

Summary Young-NVTAG event “Internationalisation of HTA”

In the midst of a global pandemic, Young-NVTAG brought together four speakers, representing three European countries, to discuss the internationalization of HTA. More than 30 young researchers followed the invitation to attend this discussion - which thankfully took place safely online!

Anne Willems from ZIN kicked off the meeting with a brief overview of EUNetHTA, which already sparked some interesting discussions about the purpose of collaborative approaches to HTA - making processes more transparent and predictable, aligning on essential aspects such as the PICOT - but also on essential limitations of the concept - the voluntary nature of these collaborations, the lack of a legal basis and the uncertainty looking into the future, where funding might run out as early as in May 2021.

The discussion continued with a presentation by Miriam Luhn from IQWiG on the quality management implemented by EUNetHTA, which revealed that during this process, a wealth of material had been developed to support researchers in their model development. This included the HTA core model, templates, process flows, and specified methodological guidance documents. And which importantly are free for anyone to use.

With the following speaker, the conversation pivoted to the manufacturer point of view as Mihai Rotaru from EFPIA led the audience through experiences of pharmaceutical companies with supra-national health technology assessments. The discussion with the audience quickly covered interesting topics such as the efficiency and time gains that can be made from streamlining multiple assessments into one. This of course, has potential for manufacturers looking to reduce spending but more importantly, for patients and manufacturers when a successful product reaches the market quicker.

The event was rounded off with the presentation of Marc van De Casteele from RIZIV-INAMI who presented the work of BeNeLuxA. His presentation outlined the ability of such collaborations to foster an exchange of expertise between participating countries, to build networks between experts and to reduce redundancy of work in HTA processes between countries.

The meeting closed with an interesting discussion between the speakers and the audience about the seemingly positive experience made with international assessments, the limitations arising from sparse capacities for such assessments, and finally the question what the future of international assessments looks like - a fascinating question that speakers and audience alike wondered about.