

## BBMRI-ERIC launches 10-Year Roadmap: Biobanking for a Healthier World

Brussels, 15 October 2024: Today, BBMRI-ERIC launches its visionary 10-Year Roadmap that adopts the "One Health" approach to prioritise the interconnection between human, animal, and environmental health. The event unveils the uniquely co-created Roadmap to key stakeholders, emphasising its role in advancing biobanking for European and global health improvements. It provides a blueprint for the research infrastructure, the biobanking community and wider partners that places biobanking at the heart of scientific research to achieve a healthier world.

The launch event kicks off with a welcome address by Philippe Desmeth, Chair of the BBMRI-ERIC Assembly of Members, followed by Prof. Walter Ricciardi on today's pressing global health challenges. Prof. Jens Habermann, Director General of BBMRI-ERIC, presents the Roadmap's strategic vision. Keynote insights are delivered by Signe Ratso, Deputy Director General for Innovation, Prosperity and International Cooperation at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD).

Perspectives from BBMRI's National Nodes are shared by Dr. Annelies Debuquoy (BBMRI.be) and Dr. Christine Joye (BBMRI.ch). Dr. Hemma Bauer, Head of Unit, Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research, Austria (BBMRI-ERIC Hosting Country) delivers the closing remarks.

Prof. Jens K. Habermann, BBMRI-ERIC Director General explains the novel approach taken to produce the BBMRI-ERIC 10-Year Roadmap:

"It was developed over the last year as part of an intensive community interaction and consultation process with our Member States, National Nodes and Biobanks, Stakeholder Forum Patient and Citizens Pillar, our external Scientific and Ethical Advisory Board and other key stakeholders. This crisp new Vision, revised Mission and eight strategic objectives enables a close alignment of national programmes with the European activities of BBMRI-ERIC and hence fosters synergies and intensified community engagement at an unprecedented new level."

The Roadmap provides a framework for strategic alignment across BBMRI-ERIC, grounded in the values of scientific excellence, equity, diversity, inclusion and fairness, with implementation led by Member State or EU-level work programmes.

Signe Ratso, Deputy Director General for Innovation, Prosperity and International Cooperation at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD), says:

"I am pleased to help launch BBMRI's 10-year Roadmap, not least since it has been developed in the most collaborative of ways, to serve research across various domains to improve prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases."

Philippe Desmeth, Chair of BBMRI-ERIC Assembly of Members, highlights the importance of collaboration and collective efforts:

“When I look at BBMRI, I'm reminded of what Antoine de Saint Exupéry wrote in his book ‘Terre des hommes’: ‘To be human is to accept responsibility...it is to be proud of a victory that comrades have won. It is to feel, by laying one's stone, that one is contributing to building the world’.

“We are among those who, in one way or another, contribute to the ongoing implementation of BBMRI. Spread the word to those who will continue to make BBMRI a success: patients, doctors, biobanks, DG R&I managers, national biobanks, National Node directors, BBMRI national delegates and the BBMRI central team.”

## A complex research landscape

Almost 20 years ago the EU put in place the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) and adopted a pan-European legal framework (European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) to pull resources across all sciences, thus enabling cutting edge research in Europe. Over the past decade, Research Infrastructures have become a key player in addressing global challenges, reflecting the complex issues the EU faces today.

Speaking on these global research challenges, Prof. Walter Ricciardi, Chair of the BBMRI-ERIC Scientific and Ethical Advisory Board, says:

“As we stand at the threshold of a rapidly evolving global landscape, scientific research faces unprecedented challenges that will shape the future of humanity and our planet. While scientific inquiry has always been a powerful tool for advancing knowledge and driving innovation, the coming decades will demand an even more robust and coordinated global response to a variety of pressing issues: *climate change and environmental sustainability, pandemics and global health, technological and ethical frontiers, resource scarcity and food security, equitable access to knowledge and innovation.*

“As we confront these and other challenges, it is imperative that scientists, policymakers, and the global community work together to build a future where research and innovation can thrive.”

## BBMRI-ERIC Vision and Mission Statement

Core to the Roadmap is a new Vision and Mission. The Vision states that “by unlocking the potential of biobanking and biomolecular resources, BBMRI-ERIC inspires the best research to benefit patients, the public and the planet.” This is simplified as: “Biobanking for a Healthier World”.

The 10-Year Roadmap Mission expands on this: “BBMRI-ERIC enables the development of innovative technology and processes as a cross-domain network that facilitates responsible access to high quality samples, data and biomolecular resources. This is accomplished through multidisciplinary expertise, service provision, scientific excellence, promotion of knowledge exchange and partnerships within the health and life sciences.”

Cyprus has been an Observer of BBMRI-ERIC since 2016 and a regular Member since 2020. Reflecting on the unique collaboration to develop the roadmap and its national value, Prof. Constantinos Deltas, founder and director of biobank.cy Centre of Excellence said:

“The collaborative efforts embodied in this Roadmap not only strengthen our commitment to biobanking but also enhance our ability to address health challenges both locally and globally. Together, we can harness the power of biobanks to drive innovation and improve health outcomes for all. Since the start of our operation, our motto has been: We invest in the Biobank, we invest in a healthier Cyprus.”

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For editors:

### **About BBMRI-ERIC**

[BBMRI-ERIC](#) is a European Research Infrastructure established in 2013 under EU legislation. It brings together all the main players from the biobanking field – clinicians and researchers, biobankers, industry, patients and citizens – to boost biomedical research. Its headquarters are in Graz, Austria.

**BBMRI-ERIC Members:** Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland.

**BBMRI-ERIC Observers:** Denmark, IARC/WHO, Qatar, Spain and Türkiye.

For more information about BBMRI-ERIC, visit [www.bbmri-eric.eu](http://www.bbmri-eric.eu)

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