

INFRASTRUCTURE, TRAINING AND FUNDING OF MENTAL HEALTH RESEARCH IN EUROPE: FIRST RESULTS FROM THE ROAMER PROJECT

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Despite the growing burden of mental disorders and the proven impact of research, there is a scarcity of research in mental health in Europe.

In the context of the ROAMER project, intending to develop a roadmap for mental health research in Europe, we aim at mapping available resources in terms of research infrastructure, training and funding so as to identify gaps and formulate recommendations.

Our method was twofold. First, as part of a larger survey a consultation survey was circulated within a pilot sample of 111 European mental health researchers. Second, survey results were discussed and complemented with a focus-group-type panel, composed of national and European experts.

Based on 55 survey responses and the expert panel, we have identified several key themes in the expert's opinions. In terms of infrastructure, these include claims about a lack of collaboration and insufficient access to potentially shared resources; poor linkage between research and clinical practice; inadequate dialogue between research and policy-makers; and a lack of interdisciplinarity. In terms of training and capacity building, it emerged that incentives lack to attract and keep researchers within mental health. Concerning research funding, the share of core funding is deemed too low while European and national grant-application procedures appear inefficient and do not cover all fields of research.

These results give a preliminary insight in the issues of current mental health research in Europe. After roll-out of the consultation to the entire mental health research community and a second expert panel, final recommendations will be formulated.