



## RICHE – Roadmap for Child Health Research in Europe

### *What is the Roadmap all about?*

Child health in Europe is reasonably good, and over the past 50 years, mortality rates have been successfully reduced for all age groups. Still, the increase in morbidity from non-communicable diseases poses a substantial burden of preventable illness, and poor health status, with predictable consequences for ill health in adult life (e.g., obesity, type 2 diabetes, poor mental health, cardiovascular disease, stroke, and premature death). Addressing these new challenges requires answers to complex questions, crossing disciplinary boundaries, and policy sectors. Emphasizing the importance of integration across policy sectors, across areas, and across age groups, the RICHE project is a response to the call of the European Union and the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States for child and adolescent health needs.

To achieve this aim and to cover the full diversity of child health research across Europe, the RICHE project brought together a wide-array of European countries and a multitude of disciplines, joining both experience and a diverse disciplinary, professional cultural and national perspective to the project. A key output of the RICHE project was development of a Roadmap on the Future of Child Health Research in Europe which had the aim to:

1. Provide evidence-based guidelines for prioritising future research on child health, research resources, research types and research methods;
2. Inspire future funding allocations and research calls, as well as national and international applications for grants, which prioritise the gaps identified within RICHE;
3. Enable a better fit between research priorities and health care practitioners' and stakeholders' needs for information;
4. Support the translation of research into policy for different stakeholders, to make better use of research in enabling evidence-based planning, monitoring and evaluation of health policy actions.



## *How was the Roadmap developed?*



- The Roadmap was developed based on the outputs of the previous RICHE work packages (WP1 – Inventory, WP2 – Child Health Measurement, WP3 – Gaps)
- Additional tasks included: development of a framework within which to present the Roadmap, recommendations for the translation of knowledge into policy and practice, evaluation of the reports of WP1, WP2, WP3 to identify priority areas to include in the Roadmap report, to develop and conduct a consultation process on proposed Roadmap, to deliver the Roadmap report
- Priority research topics were defined by application of the following criteria. Each topic had to meet at least one criteria:
  - Significant impact on society
  - Significant impact on families
  - Significant impact on individuals
  - Representative of Significant Population Groups
  - Support more efficient or effective service delivery
  - Feasible

### *Key facts about the Roadmap*

- Altogether 8 priority research areas with 31 specific research priorities
- Specific health issues as well as general aspects, such as health services research and research capacity improvement, are covered
- 78 practical recommendations for research improvement in specific areas
- Recommendations are value judgments and do not claim to be „fully valid“
- Focus on topics relevant to disadvantaged groups (e.g., immigrants) and topics which affect nearly all European children (e.g., mental health)

### *What are the main messages of the Roadmap?*

1. Need for more European comparative studies in specific health areas (European-added value)
  1. Conduct meaningful cross country comparisons through validated and routinely



implemented indicators



2. Develop indicators further in

specific research areas

2. Increase children's visibility in society

1. Collect data in a more child centric way and not just from the perspective of the economically active adult

2. Give children a greater priority in consensus data and household surveys to analyze their domestic and social environments

3. Need for more research on how to affectively implement future child health supports

### *Who developed the Roadmap?*

The RICHE project group is a multi-disciplinary group of researchers from 23 European countries with experience in child health research in Europe. An Expert Group, including young people, advocates and researchers, provided further support. The Roadmap Work Package was headed by Prof. Ulrike Ravens-Sieberer ([ravens-sieberer@uke.de](mailto:ravens-sieberer@uke.de)) in cooperation with the RICHE project group. The RICHE project is co-ordinated by Prof. Anthony Staines ([anthony.staines@dcu.ie](mailto:anthony.staines@dcu.ie)) and Prof. Michael Rigby ([michael.rigby@nhv.se](mailto:michael.rigby@nhv.se)).