



To the Chair of the COST Action CA 15 222 and STSM Coordinator

SCIENTIFIC REPORT

STSM mission within the COST Action CA 15 222 - European Network for cost containment and improved quality of health care
from The University of Kragujevac, Serbia to the University of Malta, Malta entitled:

„Retrospective Study: Long term Public and Private Health Expenditure Development in selected European Countries“

Aims and objectives of the STSM:

Aforementioned Short Term Scientific Mission began on 26th of November and finished on 2nd of December 2017 with my visit to the Department of Health Services Management at University of Malta, Malta. My academic supervisor and Host during my stay was Professor Sandra Buttgieg, MC member of the Action CA 15 222 presenting Malta.

Aim: Long term development in public and private health spending in Europe were observed to test hypothesis that economic system establishment (free-market economy or centrally planned one) back in early 1990s had profound influence on its health expenditure evolution from 1995-2015.

Description of the host institution:

Department of Health Services Management, University of Malta is a traditional established academic center of excellence with a strong and recognized track record in social and interdisciplinary health sciences.

Description of work undertaken:

At the first working day of my visit I was introduced to the Department of Health Services Management at University of Malta and was given access to the personal research conditions essential for conductance of this study. Second phase of work was related to the precise definition of the research questions and selection of appropriate study design to address feasibility of the initially proposed work plan. Local expert staff assisted significantly during this stage of work provided me with an advice on health insurance policies and health system performance measurement relevant to the proposed project. In the early stages of work we considered several public registries as potential sources of aggregate data such as: OECD Health, World Bank Health Data, European Health for All DB, EuroStat etc. Ultimately we decided to take all core data from one single source, in order to provide conditions for highest possible transnational comparability: WHO issued and maintained Global Health Expenditure Database.

Our initial set of health expenditure data comprised of ten indicators: Public funds, Rest of the world funds / External resources, Total expenditure on health, General government expenditure on health, Ministry of Health, Social security funds, Private expenditure on health, Private insurance, Out of pocket expenditure, Non-profit institutions serving households (e.g. NGOs). After thorough

investigation, data mining and extraction of missing data we came to the short list of five health spending indicators which exhibited good geographic and chronological coverage for all the regions of European WHO Region and time span 1995-2014. Statistical analysis has been done to study difference between the two observed groups of countries. Details of this output are given in a manuscript draft attached.

Main results:

During my STSM we did conduct an econometric analysis on long term public and private health expenditure dynamics of two parallel groups of countries designated as: Free market Economies as of 1989 and Centrally-Planned Economies as of 1989. We compared trends and statistical significance of difference back in 1995 and in 2014. We invested substantial efforts to proceed and analyze complex data outsourcing from the public registries listed above. Results obtained led us to the conclusive remarks that there has been strong impact of start-up country position, in terms of its economic system establishment towards its long term ability and willingness to invest into the health care sector.

Future collaboration possibilities with the host institution:

I would like to use this opportunity once again to express my personal gratitude to CA15222 officials, my Maltese colleagues at Malta University and my Host, Professor Sandra Buttigieg for inviting me and providing the opportunity for this valuable research effort. My research group is already presented inside CA15222 network (one of most productive in Eastern European health economics) in capacity of Dr Nemanja Rancic MD, PhD serving as the Management Committee Substitute representing Serbia. He has essentially contributed to this study and will co-author which makes plausible publication feasible for the inclusion into the Cost annual reports (two members from two Cost countries presented). We did have a fruitful research and publishing collaboration in the past and we plan to build up this relationship in the years to come.

The outputs produced:

One Full-length original research academic paper was produced in a form of working draft version. The final manuscript is currently under circular correspondence among the authors and it is targeted to be submitted and published in a PubMed (Medline) indexed interdisciplinary journal.

Sincerely,

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