



D7.1 Network Committee

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Executive summary

This document is a subsection of Deliverable 7.1 of the Joint Action on Health Information (hereinafter referred to as InfAct) with project number 801553. The major outcome expected of InfAct is a sustainable solid infrastructure on EU Health Information through improving the availability of comparable, robust and policy-relevant population health data and health system performance information. Through country collaboration, InfAct streamlines health information activities, reduces the data collection burden and works towards a sustainable and robust data collection in Europe that facilitates and supports country knowledge, health research and policy making.

This documents sets the Terms of Reference for a potential Network Committee in a future European Research Infrastructure Consortium. The Terms of Reference include the purpose, membership, committee and meeting arrangements and the review of the Network Committee.

Network Committee: Terms of Reference

I. Background

To make the most of health spending and investments at EU and Member State level, health policy and decision making must be based on robust evidence in the form of high quality and timely data on population health and health systems and thorough research outcomes.

Following the recommendations by the Council of the European Union¹, the Commission and its member states were invited to cooperate with a view to establishing a sustainable and integrated EU health information system. More specifically, the Council Conclusions urged to explore the potential of a comprehensive European health information research infrastructure as a tool.

This gave rise to the BRIDGE Health project² which concluded that the creation of a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) to collect, process, analyse, report, and communicate health information could facilitate the governance of health information activities in the EU in a way that best supports evidence-based health policies and investments.

The Joint Action (JA) on Health Information (hereinafter referred to as InfAct) builds on previous work and further develops collaborative action to set up a sustainable infrastructure for EU health information. InfAct started in March 2018 and will run for 3 years, bringing together 40 institutions from 28 EU-countries (EU-Member States and associated countries). More information can be found on our website www.inf-act.eu

This document sets the Terms of Reference for a potential Network Committee in a future European Research Infrastructure Consortium.

A potential governance structure of the Distributed Infrastructure on Population Health when it becomes a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (DIPoH-ERIC) is shown in Figure 1. It is composed of an Assembly of Members, a Scientific Advisory Board, an Ethics and Privacy Board, a Central Executive Management Office and a Network Committee. The strategic decisions are taken by the Assembly of Members with support from the Scientific Advisory Board. The executive activities are carried out by the Central Executive Management Office, which includes the Director General and the Core Team. The operating activities are carried out by the Network Committee.

¹ http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/lssa/140004.pdf

² <http://www.bridge-health.eu/>

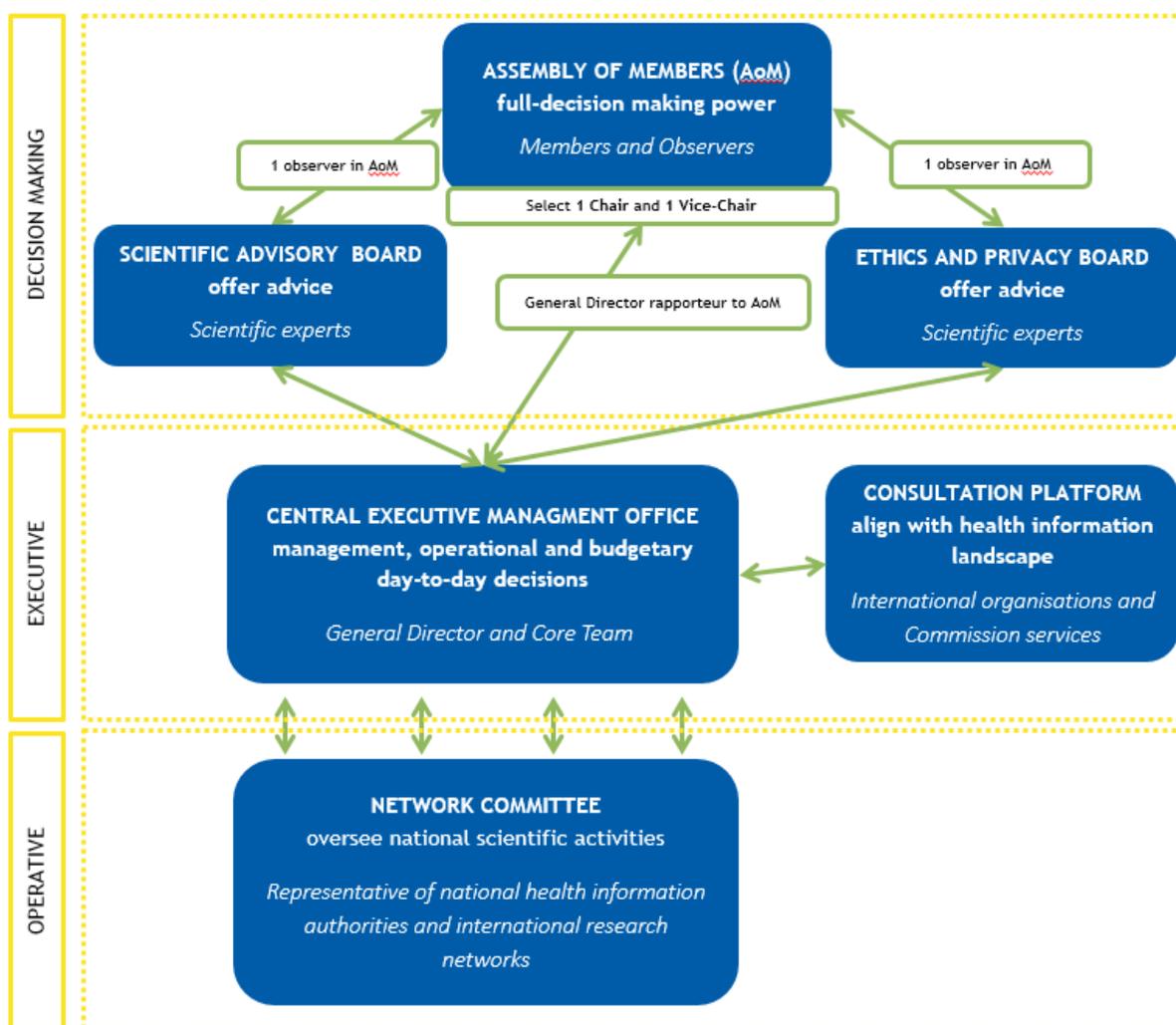


Figure 1. Governance structure of future DIPoH-ERIC.

II. Committee Name

Network Committee

III. Purpose

The Network Committee is the platform where national networks or nodes and (domain specific) research networks join together. Research networks are defined here as active networks of national and/or regional experts from several countries that perform comparative research in a specific health area (information domain). National and research networks will be the hands and feet of the research infrastructure. They will generate new data and research output, improve research methods and tools, develop standards and guidelines and contribute to international research capacity building through exchange of knowledge and expertise.

- The Network Committee shall oversee the implementation of the strategies of the Assembly of Members and the Central Executive Management Office.
- The Network Committee shall oversee national scientific activities related to DIPoH-ERIC and the activities of international (domain specific) research networks and shall streamline coherence and consistency across DIPoH-ERIC.
- It also ensures collaboration between the members at operational level.
- It focusses on the smooth functioning of the services provided by DIPoH-ERIC and shall provide feedback on the services and activities to the executive and decision making layers.
- The Network Committee shall have a practical way of working. The Network Committee shall be under the responsibility of the Central Executive Management Office. Specific working groups shall be created within the Network Committee following the request of the Network Committee or the Director General.
- A set of criteria have been developed for assessing the scope, quality, impact and performance of research networks. The Network Committee shall be able to use these criteria to evaluate and support new networks to join DIPoH.
- The Network Committee shall discuss data governance and make proposals on how to optimize data management upon approval by the Assembly of Members.

IV. Membership

A representative, known as members of the Network Committee, from each national node and each research network shall be invited to participate to the Network Committee. National nodes and research networks have a dual role of health information owners, curators, and users in the infrastructure. They have the best knowledge of what is provided to the infrastructure by their network or node and what they need in order to carry out scientific work. Additionally, they have a network of experts that can be consulted.

A list shall be set up with the name, function and institution of the members of the Network Committee.

A chairperson shall be elected during the first meeting.

V. Committee arrangements

The following requirements will be adhered to when setting up the Network Committee:

- Achieving the maximum possible inclusion and balance between MSs and associated countries in the decision-making progress;

- Achieving the maximum possible inclusion of domain specific research networks that meet the criteria for inclusion (Deliverable 7.1 Quality criteria for assessing Research Networks)
- Ensuring transparent and fair procedures, with clearly indicated accountable parties;
- Minimising the administrative overheads, without compromising the integrity of the governing procedures;
- Maintaining adequate flexibility in order to adapt to future change of needs, including fast expansion of membership or widening of scope;
- Setting up well defined consensus reaching and conflict resolution mechanisms;

VI. Meeting arrangements

Meetings will be arranged at a set frequency, possibly every six months, either face-to-face or virtually depending on budgetary constraints. The meetings could potentially take place at the Central Executive Management Office. The chairperson in collaboration with the Central Executive Management Office shall prepare and send by email to each member of the Network Committee a written (original) agenda no later than seven days preceding the meeting.

The chairperson of the Network Committee shall produce written minutes of each meeting which shall be the formal record of all decisions taken. He/she shall send by email the draft minutes to all members present in the meeting within 10 calendar days of the meeting.

The minutes shall be considered as accepted if, within 15 calendar days from sending, no member present in the meeting has sent by e-mail an objection in writing to the chairperson with respect to the accuracy of the draft of the minutes, provided that the deadline for response is sent with the minutes.

The chairperson shall send the accepted minutes to all the members of the Network Committee, who shall safeguard them. If requested the Central Executive Management Office shall provide authenticated duplicates to members of the Network Committee.

Decisions will only be binding once the relevant part of the minutes has been accepted by all.

The minutes of the Network Committee meetings will be shared with the Central Executive Management Office and the Assembly of Members.

VII. Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed in the future DIPOH-ERIC and consequently once every year.

Sciensano | Rue Juliette Wytsmanstraat 14 |
1050 Brussels | Belgium | e-mail: infact.coordination@sciensano.be |
Website: www.inf-act.eu | Twitter: @JA_InfAct

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