



## INVITATION TO THE VENICE STAKEHOLDER EVENT EUREGIO III PROJECT

Learning lessons from health investments in Structural Funds 2000-2006  
to inform regions in the 2007-2013 period

Venice, Italy 25-26 February 2010

### CONFERENCE BRIEFING

**EUREGIO III** project is funded by the EU under the 2008-2013 Health Programme and it represents a partnership between Health ClusterNET and several Associate Partners. The purpose of the project is to identify examples of good practice and lessons learnt from planning, seeking funding for, implementing, evaluating and managing health investments in the 2000-2006 Structural Fund period (& 2007-2013 period when available). With this practical knowledge EUREGIO III is designed to inform the use of SF in the 2007-2013 period and planning for the 2014-2020 period.

Within the European Union in recent years there has been growing recognition of the importance of sustainable regional development and the contribution of health to achieving it. This means health development leading to growth in social and human capital and the multiplier effect this can have in contributing massively to economic growth. This is reflected in the EU's Cohesion Policy and in the 2007-2013 round, Structural Funds explicitly included health sector investment, with an early emphasis on health infrastructure.

In the newer Member States and Convergence regions across Europe, governments, politicians and policy makers see SF as an important funding source for supporting the modernisation of health services. However, effective health investment needs to be well planned.

#### Key questions in this process

1. Have public authorities invested in option appraisal to clearly inform investment planning and decisions?
2. Do public servants and hospital managers know how to use Structural Funds efficiently?
3. Do they have enough data and evidence of the benefits of investments in health?
4. What are the main difficulties in applying for funding and managing structural funds in the health sector?



This project is important because the health sector is starting behind other sectors in using Structural Funds. Furthermore, with the consequences of the current economic recession and financial instability still emerging, it is likely that Member States will increasingly look to SF as a source of support for health sector investment.

**Based on the above, this stakeholder event will explore 2 themes**

1. Why and how it is important to talk about health in Structural Funds in order to maximize health gain from SF investments, and what regions need to be able to improve health related investments in their area?
2. What can EUREGIO III offer to the different stakeholders to meet the above challenges?

Currently, only 1.5% of SF is allocated for direct health sector investments as compared to an EU average of 8%. It is also likely that less ERDF resources will be available to Competitiveness and Employment Regions in the 2014-2020 period. If the health sector is to access and benefit from SF there are clear challenges. These include: how to get health people to make good cases to non-health people; and, how to translate understanding of the need of successfully getting Structural Funds. In addition, the current absorption capacity of the health sector at national and regional levels to use SF is unclear. If relevant capacity does not exist, it can be a killer to effective and sustainable health-related investments and the health gains that are necessary to support sustainable regional development.

**The aims of this stakeholder event are**

1. Building strategic relationships with 'key stakeholders' that enable a coherent approach to maximising health gains from Structural Funds,
2. Informing the mid-term review about how health gains from SF mainstream OPs can be achieved in the current 2007-2013 period,
3. Informing planning for the 2014-2020 period between key stakeholders in the SF process,
4. Putting in place discussion and learning that helps shape a cooperation mechanism that from 2014 can support regions to maximise health gains from SF mainstream Operational Programmes.

We aim to ensure very senior and expert representation from key stakeholders on the event in order to raise awareness about this agenda. The event will seek to hear from and address the different perspectives and priorities of those working at (i) policy level (EU, national, regional) (ii) managing SF at national and regional levels (Operational Programme Managing Authorities and Programme Secretariats), (iii) end-users: organizations and intermediary bodies who seek access to SF for health-related investments.

For further information see the Preliminary programme, Registration form, Project brochure, and the Venue and hotel information at the Events section.

Please note that this is an invitation only event. However, if this area is relevant to your field of expertise and responsibilities in your work, and you are interested in participating on this event, please E-mail us to the following address: [edit.sebestyen@healthclusternet.eu](mailto:edit.sebestyen@healthclusternet.eu).

See further information about the project on the EUREGIO III website: [www.euregio3.eu](http://www.euregio3.eu).

Organizing Committee  
EUREGIO III project