, and strengthening the performance of mental health systems. Innovative approaches such as web-based prevention and treatment are also developed and tested for implementation at a larger scale.

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Health systems

DG Research and Innovation, through its FP7 and Horizon2020 framework programmes, aims to provide evidence to support health systems across Europe. While there is significant diversity in the organization of health services, European health systems share common objectives such as patient-centredness, access to innovation, and financial sustainability. The diversity of health systems across Europe, in fact, provides an opportunity to identify good practices and study whether and how they can be transferred to other countries and regions.

Maternal health

The research projects overseen by DG Research and Innovation cover a wide range of the challenges faced by mothers and their infants all over the world: premature newborn, prevention and treatment of infectious and non-communicable diseases, reproductive and sexual health promotion, improved guidelines and evidence base for safer deliveries. Through its FP7 and Horizon2020 framework programmes, the European Commission has supported 35 projects with a total budget of 82 million EUR.

Global health

The FP7 and Horizon2020 framework programmes provided around 135 million EUR worth of funding for 45 global health-related research projects. These multi-disciplinary projects addressed important topics influencing global health, including health literacy, disease prevention and treatment, health system and workforce strengthening, and governance and management capacity-building. Through these research actions, the European Commission reinforces the impact of its actions by involving all relevant stakeholders, and by providing data and evidence-based recommendations to policy makers.

Foresight

The complex interactions between multiple determinants of health and wellbeing are not well understood. These may include air quality, climate, traffic and congestion, ambient noise, built environment, urbanisation, food systems, waste, lifestyle, occupation, demographic change, culture, socio-economic factors, globalisation... Current measures and indicators of health status and quality of life are inadequate to capture the effect of these interactions. Foresight is a powerful tool in providing a systematic and structured approach to understanding the determinants affecting health and wellbeing, analysing the range of possible outcomes, and defining policy options.