

NEWSLETTER



eHAction

Joint Action supporting
the eHealth Network



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Michèle Thonnet, French, PhD, Neuropharmacologist.

Michèle Thonnet has a PhD in Applied Mathematics and Medical Informatics and also graduated in Political Sciences and Public Law. She is a health, information systems and security specialist, with more than 25 years of experience, as well as author of many publications. Michèle joined the French Ministry of Health where she served for six years at the General Inspectorate for Social and Health Affairs (IGAS). At the European level she joined the steering board of large projects, committed to the implementation of “Large Scale Pilots” to improve cross-border healthcare (epSOS), leading the eHealth EU interoperability roadmap initiatives (CALLIOPE, eHGI, JaseHN), actively involved in the design and realisation of several others (PARENT, Trillium Bridge, EXPAND, VALUeHEALTH, RD-Action, Rare Diseases Task Force).

Currently, she is the eHealth European & International Affairs Executive at the French Ministry of Solidarity and Health, and its representative on diverse European health committees and at the eHealth Network, actively involved in the design of the triennial work programmes (2012-2015 & 2015-2018) and leading the work on cross-border eHealth exchange sustainability post 2021.

Foreword

by Michele Thonnet

Dear Reader,

Nowadays the world is not only evolving but quickly changing. Climate change and increased natural catastrophes as a consequence of human consumption of resources call for new behaviour; less “immediate” short-term reactions and long speeches but rather, beyond awareness expansion, new innovative long-term practices to be rigorously implemented and constantly adapted to the current needs of the population and the planet. A healthy population is the cornerstone of growing “well-being” of society and the environment.

How can eHealth at European level contribute to this? By enabling a digital space for making Europe a daily reality for easier and healthier citizen life, helping each citizen to be able to be treated everywhere as (s)he would be in his/her country by first allowing accredited health professionals to gain secure access to vital validated up-to-date personal information across borders. Sharing common views and objectives and agreeing to exchange and implement best practices on a voluntary basis through the eHAction is an important component of this aim.

On one hand, building and keeping a trustworthy European community based on dematerialised cross-border personal information exchange calls for thorough and balanced governance. On the other hand, this may only be possible if we are able to improve the exchange by continuously ensuring the interoperability of the (e)Health ecosystem for the safety of the patient and the security of the data and the systems.

Overcoming the interoperability challenges by implementing agreed common guidelines to promote and enable exchange and use of patient information through the healthcare provider systems is one of the objectives of the WP7 of the eHAction. Different actors, such as representatives of healthcare providers (from hospitals, clinics, government, insurance) have met this summer in Greece to discuss and detail their respective needs and best practices to co-design implementation guidelines. The cybersecurity components will be added by reflecting the results of the WP7 Prague’s meeting of September 2019.

These interoperability and cybersecurity components at both national and European levels will also contribute to the best principles of the sustainability process the eHAction aims for, through WP8 (eHealth national policies and sustainability for Europe post 2021), that I am honoured to lead.

Being proud to modestly contribute since many years to some of these important steps, I am delighted to see the progress made in one year by the eHAction, based on its ability to build upon the useful results of the two previous Joint Actions to support the eHealth Network and related national scale European projects and activities.

I wish you pleasant reading,

Michele Thonnet

eHealth European & International Affairs Executive
at the French Ministry of Solidarity and Health
eHAction WP8 Leader

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Intro

How do we work?

The eHAction work structure is organised into 8 areas: Work Packages (WP).

WP1 Coordination, WP2 Dissemination and WP3 Evaluation are Management and Support Work Packages. These Work Packages are respectively in charge of: managing and ensuring the Action is implemented as planned; disseminating the content produced within Member States/Countries (MS/C) and stakeholders; validating project implementation, progress and quality of results.

Core Work Packages are responsible for translating each defined priority area of the Multiannual Work Programme (MWP) 2018-2021 into actions, including related specific requests from the eHealth Network (eHN).

In this sense, Core Work Packages focus on the following areas/roles:

- **WP4 Empowering People:**

Addressing citizens as individuals who should take an active role in their healthcare process;

- **WP5 Innovative Use of Health Data:**

Providing guidance on practical governance of big data at EU level on handling big data in health;

- **WP6 Enhancing Continuity of Care:**

Addressing MS/C and their fitness for eHealth Digital Service Infrastructure (eHDSI) uptake;

- **WP7 Overcoming Implementation Challenges:**

Addressing transversal enabler issues crossing all previous categories;

- **WP8 eHealth National Policies and Sustainability:**

Ensuring long-term sustainability of the work developed and the integration of its results into national policies.

Throughout the course of eHAction, each WP has several specific milestones to achieve, internal and external deliverables to produce, as well as diverse workshops to promote in order to share knowledge and discuss ideas on different focus areas.



Top Stories

11th & 12th June 2019, Bucharest

eHealth Network F2F Meeting

June 13th, 2019 Bucharest
**Leadership Council
 F2F Meeting**

July 10th & 11th, 2019 Thessaloniki
WP7 T7.1 Workshop

September 2nd & 3rd, 2019, Brussels
**3rd Common Semantic
 Strategy Workshop**

September 11th to 13th, 2019, Prague
WP5 & WP7 Face-to-Face Meeting

September 9th to 20th, 2019, Amsterdam
WP4 Workshop

The 15th eHealth Network meeting took place in Bucharest, Romania on 11th and 12th June 2019. Both co-chairs opened the 1st day session, starting with the approval of the agenda.

Under the first topic, *eHDSI implementation*, the eHN approved the going live of 3 countries: Estonia, Malta and Portugal, that will offer ePrescriptions and/or patient summaries for their own citizens and for foreign ones. A representative of CEN (the European Committee for Standardization) presented the results of the *International Patient Summary Standards* Project, funded by the Commission and aimed at the creation of a global level Patient Summary specification to transpose into a European standard. Closing off the first topic, the Commission presented the European Court of Auditors' report on the implementation of the Cross-border Healthcare Directive.

The second topic covered was *Interoperability and Sustainability*, starting with the presentation of D6.1 Roadmap on future eHDSI use cases and features by a representative of gematik (Germany), who presented the legal environment of the eHDSI in a report aimed at a non-lawyer audience as well. Greece continued with the *Guidelines for IT interoperability* presentation, aimed at facilitating co-operation between hospitals. A representative of Portugal presented the work on the *Common Semantic Strategy*; the eHealth Network decided to set up a Member State sub-group on semantics, with the participation of Finland, Croatia, Germany, Portugal, France, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Spain, Hungary, Netherlands, Slovakia and Romania. France followed with the information note on *Integration in national policies and sustainability* of the eHDSI. Both Commission and Member State co-chairs underlined the importance of this work. The Czech Republic closed the topic by presenting a draft report on *Best practices on data protection at national level*.

Estonia opened the third topic, *Patient Empowerment & Patient Access to Health Data*, presenting the draft policy framework for empowering people focused on mHealth, telehealth, patient access and digital health literacy. Ireland showed the approach they had taken to the task of developing a common competence framework to measure e-skills among health professionals and map training actions.

In the afternoon, there was a brainstorming session with EU Agencies and stakeholders on eHealth activities: Assessing the impact of digital transformation of health services; Immunisation / vaccination; Common Security framework for eHealth; Use of health data, big data, health analytics.

Regarding *EU eHealth Sustainability and Planning*, the Member States co-chair presented the 2019 – 2021 plan for the eHealth Network as agreed in the previous meeting (November 2018). Afterwards, Romania presented its national ehealth strategy and intention to join the eHDSI.

The second day's agenda started with a second session on *EU eHealth Sustainability and Planning*. Roberto Viola, Director General of DG CNECT, presented the *Commission Recommendation on a European Electronic Health Record Exchange Format*.

About the topic *Investment guidelines*, the Commission provided an overview of the various funding opportunities likely to be available under the next Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-27. Austria presented the draft investment guidelines, intended to be a tool to orient EU actors towards funding/purchasing choices that foster interoperable digital health.

Finally, the Commission (DG SANTE) provided an outline of provisional plans to launch a study to identify potential legal and regulatory gaps in the field of digital health.



eHealth Network F2F Meeting | 11th & 12th June 2019, Bucharest

June 13th, 2019 Bucharest

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WP4 Workshop

The 13th Leadership Council meeting was held in Bucharest, Romania on the 13th June this year. WP 1 *Coordination* introduced the face-to-face meeting, followed by the activity status and a debriefing from 15th eHealth Network meeting.

The Leadership Council reviewed and commented on the summary of eHAction's first year of activities. Current and upcoming activities and events were addressed and discussed, as well as administrative issues and document amendments.



Leadership Council F2F Meeting | 13th June 2019 | Bucharest

July 10th & 11th, 2019 Thessaloniki

WP7 T7.1 Workshop

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WP4 Workshop

WP7 *Overcoming implementation challenges* promoted the “1st eHAction Interoperability Workshop for Hospital CIOs and CEOs” in Thessaloniki, Greece, 10th-11th July 2019.

Henrique Martins, eHAction Coordinator and eHealth Network Co-chair, joined the methodical sessions aimed at promoting reflection on the best approaches to answer interoperability issues and the debate on cybersecurity challenges in healthcare organisations.

The agenda of the first day involved several monitors and managers (CIOs and CEOs) from hospitals, universities and health agencies from different European countries, as well as entities like DG CONNECT and ENISA. The speakers’ panel comprised of experts in specific fields such as legal, organisational, technical and operational, organised in working groups to discuss and share ideas in a dynamic way.

On the second day, working groups focused on the alignment of the next steps towards the definition of a practical and operational guide for IT Management on implementing interoperability actions in healthcare organisations.



WP7 T7.1 Workshop | July 10th & 11th, 2019 Thessaloniki

September 2nd & 3rd, 2019, Brussels

3rd Common Semantic Strategy Workshop

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September 9th to 20th, 2019, Amsterdam
WP4 Workshop

The 3rd Workshop on Common Semantic Strategy (CSS) for Health in the European Union took place in Brussels on the 2nd and 3rd of September this year.

Aimed at the consolidation of the deliverable document D8.2.2, produced by the CSS Working Group, this workshop focused on the general view of each chapter, discussion and alignment of the document, its critical points, participants' main comments and points that still need to be aligned.

The aim of the Common Semantic Strategy for Health is to present the eHealth Network with the work developed by the CSS working group, in the form of an elaborated CSS draft proposal, to achieve semantic interoperability in selected use cases for healthcare and health management at EU level in the coming five years.



▲ 3rd Common Semantic Strategy Workshop | September 2nd & 3rd, 2019, Brussels

September 11th to 13th, 2019, Prague

WP5 & WP7 Face-to-Face Meeting

September 9th to 20th, 2019, Amsterdam
WP4 Workshop

WP5's Innovative Use of Health data and WP7's Overcoming implementation challenges joint face-to-face meetings took place between the 11th and 13th September 2019 at the Conference Centre Hotel ILE, Prague, Czech Republic.

During the initial part of the meeting, WP7 discussed the results of the survey on data protection in healthcare carried out by WP7.2 (Best practices and approaches on data protection at national level). The Czech team presented the data gathered from the partners as well as the structure of the D7.2 Report on Best practices and approaches on data protection at national level. The aim of the meeting was discussion of the topics on data protection in healthcare, to share Member State approaches to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in healthcare and to develop together a meaningful report for the eHealth Network.

During the second part of the meeting, WP5 discussed the topic of the WP5.1 (Mapping, awareness raising, and policy relevant actions on innovative use of big data in health). The overall objective of WP5 is to support the application of good practices in Member States and provide guidance at EU level on handling big data in health within the existing EU regulatory framework on secondary use of personal health data, and consequently to ease the uptake of innovative usage of data across the healthcare sector for the benefits of society, individuals and performance of MS health systems.



WP5 & WP7 Face-to-Face Meeting | September 11th - 13th 2019, Prague

9th to 20th September 2019, Amsterdam
WP4 Workshop

WP4 - Empowering People, organised the “People Empowerment Workshop” in Amsterdam, Netherlands, 19th - 20th September 2019.

The agenda of the first day started with a brief presentation to the stakeholders. WP4 then introduced an overview of the activities, planning and goals to be achieved from the workshop “Empowering People”. Each WP4 task contributors and stakeholders took part in brainstorming sessions on the deliverable D4.1 Policy Framework on People Empowerment. During the afternoon, the working groups discussed the results of the different tasks and consolidated relevant information about the collected data.

On the second day, stakeholders presented the projects they are involved in and gave contributions about policy making and proposals in the field of health, focusing on People Empowerment. After that, the working groups brainstormed, defined priorities and verified the structure of the deliverable D4.2 Policy Proposal.

The People Empowerment Workshop brought fruitful contributions from all the participants, improving WP4’s work in progress.



WP4 Workshop | September 19th & 20th, 2019, Amsterdam

Meet the SPMS Communication and External Affairs Director, eHAction WP2

Diogo Gomes



▲ Diogo Gomes | SPMS Communication and External Affairs Director, eHAction WP2

Diogo, considering eHAction's first year, how do you assess its performance and what were the most significant achievements so far?

I would consider the most relevant achievements to be the specific guidelines and reports eHAction core Work Packages have been developing; for example, the Report on eSkills for Professionals, Best Practices in Data Protection, the Policy framework on People Empowerment, among others, aimed at ensuring that countries' approach to patient use of data and health professionals' digital skills are both helpful and consistent.

We have promoted several workshops during the year as well, 15 to be precise, bringing together professionals and specialists from different areas, for instance the WP7 Workshop for Hospital CIOs and CEOs, that focused on implementation challenges in eHealth interoperability.

As a health communication expert how do you see the impact of this Joint Action on EU citizens and health professionals?

In my opinion this Joint Action has a high impact on both EU citizens and health professionals as we are developing innovative strategies to prepare them for acquiring useful and helpful eSkills. Nowadays, the performance of any profession requires digital skills and in clinical practice it becomes particularly relevant as all health professionals use IT systems on a daily basis.

Given the challenges of cybersecurity, it is also very important to empower people with digital health literacy and tools to access their own health data. In this sense, we foresee that these systems will allow the mitigation of errors and support clinical decision making, thus improving the quality of health services.

What do you consider to be the main challenge of eHAction?

I think the biggest challenge of eHAction will be the implementation of its deliverables i.e. reports and guideline policies. Considering the legal and normative heterogeneity in Member States, hopefully this does not become a barrier towards IT standardisation, semantic interoperability, setting of information sharing patterns and health data consultation.

Diogo, within WP2 you have been managing the eHAction dissemination process, can you specify the WP2 strategy and main objectives?

WP2 is responsible for developing an effective, macro and common dissemination strategy, consisting of four main tasks: Public dissemination; Specific dissemination, meaning share project results among eHealth stakeholders; Internal project dissemination and stakeholders' engagement, to ensure that project results can be implemented.

Having four types of dissemination is a challenge that continuously needs to be overcome, as each group requires a different approach. So, WP2 acts as a bridge between all WPs to disseminate the results and achievements of WP tasks.

About our goals, we mostly aim to raise awareness of eHAction activities and the benefits to the public, promoting results and benefits to audiences that can truly benefit from the developed work and to impact stakeholders and policy makers at European level.

eHAction has two more years ahead, what steps do you envisage taking over the next year?

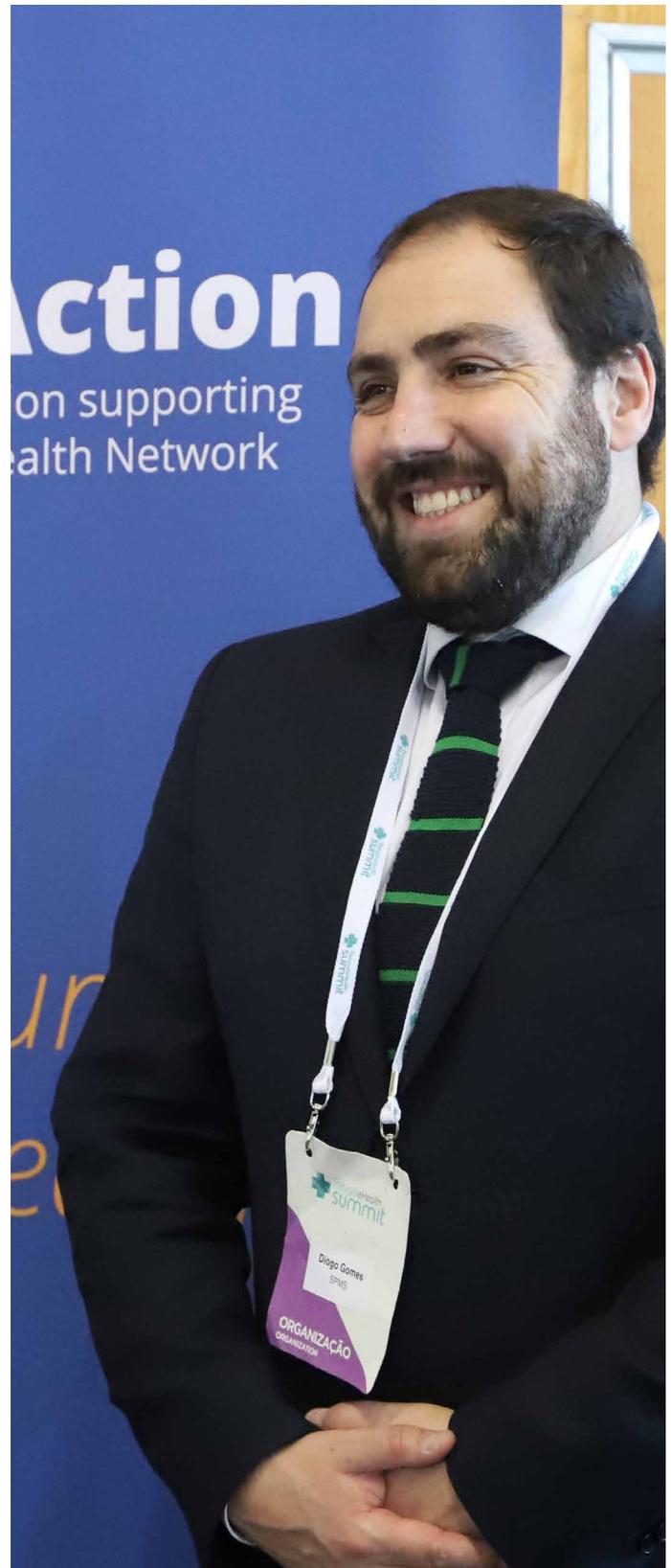
This year one of the following practical steps will be the readjustment of the eHAction website. We want to make it more appealing and functional, in order to promote an easier and profitable navigation to all our visitors. In charge of eHAction dissemination, WP2 will absolutely continue to focus on implementing digital communication strategies to increase both website and social networks' flow and interaction levels.

As I have mentioned previously, WP2 acts like a bridge among the other WPs. Therefore, we will keep giving our best to support their work development and its dissemination.

Regarding stakeholders' engagement mission we are going to implement an operationalisation plan, working together with each Work Package, in order to adjust and customise actions and activities to enable stakeholders' significant involvement, according to their engagement level and specific areas of interest.

Is there anything else you would like to share?

Sure, we have upcoming interesting events, namely the SPMS and ENISA Cybersecurity Workshop in early October. Therefore, I would like to invite everyone to visit the eHAction website and social media to know the details.



▲ Diogo Gomes | SPMS Communication and External Affairs Director, eHAction WP2



Work Package 7

Overcoming implementation challenges

Work Package 7 (WP7), led by the 3rd Regional Health Authority of Macedonia (3rd-RHA), Greece and the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic (MZCR), is about providing the eHealth Network, national and European health authorities, eHealth professionals and IT staff in large healthcare organisations with guidelines and recommendations for implementing interoperable and secure eHealth services at national and cross-border levels.

Although many initiatives have already been taken, there are issues that still need to be addressed. WP7, connecting 25 supportive entities, aims at tackling challenges on three of the most critical issues concerning the eHealth European ecosystem: interoperability, data protection (GDPR - General Data Protection Regulation) and data and systems security (NIS Directive - Network and Information Security Directive).

Work Package 7 Tasks are the following:

TASK 7.1:

Recommendations on how to implement interoperability guidelines in large healthcare organisations (Lead: 3rd RHA)

This task is envisioned to provide large healthcare organisations with practical recommendations on how to implement already defined interoperability guidelines in order to facilitate communication, exchange and use of patient information between healthcare providers, hospitals, government and insurers, especially in the cross-border context.

Main Objectives:

- Exploit previous work in the field of interoperability as described in the Digital Agenda – “eHealth Action Plan”, “Refined European eHealth Interoperability Framework” (reEIF), the new “European Interoperability Framework” (new EIF), epSOS project, SemanticHealthNet, JAseHN and others, in order to facilitate patients’ rights in cross-border healthcare;
- Collect data on the level of familiarisation of IT management staff of large healthcare organisations regarding interoperability issues and guidelines;
- Explore Member States needs for guidance on implementing eHN interoperability guidelines at national level;
- Provide recommendations for IT Management of large healthcare organisations on how to implement interoperability guidelines by aligning EU regulations/common frameworks/policies. Specifically, interoperability guidelines will address software supply, software building and software deployment.



TASK 7.2:
Data protection (Lead: MZCR)

This task’s deliverable is a “Report on best practices and approaches on data protection at national level”, focusing on finding key implementation challenges of GDPR in the healthcare sector, tackling those challenges and creating a safe and efficient environment for data protection.

Personal data protection is a key challenge of healthcare systems, becoming even more relevant due to eHealth records and other digital data growth. Healthcare records are the single most sought after type of personal data on the black market, and ever-increasing numbers of cybersecurity breaches and attacks are aimed at them. At the same time there are new challenges related to the digitisation of healthcare and related services every day. Personal data protection among healthcare systems is essential to avoid direct threats and the damage that any misuse of such data may cause, such as compromising the overall trust in eHealth and the harm arising from the lack of confidence in the security by patients and healthcare providers.

Report on best practices and approaches on data protection at national level focuses on:

1. the key sets of personal data processed in healthcare;
2. the main purposes of their processing;
3. the key obstacles in implementing personal data protection in healthcare with special emphasis on eHealth;
4. the best ways to overcome those challenges and obstacles

TASK 7.3:
Data and systems security (Lead: 3rd RHA)

The vision of this task is to assist eHealth professionals in building more secure eHealth systems and services at a national and cross-border level by producing a common cybersecurity framework for eHealth systems and services.

Main Objectives:

- Provide common security framework guidelines for eHealth systems and services at national and cross-border levels (cybersecurity requirements for Patient Summary and other interoperability and portability services, security of medical devices);
- Increase awareness of national health authorities and health professionals on data and system security issues after identifying key issues to be tackled through questionnaires;
- Align with and elaborate on results of other EU Horizon 2020 projects and initiatives relative to cyber risks.

WP7 Workshops

1st eHAction Interoperability Workshop for Hospital CIOs and CEOs

The 1st eHAction Interoperability Workshop for Hospital CIOs and CEOs took place in Thessaloniki, Greece 10th-11th July this year. This two-day workshop focused on healthcare organisations and having the participation of key experts from European hospitals dealing with real-life interoperability challenges in their organisations.

The first objective of the workshop was to discuss practical approaches to solve interoperability questions and understanding the security challenges in the digital ecosystem of healthcare organisations. Procuring interoperable solutions in hospitals and operationalising interoperability and security in practice were some of the issues addressed. In addition to providing a forum for discussion and the exchange of experiences between European leaders in the above areas, the workshop supported the eHAction objective of delivering a practical guide for hospital managers, Chief Information Officers and IT staff of European hospitals on how to effectively master their interoperability challenges.

A second objective of this workshop was to launch the discussion on the cybersecurity topics addressed within eHAction, focusing on identifying security priority areas for healthcare providers (HCPs) that could benefit from joint efforts in the EU.

Highly interactive, the workshop enabled the identification of those aspects that need to be most urgently addressed, captured practices that have proven efficient in practice and allowed a co-creation approach for the respective eHAction documents, supporting the relative eHealth Network work items. Both panel sessions and open discussion with participants provided thought-provoking contributions.

Joint Face-to-Face meeting with WP5

As previously mentioned in our Top Stories, from the perspective of WP7, this joint face-to-face meeting was aimed at discussing data protection in healthcare topics, to share the approach of member states towards the General Data Protection Regulation in the healthcare sector and develop together a valuable report for the eHealth Network.

Therefore, WP7.2 deliberated on the results gathered from the survey on data protection in healthcare and on the structure of the deliverable *D7.2 Report on Best practices and approaches on data protection at national level*.



eHAction WP7 Workshop Participants | July 10th-11th, 2019, Thessaloniki

eHAction 1st year

One year of eHAction,
One year of eHealth
Progress

The 3rd Joint Action supporting eHealth Network marks a year of improvements in Digital Health.

In the course of its first year, eHAction has been working towards: Empowering people to participate in their health and care process by building their skills to access and control their health data; Innovating the use of the health data gathered; Enhancing continuity of care and the implementation of Interoperability Guidelines in Healthcare, looking forward to introduce best principles, to ensure post-2021 sustainability and continuity of eHealth.



13 000
WORKING HOURS



17
DELIVERABLE VERSIONS



18
COUNCIL MEETINGS



15
WORKSHOPS



3
NEWSLETTERS



2 152
FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS



254
TWITTER FOLLOWERS

These strategic implementations highlight the importance of eHealth as a service for public health and cross-border access and, consequently, to gain wide acceptance from citizens.

▲ Henrique Martins | eHAction Coordinator and eHealth Network Member States Co-Chair

A year after the eHAction Kick-Off, the effort and commitment of its partners and stakeholders must be highlighted. In about 13,000 hours of work performed over the year, several Deliverables were produced for the eHealth Network; 18 Council Meetings were held and 15 specific Workshops were promoted in order to share knowledge, developments and discuss ideas in several distinct focus areas.



eHAction quiz

How much do you know about eHealth Initiatives?

1. Which is the highest-level decision-making body of the European Union in the field of eHealth?

- a) WHO – World Health Organization
- b) eHealth Network
- c) CHAFEA – Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency

2. Which of the following is the EU's major health concern?

- a) Ageing population and chronic diseases putting pressure on health budgets
- b) Overweight and obesity issues
- c) Growing tobacco addiction in EU citizens

3. What was the first eHealth-related Joint Action from the European Commission?

- a) JASeHN - Joint Action to support the eHealth Network
- b) eHGI - eHealth Governance Initiative
- c) eHAction - Joint Action supporting the eHealth Network

4. Since which year has the European Commission been funding Health Programmes?

- a) 1993
- b) 2014
- c) 2003

5. Which of the following represents the greatest barrier to eHealth deployment?

- a) Lack of interoperability between eHealth solutions
- b) Lack of funds
- c) Lack of political will in Member States

6. What does the electronic cross-border eHealth service do?

- a) Controls the cross-border movements of EU patients
- b) Ensures the continuity of care for European citizens while travelling abroad in the EU
- c) Gives senior citizens a personalised insurance service to travel across the EU

7. Among eHAction Member States, how many countries have been approved so far to provide operational cross-border services?

- a) 5
- b) 9
- c) 13

8. Which of the following options best describes eHAction mission?

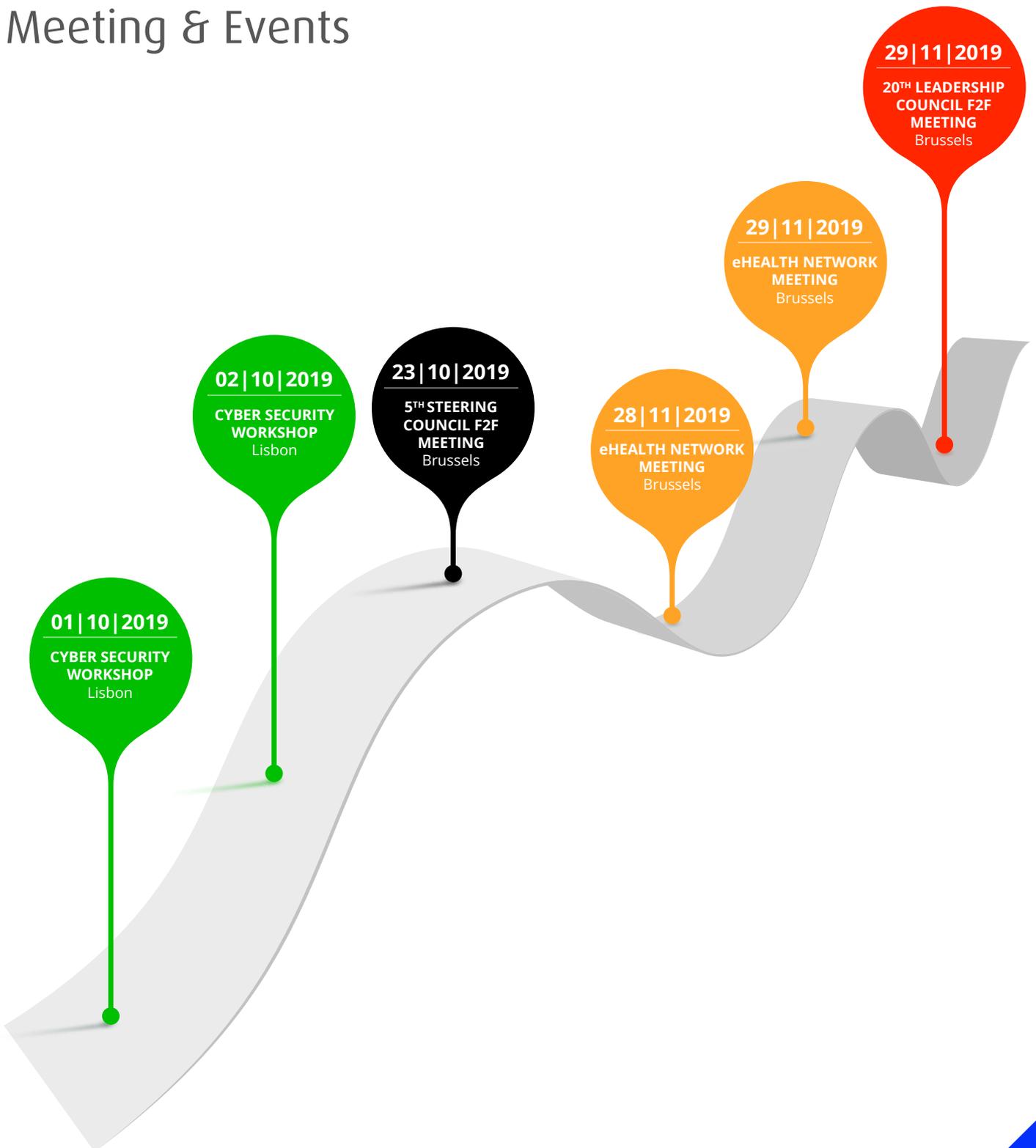
- a) A Joint Action to bring Member States together to discuss eHealth challenges
- b) A Joint Action aimed at establishing an efficient and sustainable eHealth system
- c) A Joint Action working towards a global health system

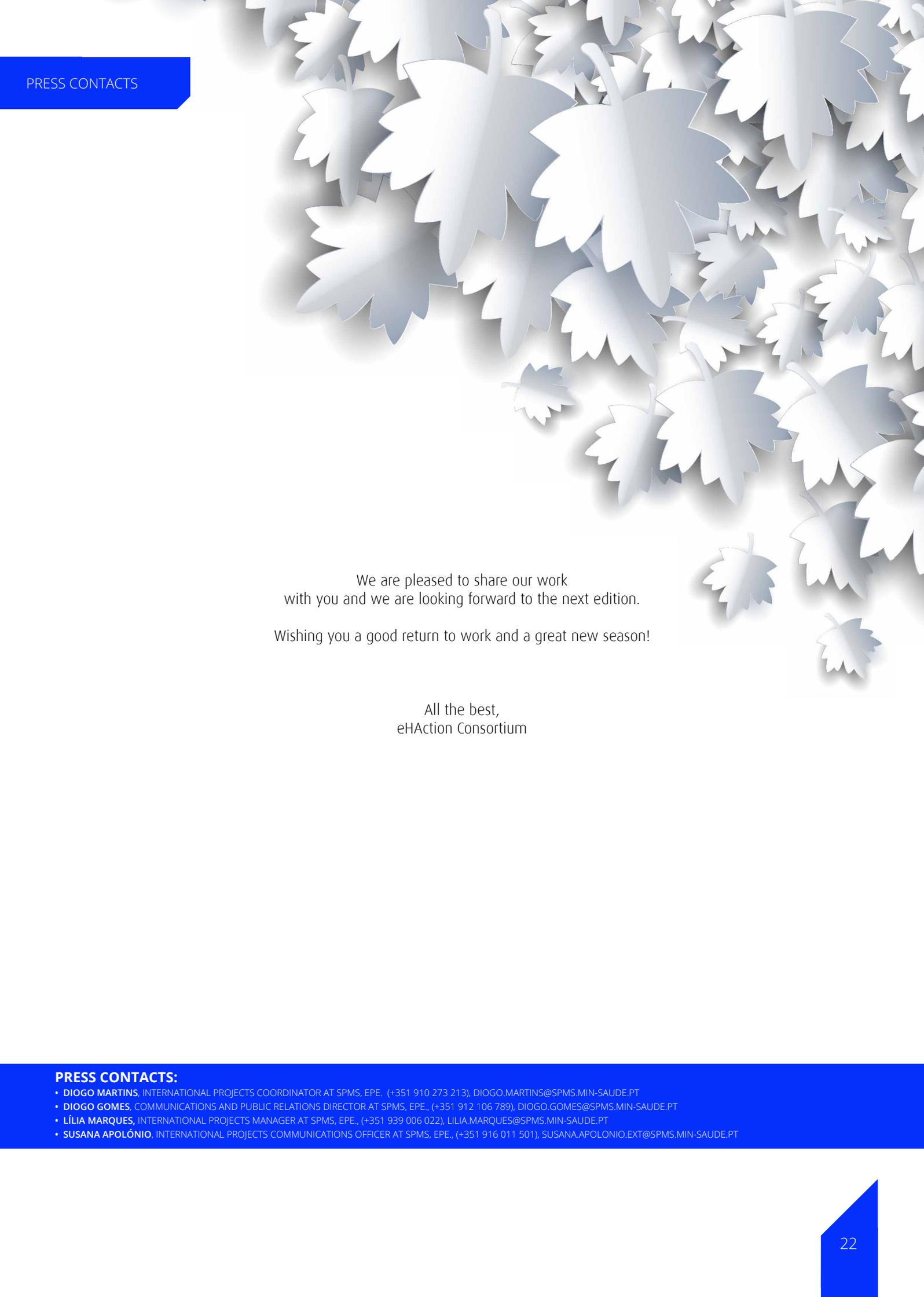
9. eHAction's biggest challenge is...

- a) To improve EU citizens health and care services
- b) To be on the frontline of Digital Health
- c) To overcome cross-border legal challenges

Upcoming

Meeting & Events





We are pleased to share our work
with you and we are looking forward to the next edition.

Wishing you a good return to work and a great new season!

All the best,
eHAction Consortium

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