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OA2093. Health data spaces as foundations for preparedness: Lessons from Greece and the VELES excellence hub

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Issue/Problem: Robust preparedness for unexpected health threats depends on timely, secure access to high-quality, interoperable data across national and EU systems. Yet, countries like Greece face barriers to developing effective Health Data Spaces. Fragmented infrastructures, weak governance coordination, and inconsistent legal frameworks limit data use for for decision-making, research, and cross-border collaboration—key goals of the European Health Data Space (EHDS).

Description: Drawing on the VELES Excellence Hub initiative (veleshub.eu), this study explores Greece's digital health ecosystem through stakeholder interviews across the public sector, industry, academia, and civil society. Six dimensions were analyzed: technical infrastructure, data readiness, governance, regulation, workforce, and stakeholder roles—focusing on national capacity to support EHDS and health data use in emergencies.

Results: Despite notable progress Greece faces major challenges. These include interoperability gaps, the lack of centralized data governance, unclear regulations on secondary data use, and workforce skills shortages that undermine Greece's readiness to contribute to EHDS goals and EU-level preparedness.

Lessons: Building Health Data Spaces is not just a tech challenge, but a complex, multi-dimensional endeavor. Key lessons include (i) the necessity of a unified, transparent governance framework; (ii) harmonized legal provisions for ethical and efficient secondary data use; (iii) investment in interoperable digital infrastructure; and (iv) capacity-building for digital and data literacy. The findings illustrate that without integrated planning and sustained stakeholder engagement, national health data ecosystems will remain fragmented and unprepared to contribute effectively to EU-wide health resilience.

Key messages:

- EHDS is essential for EU safety. National -level readiness must align infrastructure, policy, and regulation to ensure health systems can act swiftly and securely in times of crisis.
- Preparedness requires more than data, it needs governance, interoperability, and trust to enable timely, coordinated responses across national and EU health systems.

Topic: Stakeholder Collaboration, Interoperability, Data Governance.