

Welcome to SENET!

The Sino-European Health Networking Hub – SENET – is a 30-month (2019 – 2021) project launched in January 2019, aiming to create a sustainable dialogue between health research and innovation actors from the EU and China. Focusing on common health challenges, SENET will facilitate and foster the cooperation in health research and development (R&D) between China and the EU.

Based on a collaboration scheme strongly involving experts from both the EU and China, the project will promote EU-China health cooperation through different collaborative events and activities like roadshows, virtual ideation hackathons and call power partnering. SENET has a multidisciplinary consortium composed of five European and four Chinese organisations with a long track record and expertise in research and innovation management and communication, as well as research policy.

Word from the Coordinator



*Hicham Abghay, Steinbeis 2i
Coordinator of the SENET project*

The ravaging sway of the COVID- 19 pandemic beyond borders threatens whole economies, social structures and communities to dither. Considerable efforts are being undertaken to counteract this state of affairs, reflect past practice and fathom on a new normal, more resilient and conciliable. In this spirit, SENET partnership went 100% virtual and launched a series of web seminars raising awareness about international collaboration in Health Research and innovation around themes like biomedical engineering, AI in Health. With its capacity building masterclasses on Horizon Europe, cascade funding in e.g. TANSVAC, SENET reached out to a larger community and collaborations with other EU initiatives and expert groups and policy stakeholders in the EU and China. Our current newsletter sums up the insights of these lively interactions and consultations and give a glimpse to what's coming up.

Enjoy the dialogue!

SENET Updates

Scientific expert dialogue

Solving global challenges collaboratively – expectations from researchers in China and Europe

China has a growing economy and a research environment with a large number of investments and highly motivated young talents. At the same time its government reinforced their efforts to attract and welcome more international companies to China. Growing industrial and commercial ties[1] between China and Europe are also facilitating research collaborations.

Nevertheless, the participation of Chinese partners in the European Commission funded collaborative calls dropped with the beginning of the H2020 framework programme (2014-2020). SENET addresses this issue and aims at understanding the interests of Chinese and European researchers and identify opportunities for collaborations. Therefore SENET is organizing a series of experts meetings, inviting research and innovation experts from China and Europe to discuss and define common research priorities and develop recommendations for new collaborative research programmes and funding schemes. The 1st SENET research and innovation expert meeting took place on the 23rd of June 2020 as a virtual meeting. The outcome of the meeting is documented in a [full report](#) and summarized below.

In the discussion about common research priorities it became clear that a considerable overlap of research interests exist and that a number of research fields would benefit specifically from Sino-European research collaborations, such as emerging pathogens, antimicrobial resistance, One Health, and aging. All of which having a global dimension and impacting public health, as well as social and economic well-being of the world population.

Pandemics and the development of antibiotic resistant pathogens are recurring and global phenomena, which need to be managed by internationally agreed policies and efforts. Many, if not most emerging pathogens are of zoonotic origin and diseases are transmitted from animals to humans[2]. Therefore, One Health is at the intersection of human health, animal health, and environmental health, and it relies on collaborative efforts of multiple disciplines working locally, nationally, and globally[3]. Finally, while the rapidly aging society is a global phenomenon, the severity of the aging problems in China is unprecedented[4]. Collaborative research between China and Europe on brain connectivity and neuro-degenerative diseases could speed-up the development of new treatments and long-awaited cures for Alzheimer's and other diseases.

However, the participating experts discussed intensively that Sino-European collaborations in scattered research topics will have limited impact on solving global challenges. The main conclusion and recommendation to the Chinese and European governments and policy makers is, to agree on one main global challenge they want to tackle together in collaboration and to

engage their researchers with true commitment based on mutual interest, providing tailored framework conditions and funding programmes.

What is your opinion? Give us your feedback on the report and share your experience. Your input can influence the action plan proposal to be communicated and shared with policy makers, funding agencies and program managers in the EU and China.

[1] [EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment - Trade - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](#)

[2] <https://www.who.int/zoonoses/en/>

[3] <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/one-health>

[4] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6588706/>

Policy dialogue

SENET's Policy meetings aims at increasing collaboration at an institutional level and at discussing with Policy makers and Implementers possible ways to facilitate the collaboration for researchers, in aligning health priorities and funding programmes. SENET's first policy meeting took place on the 2nd of December 2020 as a half physical, half virtual meeting.

High-level representatives of the China National Health Development and of the European Commission introduced the discussions and highlighted the importance to learn from one another and collaborate in a win-win perspective, building on both Chinese and European strengths and needs, as described in the national Health's strategies and programmes ("Healthy China 2030" and "Horizon 2020"/"Horizon Europe"): to learn more about it, see SENET's public report: "[Review on health research and innovation priorities in Europe and China](#)") as a basis for collaboration.

The need for more collaboration has been even more evident since the COVID-19 pandemic. One major challenge faced by both China and the EU is the resilience of the healthcare systems, that is the ability to prepare for, manage (absorb, adapt and transform) and learn from shocks[1]. This can be translated through Governance, Financing, Resources or Service delivery.

China is currently experimenting a need to improve its financial system of health, the training of its resources, the people awareness and the delivery of medicines. In 2016, China has launched Healthy China 2030 Plan that aims to prioritize Health in China's development agenda and to continuously improve resilient health system and build healthy environment. In addition, China also learned from European partners in terms of improving the data reporting, reinforcing the crisis preparedness and surveillance under the strong EU health security network. While people's awareness and trust are also major challenges in the EU, it demonstrated its strong abilities in financing the Health system, with the success of successive funding campaigns in 2020 for solutions to support the COVID-19's outbreak.

If both sides agreed that a reinforced collaboration is needed, strong differences in the approach persist and should be tackled. Whilst the EU thinks that success for resilience and the fight against COVID-19 and new infectious diseases lies and depends on the transformation and support of R&D, China expects the promotion of collaboration to serve commercialisation and support a new business card of the country.



Finally, the meeting was the occasion to explore the potential for collaboration related to chronic diseases, one of the major challenges both for the EU and for China. In fact, cancer and cardiovascular diseases are nowadays the most common causes of death, while people spend an average of 20 years with disabilities due to chronic diseases, which is an enormous burden to the health system. Researchers and medical corps both in China and in the EU strongly advocate for new prevention measures to reduce this burden. Additionally, China emphasizes the use of traditional Chinese medicine, which experiences a strong revival in China with new evidences of its value. Researchers and companies on both continents also expect to support the prevention on chronic diseases with new genomics and digital tools, through personalized medicine. This meeting was the first of a series of meetings. It highlighted some common priorities, emphasized the need for more collaboration and especially the need for new collaboration models. Forthcoming SENET's Policy Meetings (next one: 9/03/2021) will therefore aim to define more precisely what these new collaboration models could be. If you wish to participate as an expert, please complete our [call for expression of interest!](#)

[1]<https://www.euro.who.int/en/about-us/partners/observatory/publications/policy-briefs-and-summaries/strengthening-health-systems-resilience-key-concepts-and-strategies-2020#:~:text=Health%20system%20resilience%20is%20the,stresses%2C%20such%20as%20population%20ageing.>

Launch of the SENET's webinar series

As a mitigation to the current state of affairs related to travel restrictions and confinement, SENET launched in October 2020 a series of webinars to raise awareness about EU China International Collaboration in Health Research and Innovation. Since then, SENET carried out 8 expert masterclasses including capacity building in Health research and funding opportunities, future trends in e.g. biomedical engineering and AI. The series attracted more than 200 participants worldwide piloted by professionals both from the EU and China. SENET is planning to continue this activity in 2021. An overview of the past events and upcoming webinars can be consulted [here](#)

Horizon Europe

January 1 2021 witnessed the launch of the world's largest funding programme for research and innovation, Horizon Europe. The initiative has a budget of around €95.5 billion for the programme period from 2021 to 2027. The official digital event of the Horizon Europe Programme took place on February 2, 2021 under the hospice of the [Portuguese EU Council Presidency](#) and the European Commission.

While Horizon Europe pledges on continuity, compared to its predecessor Horizon 2020, it includes new features among others, the institutionalisation of the European Innovation Council (EIC), as well as the introduction of strategic planning processes and topic-driven missions, one of them is the [Mission on Cancer](#). The rationale behind the revised programme is to foster and protect a knowledge-driven, innovation-friendly society, and to develop a globally competitive and environmentally sustainable economy.



Within the 2nd pillar "Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness", the 'Health' Cluster covers the following areas: staying healthy in a rapidly changing society; living and working in a health-promoting environment; tackling diseases and reducing the burdens of disease; ensuring access to high-quality health care; unlocking the full potential of new tools and digital solutions and; maintaining an innovative, sustainable health industry.

Sixteen calls for research are planned in 2021-2022 on six topics around disease prevention; the links between environment and health; digital tools for health; tackling various diseases; strengthening healthcare systems; and supporting Europe's health-related industries. In 2021, there is one call planned for each of the six topics. The Health cluster will work hand in hand with the EU4Health programme.

[Read More](#)



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External News

News about SENET or relevant subjects regarding health research of every communication source

Horizon Europe health research in line for €948M in 2021

The focus of the calls in the first years of the EU's new research programme, Horizon Europe, will be recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, to lay the foundations for a more sustainable and resilient EU that is prepared for future health emergencies.

The first calls for all six topics, foreseen to open on 22 April 2021, will cover disease prevention, environment and health, tackling major diseases, innovating healthcare systems, developing digital health tools, and nurturing a competitive European health industry.

More information: [here](#)

Detailed data on COVID-19 vaccination progress in the EU/EEA

The new version of the Vaccine Tracker is now available as a separate dashboard. It provides information on the national uptake of the first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccines by age and other target groups, as well as by vaccine products, for all EU/EEA countries. Information is provided as maps, graphs and charts and can be exported as data. Vaccination campaigns against COVID-19 disease are well under way in all EU/EEA countries, and more detailed information is now available on the ECDC website.

More information: [here](#)

New policy brief calls on decision-makers to support patients as 1 in 10 report symptoms of “long COVID”

Some 1 in 10 people still experience persistent ill health 12 weeks after having COVID-19, termed “long COVID” or post-COVID conditions. A new policy brief from the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies documents responses to post-COVID conditions in different countries of the WHO European Region and looks at how sufferers, including medical professionals, are driving some of those responses.

More information: [here](#)

China vows more COVID-19 vaccines to developing countries

China will continue to provide COVID-19 vaccines to other countries, especially the developing ones, in a timely manner within its capacity and contribute to the building of a community of health for all, a Foreign Ministry spokesperson said on Feb 1.

China is providing vaccine aid to 13 developing countries, including Brunei, Nepal, the Philippines, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, Palestine, Belarus, Sierra Leone, Zimbabwe, and Equatorial Guinea, with 38 more developing countries in need slated to receive China's vaccine aid at a later stage.

More information: [here](#)

Forum for tackling misinformation on health and NCDs

WHO has created a forum for tackling misinformation on health and noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). The WHO European Office for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases is bringing together a broad range of stakeholders in a series of meetings to gather the necessary expertise to tackle health disinformation and help build a toolkit of policy initiatives for the future.

More information: [here](#)



Upcoming events and webinars

Please note these events may suffer changes due to current restrictions of circulation from different European countries.

Med2Meet - virtual healthcare cooperation day

Date: March 18, 2021

Location: Online event

The aim of the event is to facilitate international cooperation between manufacturers, service providers, distributors and end users of various types of medical devices and equipment. The online event will provide a market overview, analyse the regulatory and policy framework of the healthcare and medical devices sector, and provide practical information for those companies interested in accessing the Chinese market.

Website: www.eusmecentre.org.cn/calendar?evtype=EVENTS_EXTERNAL

Innovation for Health

Date: 15-16 April, 2021

Location: Online event

The theme of this year's conference is immunology, a topic that, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, has never been more relevant. With the energizing programme, it aims to bring over 40 top-notch speakers to the stage, display high impact innovations, highlight best practices, and demonstrate inspiring developments in healthcare. Inspiring, interacting, and networking are at the heart of the conference. Innovation for Health is the leading conference for key players in Health & Life Sciences.

Website: www.hyphenprojects.nl/i4h/

Biosimilar Medicines Virtual Summit 2021

Biosimilars: Investment In Health That Matters

Date: 22 April 2021 / 6 May 2021 / 20 May 2021

Location: Online event

The 2021 Biosimilar Medicines Virtual Summit will explore the latest developments in biosimilar medicines policies and look at future opportunities and challenges in this field. In a novel online format, each live session will be complemented by resources such as recorded interviews and presentations, infographics and reports. Registration for this summit will be free and will grant access to a website containing all the related material.

More information: www.medicinesforeurope.com/events/bios21/

14th International Conference on Advanced Technologies & Treatments for Diabetes

Date: 2 - 5 June, 2021

Location: Online event

ATTD aims to promote and enhance the development of novel technologies and treatments for diabetes and strives to change the lives of people with diabetes. We invite you to be a part of the continuously growing community that is moving our field forward. Come see the latest advancements & innovation, discover remarkable science, meet experts in the field, and be part of an evolving the future.

Website: attd.kenes.com/

International Conference on Aging & Gerontology (ICAG 2021)

Date: 1-3, June 2021

Location: Guilin, China

The International Conference on Aging & Gerontology (ICAG 2021) will be held in Guilin, China, during June 1-3, 2021. ICAG 2021 will cover issues on Aging and Economic Perspectives, Physical Wellness & Healthcare, Sensory Decline, the Immune System and Aging: Immunological Changes, Alzheimer's Disease and Prevention, Declines in Hearing Acuity and Hearing Loss, Emotion Recognition. It dedicates to creating a stage for exchanging the latest research results and sharing the advanced research methods.

Website: www.confjune.org/conference/ICAG2021/

The 30th China (Guangzhou) International Health Industry Expo

Date: 24-26, June 2021

Location: Guangzhou, China

China (Guangzhou) International Health Industry Expo (IHE China - Inter Health Expo) is an international annual B2B trade show on nutrition, health food and health care products held at the Guangzhou Import and Export Fair Complex. IHE China is a significant health industry exhibition in China and an ideal platform for overseas enterprises and fine products to enter the China market.

Website: www.djkz.org/en/

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