



ROAMER

A Roadmap for Mental Health Research in Europe



Why Mental Health Research?

Mental disorders place immense burdens on individuals, their families and society. **More than 1 in 3 Europeans** experience mental health problems in any given year, and even more will be affected indirectly. The most recent estimate of cost in Europe is **€461 billion per year**, as of 2010.

Funding for mental health research in Europe is much lower than the population impact of these disorders. This is despite mental health research providing a similar investment return to other health areas. Reports suggest that for every one euro spent on mental health research there is a 0.37 euro return per year—similar to the return for cardiovascular disorder research.

European Research Advantage

- Europe has some of the best mental health centres in the world, staffed with highly trained professionals and producing the highest quality research
- Europe's comprehensive and intelligible health systems offer the ability to collect 'big data' and produce rich datasets not available elsewhere in the world
- Europe is home to initiatives for including individuals with mental health problems in the design and management of research
- Taking advantage of the full research potential requires coordination and integration across Europe, capitalising on relationships across disciplines, professions, and public and private sectors.



Poised for action

There have been recent ground-breaking advances in many areas of mental health, including **biological sciences** (brain mapping, fast genome-wide association studies), **eHealth and technology** (web-based treatments, apps for monitoring symptoms), **psychological therapies** (use and implementation of CBT) and **research infrastructure** (open access publication, European Research Networks). European research is well-placed to address many challenges in mental health over the coming years.

ROAMER Method

ROAMER (ROADmap for Mental health and Well-being Research in Europe) developed a **comprehensive and integrated mental health research roadmap**. ROAMER encompasses population and public health, monitoring of health services and service implementation, social and cultural contexts, clinical trials, individual traits and risk factors, and research at cellular levels.

Work packages within ROAMER used systematic literature mappings to evaluate major research advances in their respective areas of research. They also identified the next critical questions for research by using consensus meetings, advisory boards, and surveys of researchers and wider stakeholders in Europe, making sure they took account of recent technological advances and European infrastructure

Six research priorities were produced and are shown overleaf. These are targeted, actionable, built on excellent European science and resolvable in the next 5 to 10 years.

Addressing these priorities will benefit:

Individuals and their families, through:

- Reducing burdens on carers
- Reducing stigma
- Promoting social inclusion

The public purse, through:

- Reducing healthcare costs
- Reducing the costs on

social services necessary to support European citizens

Sustainable growth and productivity gains to European industry, through:

- Creating opportunities for drug development and technological innovation
- Developing a skilled young work force

ROAMER analysed existing resources in European regions, and **involved input from over 1000 individuals and stakeholder organisations**. Evidence-based recommendations were prioritised through iterative feedback, consensus meetings, international advisory boards and surveys of researchers, experts and wider stakeholders in Europe. This process was the largest survey to date on research prioritisation in mental health

ROAMER's 6 Mental Health Research Priorities

1. Research into mental disorder prevention, mental health promotion and interventions in children, adolescents and young people
2. Focus on the development and causal mechanisms of mental health symptoms, syndromes and well-being across the lifespan (including older populations)
3. Developing and maintaining international and interdisciplinary research networks and shared databases
4. Developing and implementing better interventions using new scientific and technological advances
5. Reducing stigma, empowering service users and carers in decisions about mental health care, research
6. Health and social systems research that addresses quality of care and takes account of socio-cultural and socio-economic contexts and approaches

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