

EURORDIS Briefing on the JARDIN project

What is JARDIN?

JARDIN is a Joint Action to support the integration of European Reference Networks (ERNs) into national health systems. Joint Actions are a funding mechanism through which the European Commission co-finances collaborative action among EU and associated countries to develop, share and test tools and approaches to respond to specific health issues.

Supported by 58 partner institutions across 29 countries, including all EU countries, Norway, and Ukraine, JARDIN has a budget of €18.75 million for three years.

What is the Purpose of JARDIN?

Health systems are complex systems that consist of a myriad of elements that interact from individuals to organisations, infrastructures, and technologies. For these systems to promote, restore, and maintain citizens' health, every level and component must be closely connected.

ERNs represent the supranational level that has been operating so far in a somewhat detached manner from national and regional levels, both operationally and from a governance perspective. National health authorities must now envisage how the Networks will interact with the other components of their health system to enhance their capacity to diagnose, manage and treat patients.

JARDIN will support these efforts by producing recommendations, models, and implementable solutions to integrate the ERNs with the national and subnational health systems as a continuum.

What is the Plan for JARDIN?

The project's comprehensive approach is a step in the right direction to ensure multilevel integration (local, national, and supranational) and the interconnection of all system's components. The activities planned under JARDIN include:

- Developing frameworks for national rare disease governance and quality assurance.
- Optimising care pathways tailored to patient needs and improving referral systems for accessing ERNs' specialist advice.
- Proposing recommendations and models to create or enhance national networks and other mechanisms to improve coordination and knowledge sharing at national level and serve as an interface with ERNs and developing programmes for undiagnosed conditions.
- Improving the management and sharing of health data across ERNs and national infrastructures.
- Offering recommendations to improve support to Expert Centres that participate in the ERNs, including training, working conditions, and resources.

What is the Promise of JARDIN?

JARDIN recommendations, solutions and simulation models will be used by national health authorities to develop their own solutions for integration, based on a detailed analysis of the population's needs and a deep understanding of their own health system.

Possibly by 2027, not all countries will have implemented all reforms required to integrate the ERNs, but they all should have a comprehensive implementation plan for integration anchored in the national rare disease strategy, with a clear timeline, milestones, and resources allocated to get to the finish line.