

## Project Summary

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The effects of iodine deficiency cause tremendous, preventable costs in health-care systems. Despite the fact that iodine deficiency can easily be prevented by iodine fortification of salt, Europe belongs to the worst regions in terms of access to iodised salt. Many European countries are mild-to-moderate iodine-deficient, but significant heterogeneity exists with respect to programmes to prevent and monitor iodine-deficiency disorders (IDD). While only 27% of households have access to iodised salt, 350 million European citizens are exposed to iodine deficiency leading to inappropriate interventions, increased disease burden, health inequalities, increased health-care expenditures and the perpetuation of the single most important, preventable cause of brain damage. The WHO identifies an effective European monitoring programme as a crucial step towards eradication of IDD with significant benefits for European citizens and the sustainability of health-care systems.

The overall aim of EUthyroid is to evaluate IDD prevention and monitoring programmes in 27 European countries based on registry and IDD monitoring data, to initiate capacity building for harmonised European IDD prevention and monitoring programmes, to perform research regarding health outcomes and the new biomarker thyroglobulin. The project will position itself as international hub of current national initiatives in the attempt to coordinate and support existing national activities. EUthyroid will generate the first harmonised data set of IDD resulting in the first valid European map of iodine status and thyroid disorders. With a dedicated dissemination programme about the unfavourable health outcomes of IDD, EUthyroid will pave the way for a harmonised EU-wide regulation of iodisation, a coordinated approach to IDD and outcome monitoring including recommendations for scientists on how to monitor IDD prevention programmes. EUthyroid aims to make Europe a benchmark for IDD prevention worldwide.