

# What population health researchers need, and how PHIRI federated research infrastructure can help?

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**Enrique Bernal-Delgado**  
on behalf of the PHIRI team



# PHIRI

The Population Health Information Research Infrastructure for COVID-19:

- a **European mechanism**, that aims to
- facilitate and support **data-driven population health research**
- and **exchange of best practices**
- to support **decision making**



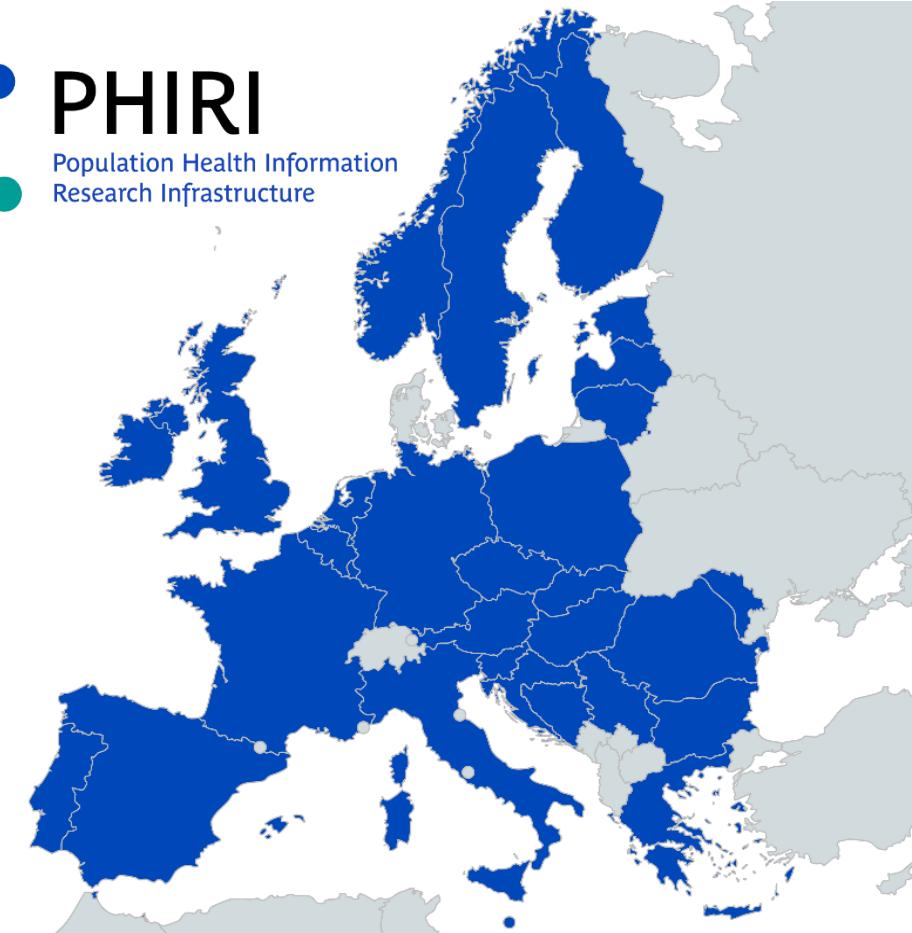
PHIRI

Population Health Information Research Infrastructure

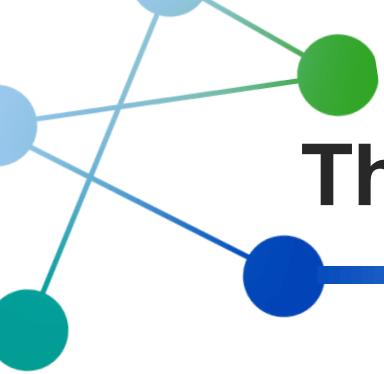
[www.phiri.eu](http://www.phiri.eu)



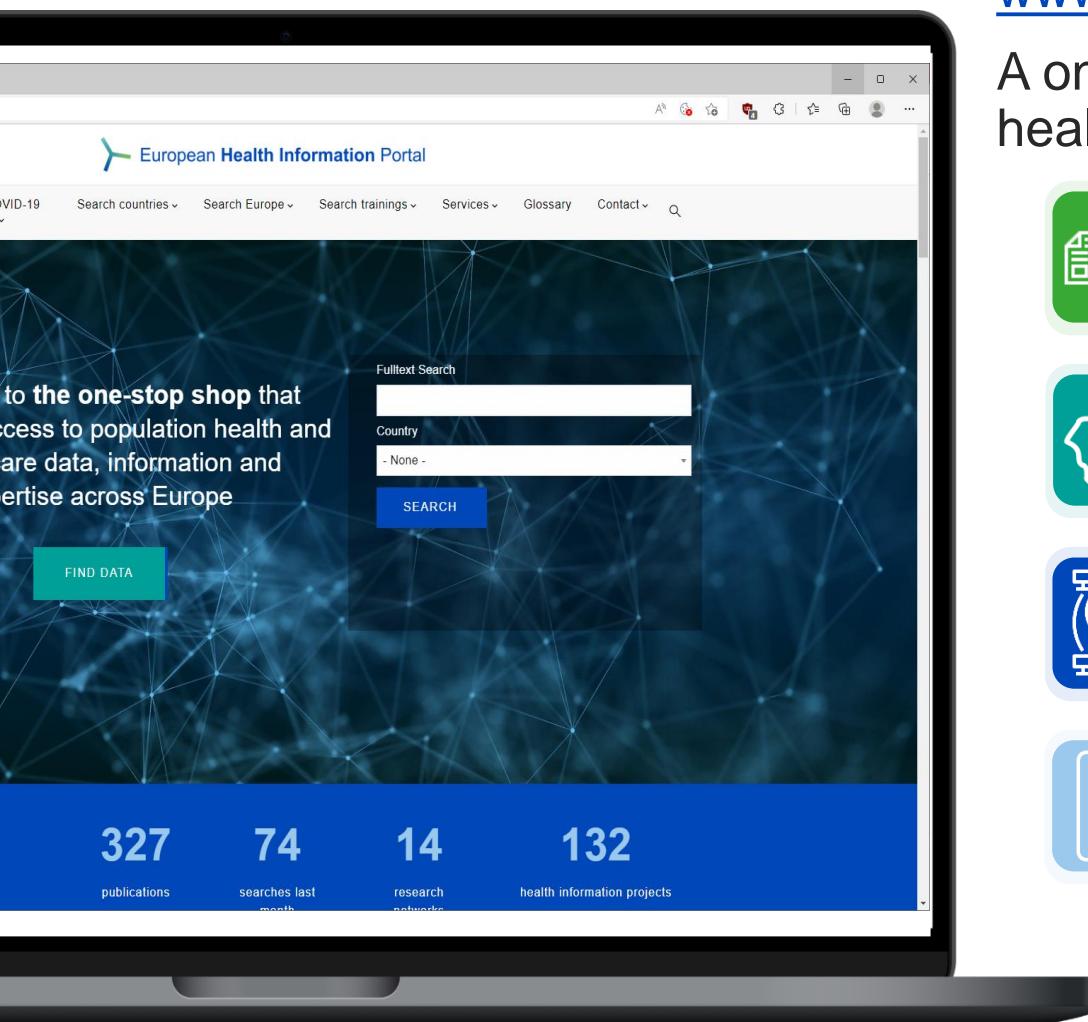
Population Health Information Research Infrastructure



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101018317



# The European Health Information Portal



[www.healthinformationportal.eu](http://www.healthinformationportal.eu)

A one-stop shop that facilitates access to population health and health care data, information and expertise across Europe.



**Health information (data) sources**



**Publications**



**Countries and national nodes**



**Trainings in all areas of population health**



**Research infrastructures, Research networks**



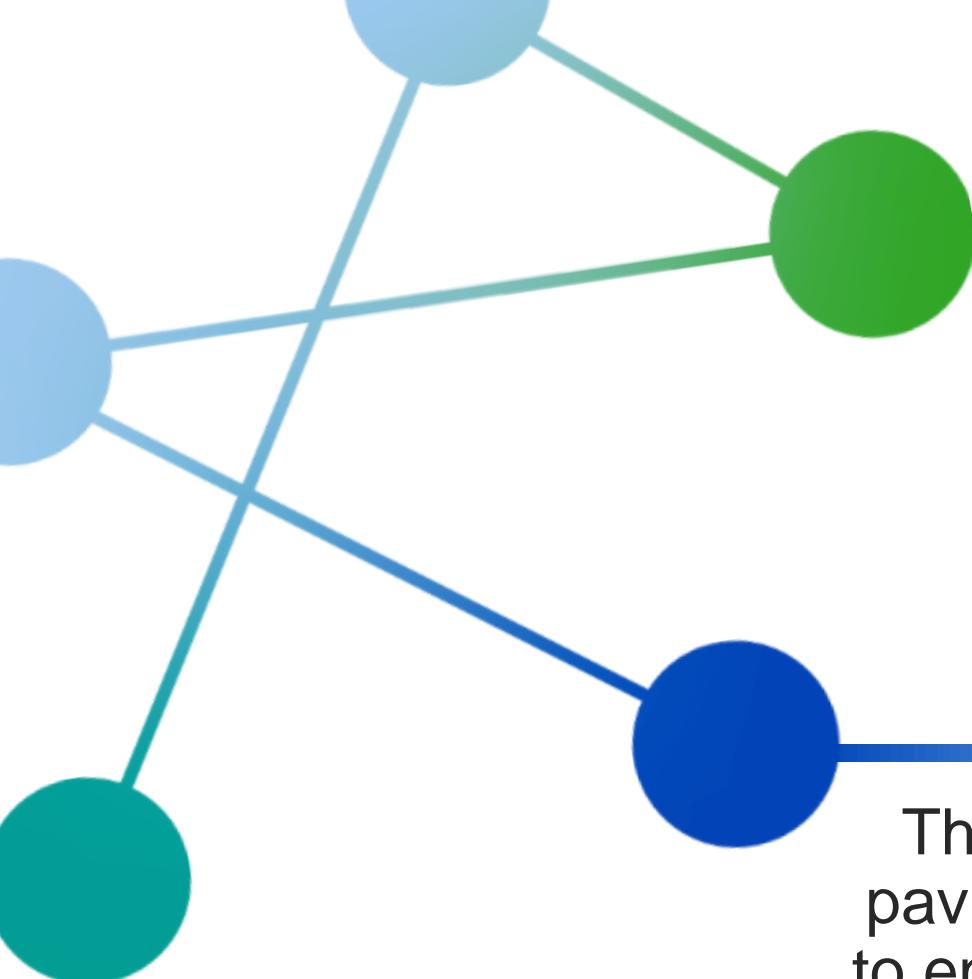
**COVID-19 Policy measures**



**Health information projects**



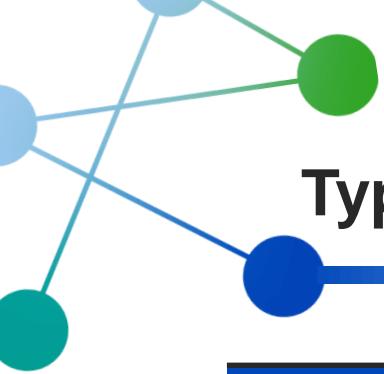
**COVID-19 Rapid Exchange Forum**



# Introduction

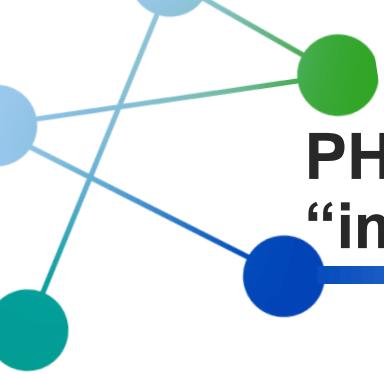
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The PHIRI federated research infrastructure is paving the way for population health researchers to enhance their research when reusing individual sensitive linked data.



# Typical use cases when mobilizing real-world data?

High-level research questions	Design (typical)	Data distribution (typical)	Matrix content
Causal inference on individuals	Target trials		Weights - IPW
Causal inference on populations	Dif in Dif		B coefficients
Inference on pop. Subgroups	Retrosp. Cohort		Residuals
Outcomes prediction pop. subg.	ML		Synthetic data
Inference on providers	Monitoring		Aggregated data
Inference on populations	Ecological	Matrix/Tensors	Aggregated data
Patients' classification	ML - classification		Distance
Prediction on patients	ML - prediction		Distance
Knowledge based development	NLP		Distance
Hypotheses generation (eg tech repurposing)	In-silico ML		Synthetic data



# PHIRI: Real-world data measuring the COVID19 indirect “impact”



Direct and indirect determinants of COVID-19 infection and outcomes in vulnerable population groups with reference to inequalities



COVID-19 related delayed care in breast cancer patients



The impact of COVID-19 on perinatal health and perinatal health inequalities



COVID-19 related changes in population mental health



# Agenda

- **What the PHIRI federated research infrastructure has achieved so far?**
  - Juan González-García - IACS
- **An enhanced version of the PHIRI infrastructure: improving the analytical services**
  - Francisco Estupiñán-Romero - IACS
- **An enhanced version of the PHIRI infrastructure: improving the technological solutions**
  - Pascal Derycke - Sciensano
- **Improving PHIRI performance and scalability: working within EGI-ACE**
  - Patrick Furhmann – DESY, EGI Foundation

# What the PHIRI federated research infrastructure has achieved so far?

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Juan González-García  
Biocomputing Unit Manager  
Institute for Health Sciences in Aragón, Spain



# Background

- Builds on top of the network from BridgeHealth project and Joint Action InfAct
  - Representatives of Public Health Institutes from 41 partners of 30 countries
    - 27 National Institutes of Public Health / Research / Disease Control
    - 7 Universities
    - 7 Ministries of Health

# Ambition and challenge(s)

- Build and validate a **federated research infrastructure (FRI)** for rapid cycle analysis
  - Demonstrated through COVID19 uses cases (4+1)
  - Valid for future pandemics and (in general) observational studies
  - Establish a solid governance structure
  - Serve as prototype of Distributed Infrastructure on Population Health Align with European Health Data Space (EHDS) & others (HealthyCloud, etc.)
- Setup a **network of IT developers** capable of sustaining and upgrading the FRI
- Setup Health Information Portal on population health
  - Metadata catalogues on population health data sources, studies, guidelines, projects and trainings

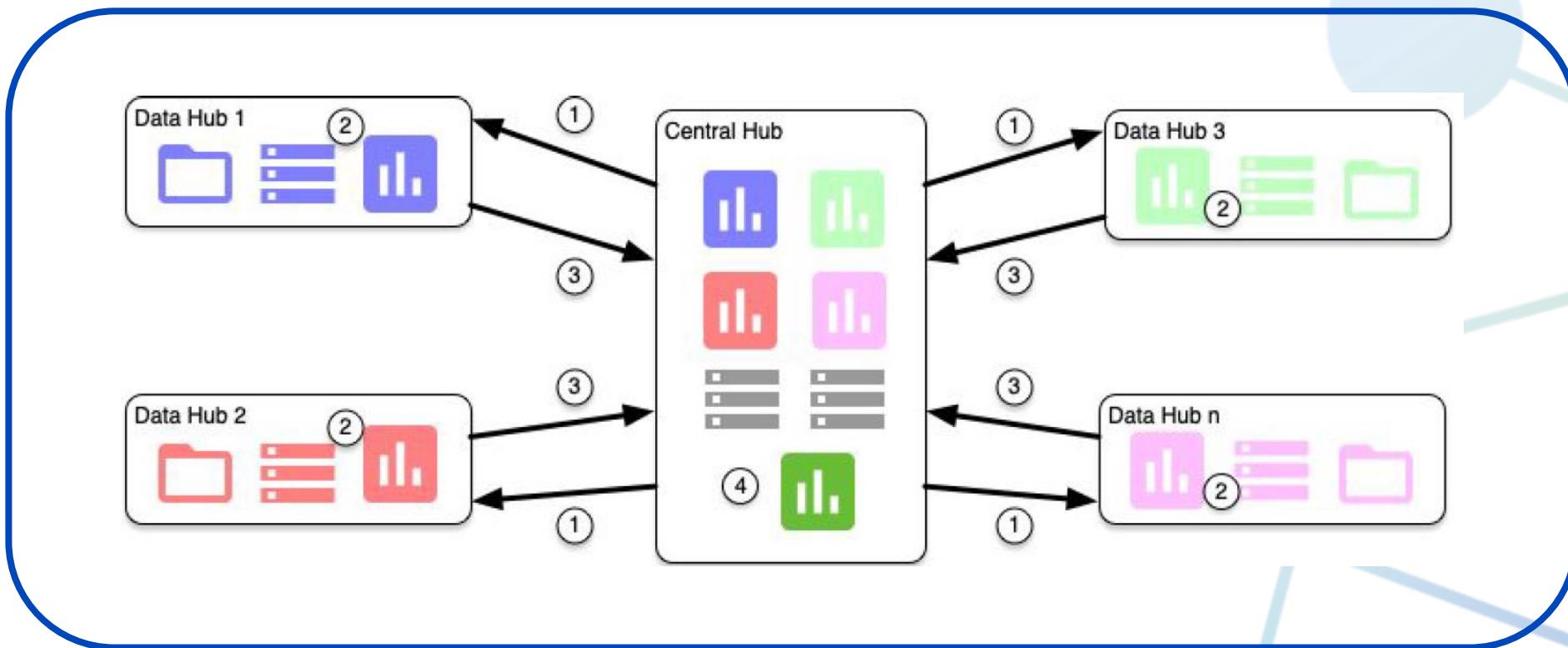
# Ambition and challenge(s)

## INTEROPERABILITY!



\*The New European Interoperability Framework

# Architecture solution





# Legal interoperability



*“ensuring that organisations operating under different legal frameworks, policies and strategies are able to work together”*

- Follow GDPR principles
  - *Privacy and Secure by design*
  - Minimise data mobilisation
- Align efforts with architecture proposal of HealthData@EU (EHDS2)



# Organisational interoperability

*“to the way in which public administrations align their business processes, responsibilities and expectations to achieve commonly agreed and mutually beneficial goals”*

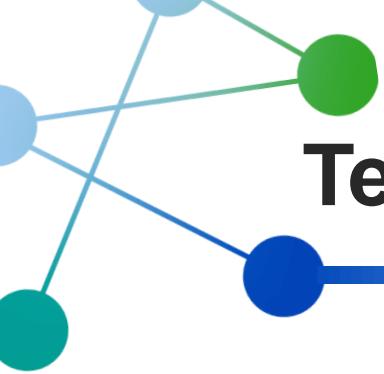
- Set up a IT experts network
- Open approach: maximise transparency by exchanging
  - Source code
  - Procedures and methodologies
  - General IT expertise
- Help desk in place to facilitate the implementation and deployment



# Semantic interoperability

*“the precise format and meaning of exchanged data and information is preserved and understood throughout exchanges between parties”*

- Foster the use of a Common Data Model (CDM) using standards
- Facilitate the mapping of original data formats to CDM



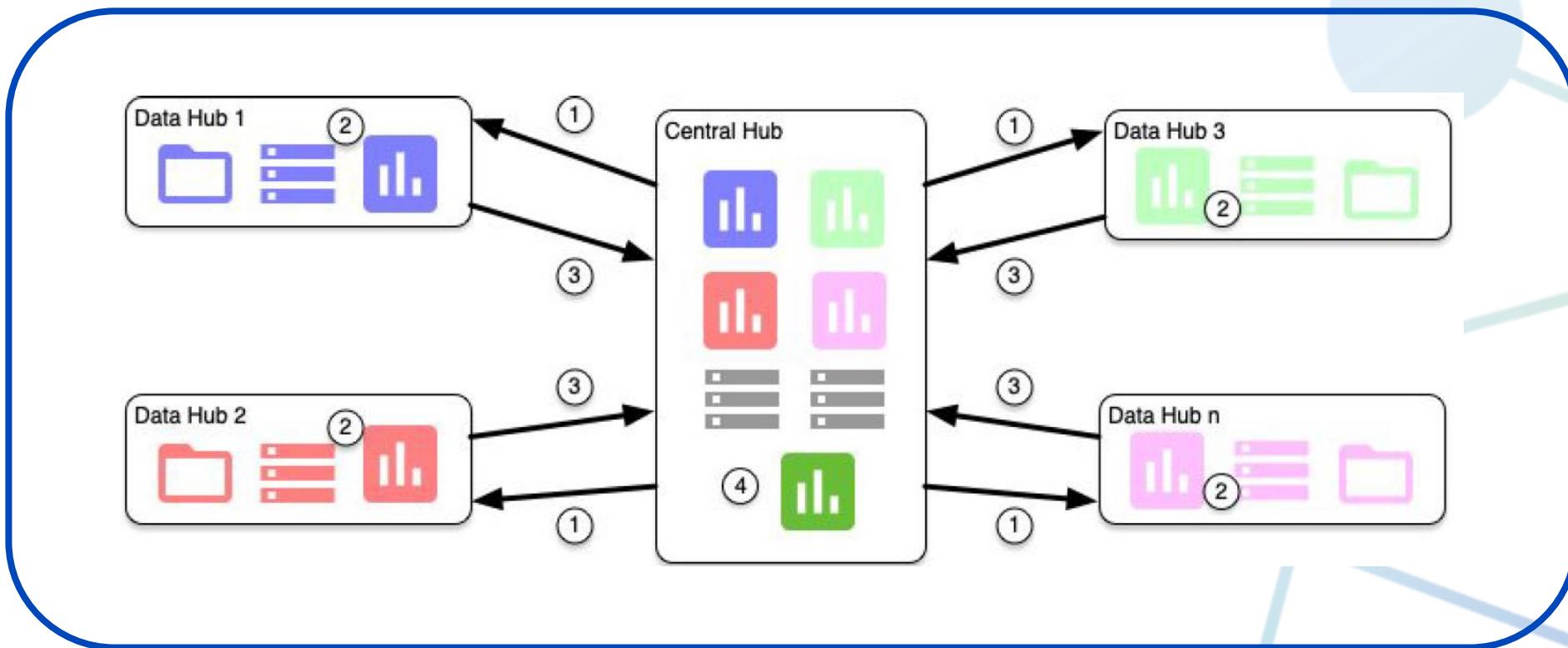
# Technical interoperability

*"the applications and infrastructures linking systems and services. Aspects of technical interoperability include interface specifications, interconnection services, data integration services, data presentation and exchange, and secure communication protocols"*

- Adoption of container-based solutions
- Use of well known software stacks



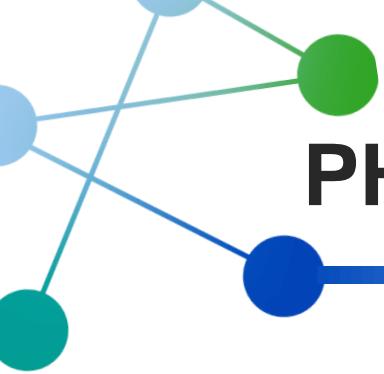
# Wrap-up



# An enhanced version of the PHIRI infrastructure: improving the analytical services

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Francisco Estupiñán-Romero  
*on behalf of PHIRI WP7*



# PHIRI – Research Use Cases

## 4 real life research use cases measuring the impact of COVID-19 on population health



Direct and indirect determinants of COVID-19 infection and outcomes in vulnerable population groups with reference to inequalities



COVID-19 related delayed care in breast cancer patients



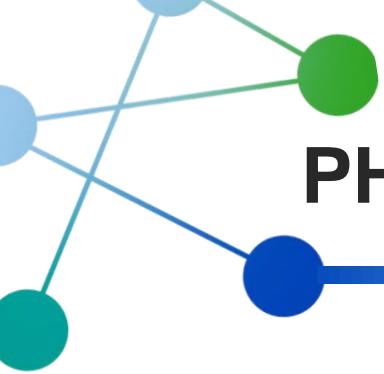
The impact of COVID-19 on perinatal health and perinatal health inequalities



COVID-19 related changes in population mental health

**Demonstrate** how a broad variety of data (e.g. administrative and survey data) can be reused in a distributed way across Europe:

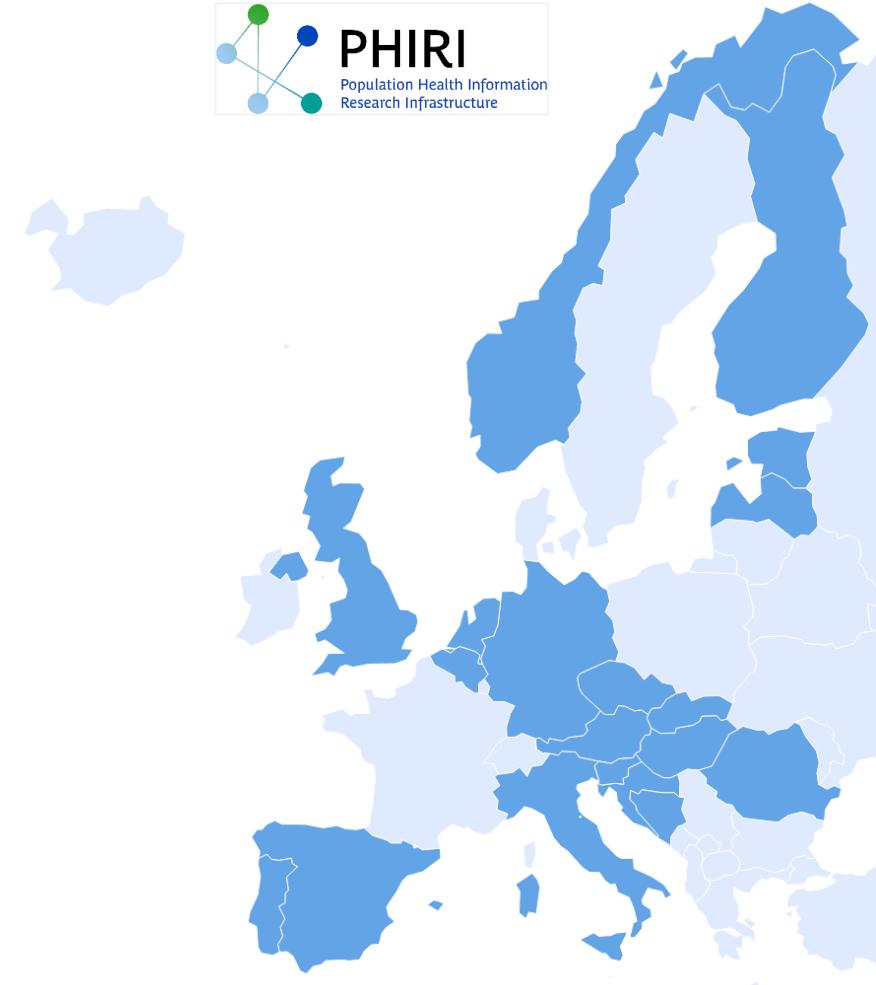
- a) Conduct research** through use cases of immediate relevance on the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on European population health
- b) Pilot activities** for the benefits and added value of a federated research infrastructure by bringing together data from different European countries

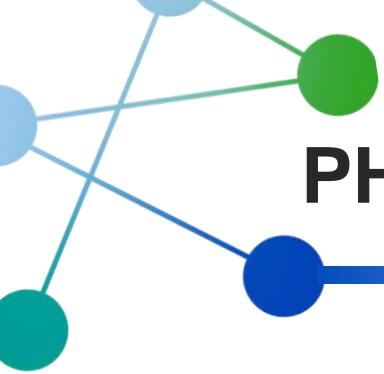


# PHIRI Research Use Cases – Achievements



- In **almost 20 data hubs**, data is mobilized and ready to be analyzed in a distributed manner



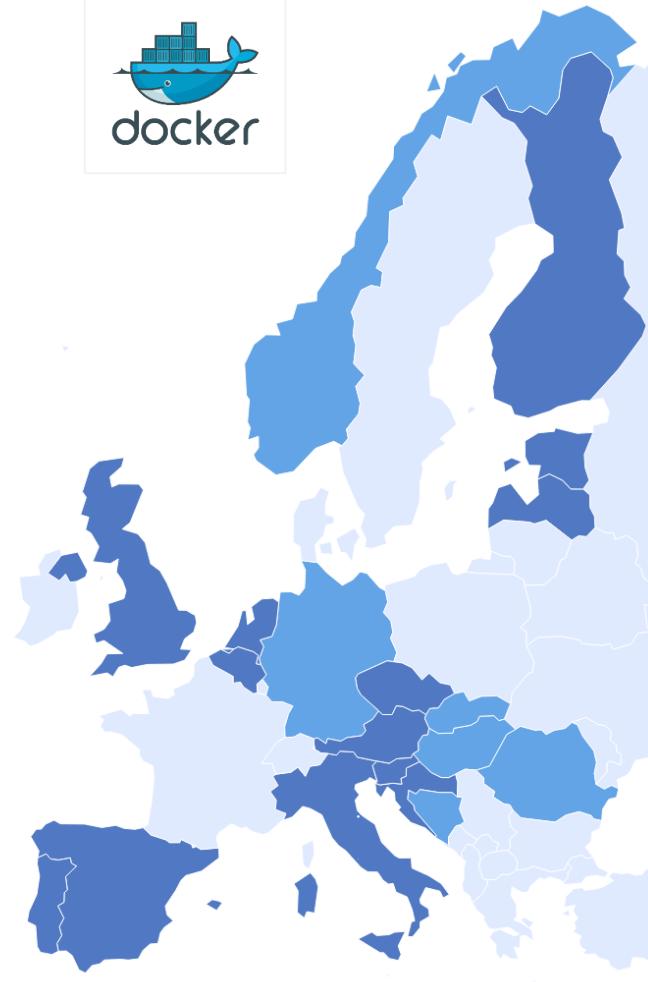


# PHIRI Research Use Cases – Achievements

- In almost 20 data hubs, data is mobilized and ready to be analyzed in a distributed manner
- In 14 data hubs, the PHIRI-app (Docker) is already deployed and tested



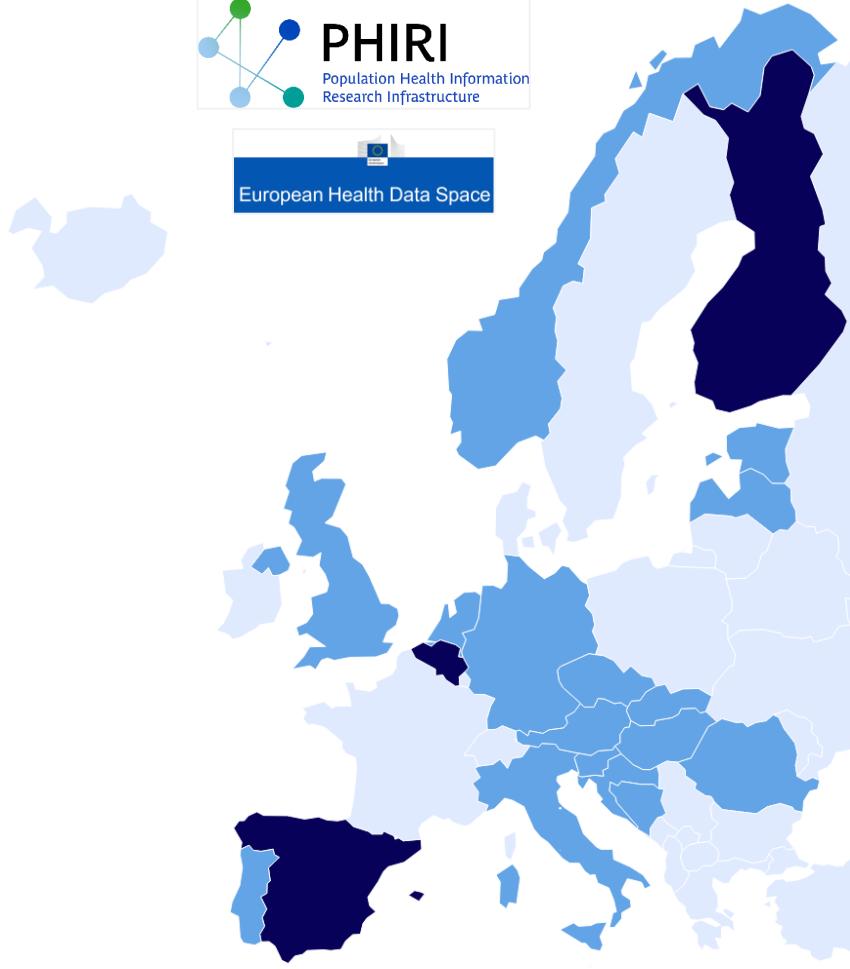
BERLIN | 9-12 NOVEMBER 2022





# PHIRI Research Use Cases – Achievements

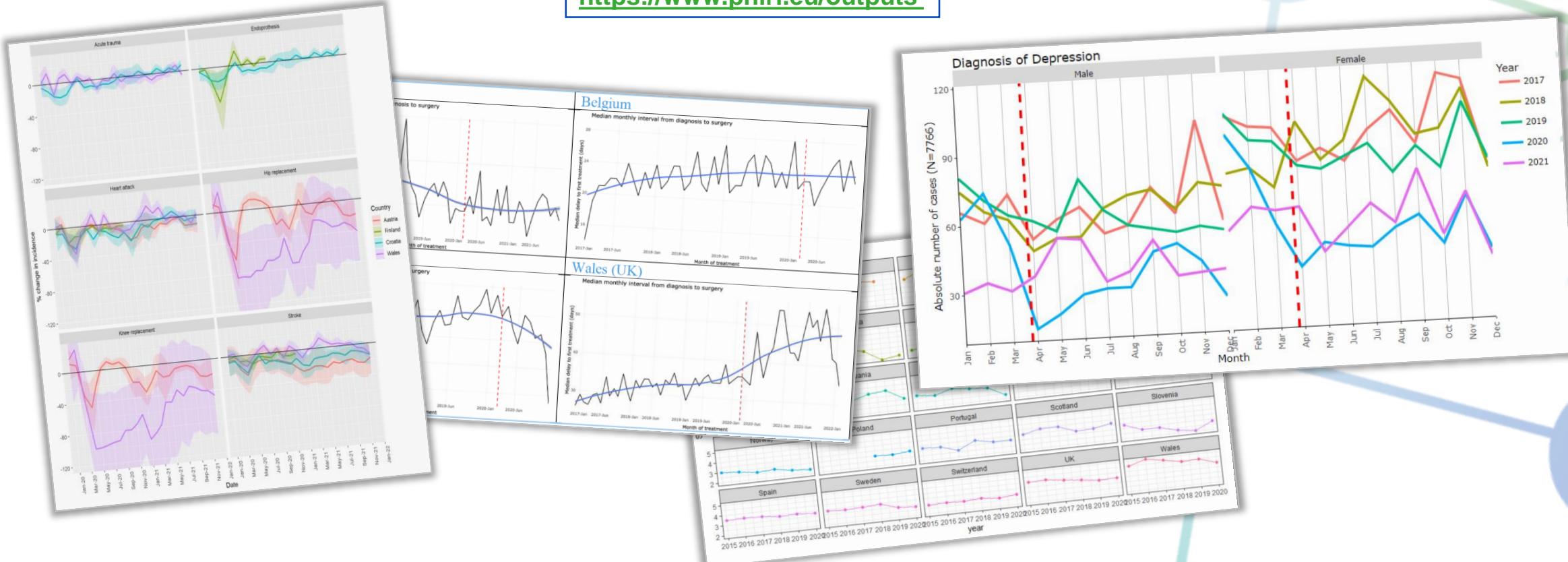
- In almost 20 data hubs, data is mobilized and ready to be analyzed in a distributed manner
- In 13 data hubs, the PHIRI-app Docker is already deployed and tested
- There is already **overlap** between the PHIRI data hubs and the **health data access bodies (HDAB)** in the EHDS2
  - Majority of PHIRI use cases data hubs will be HDAB in the future



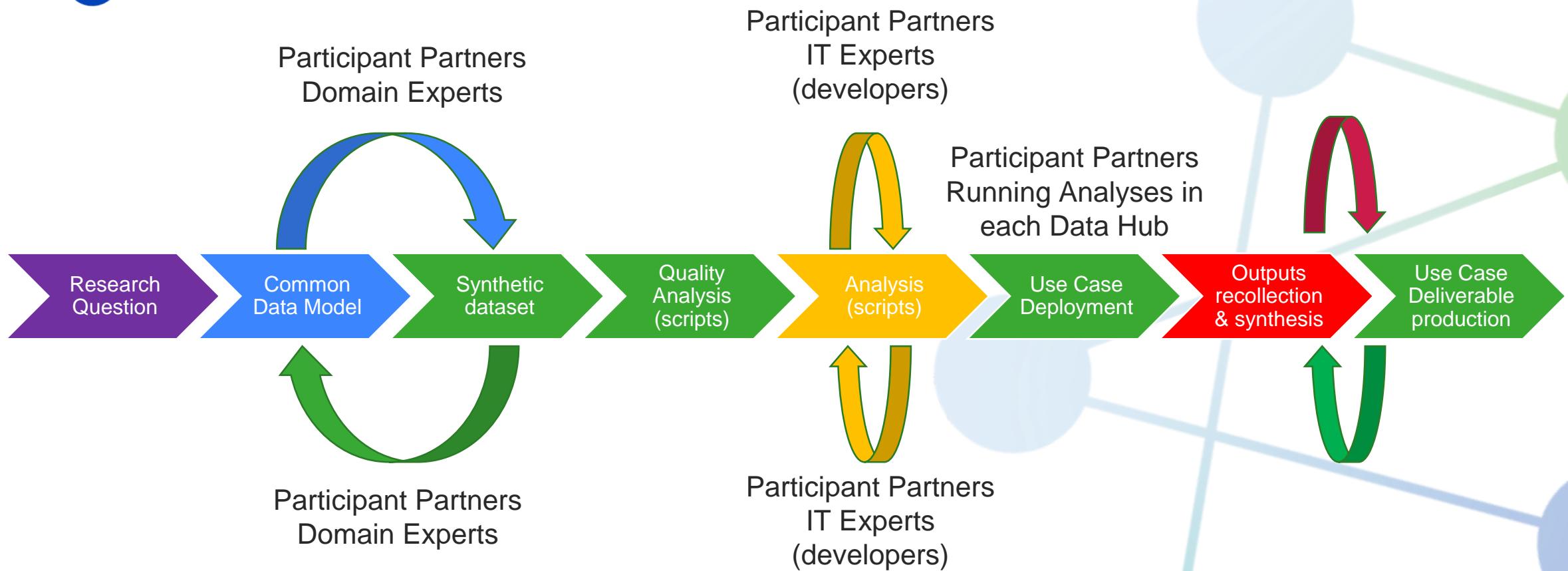
# PHIRI Research Use Cases – Achievements

First results on the impact of COVID-19 on **population health** available and published in Use Case Reports:

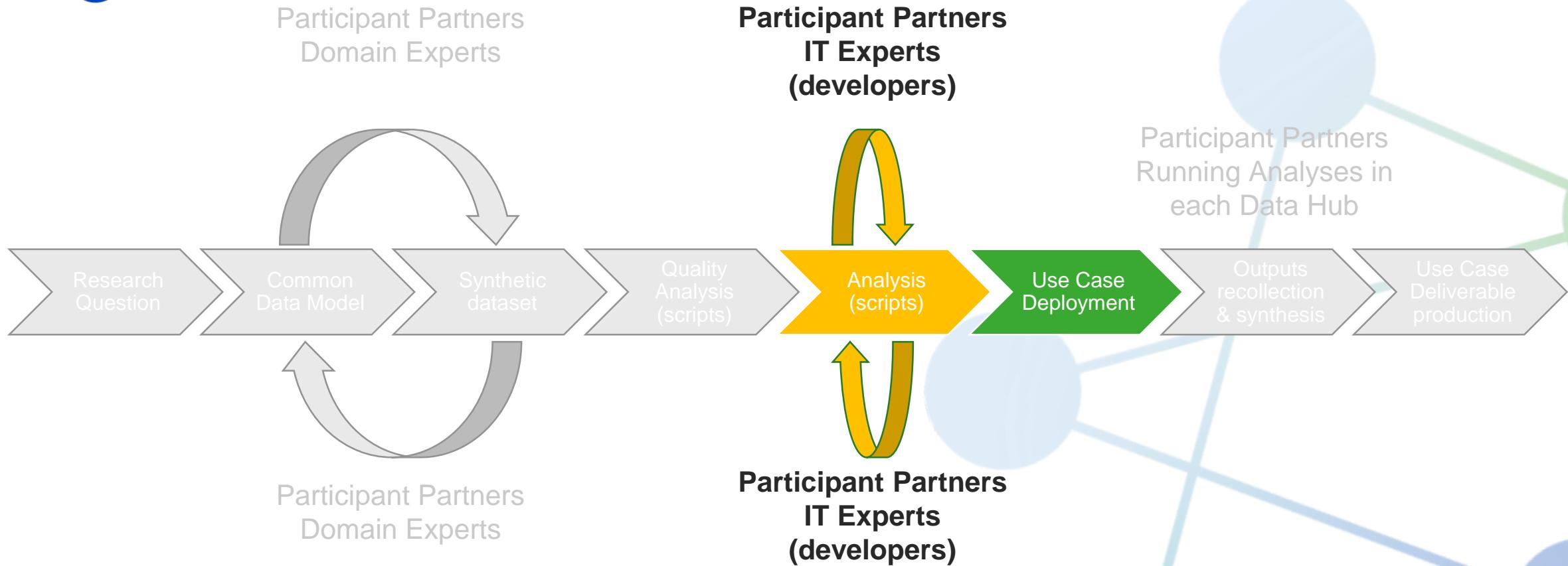
<https://www.phiri.eu/outputs>

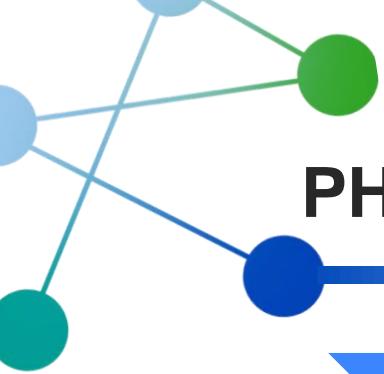


# Prototyping a use case in a federated infrastructure

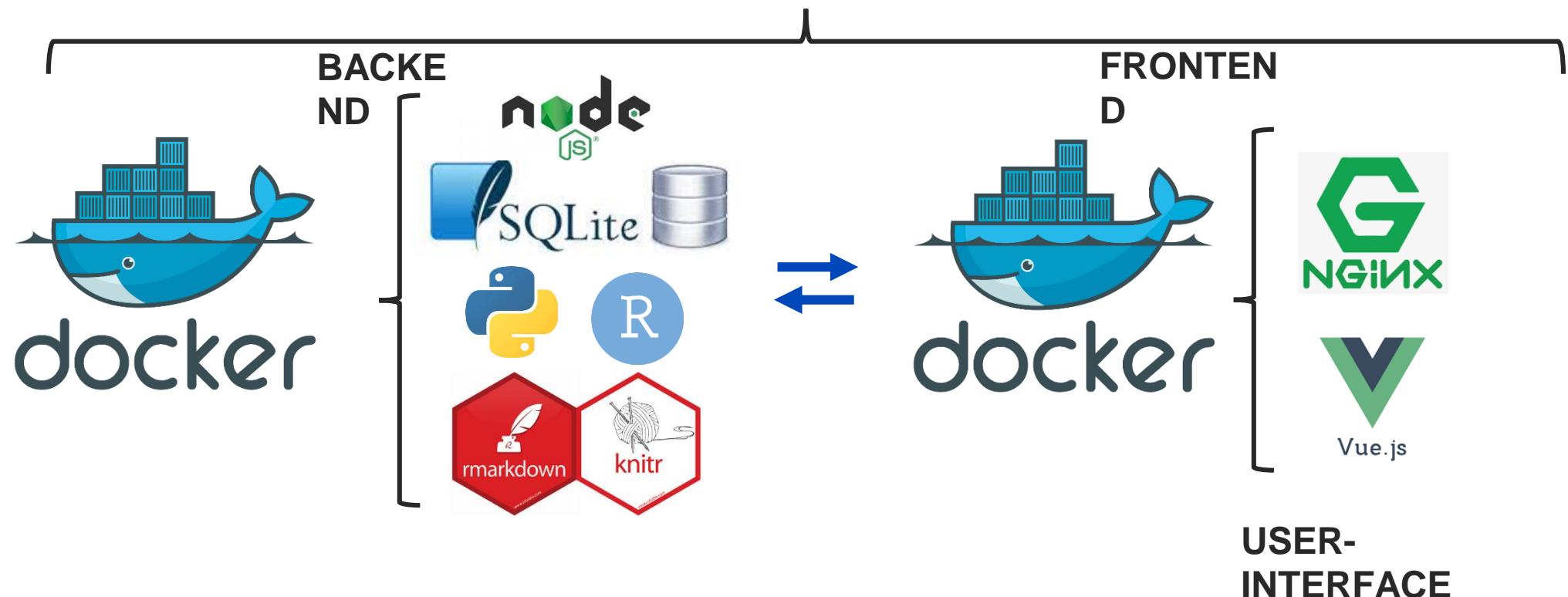


# Prototyping a use case in a federated infrastructure



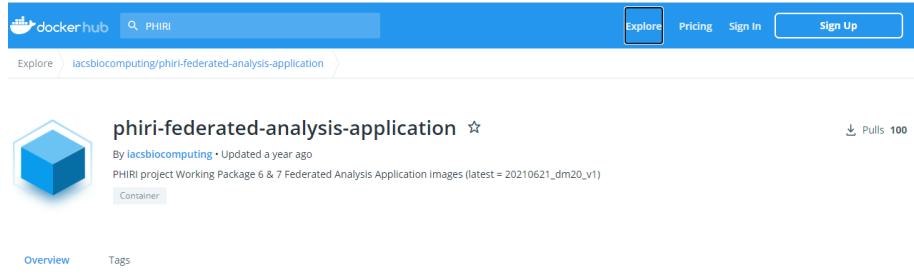
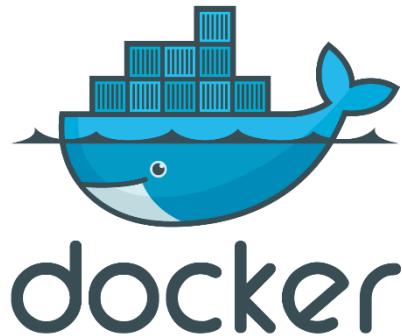


# PHIRI Federated Analysis Application (Docker)





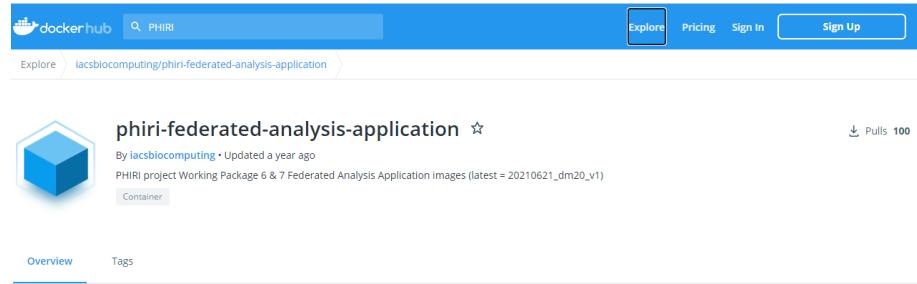
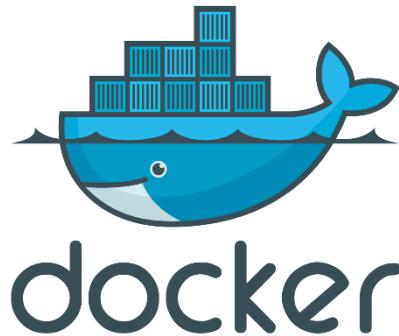
# Orchestration of a use case: PHIRI Federated Analysis Application (Docker)



- Data availability
- Data accessibility
- Data minimisation
- Semantic interoperability



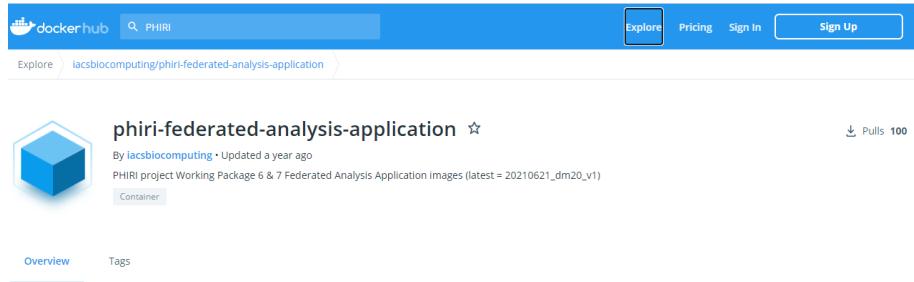
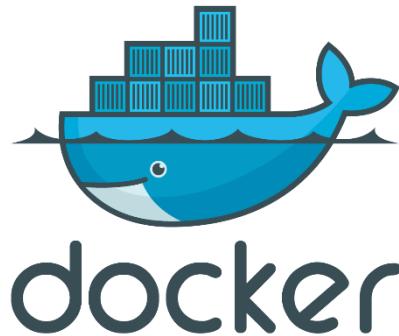
# Orchestration of a use case: PHIRI Federated Analysis Application (Docker)



- Model benchmarking
- Script development
- Dependencies documentation



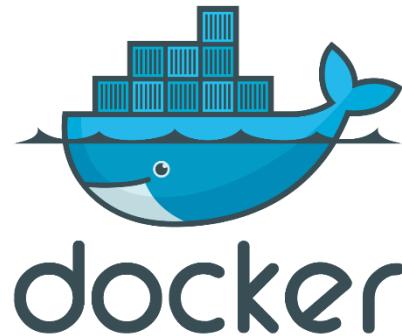
# Orchestration of a use case: PHIRI Federated Analysis Application (Docker)



- Data quality at origin
- Informs interpretability

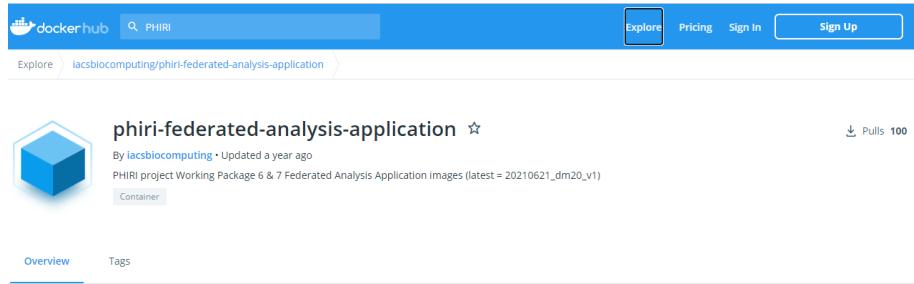
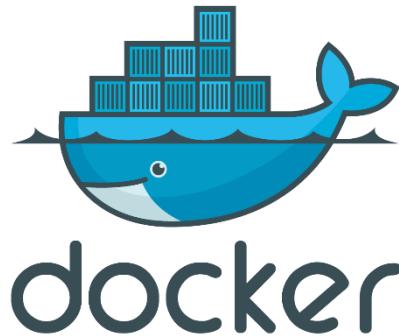


# Orchestration of a use case: PHIRI Federated Analysis Application (Docker)





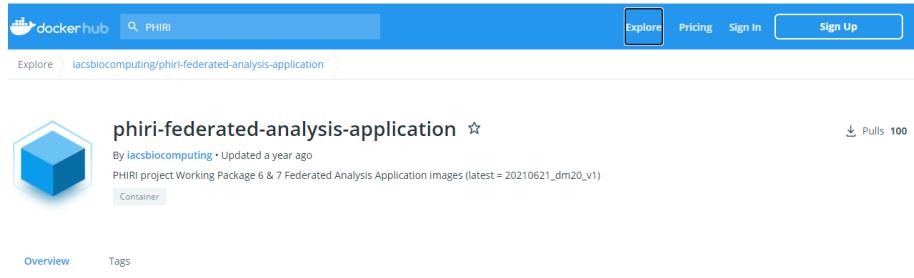
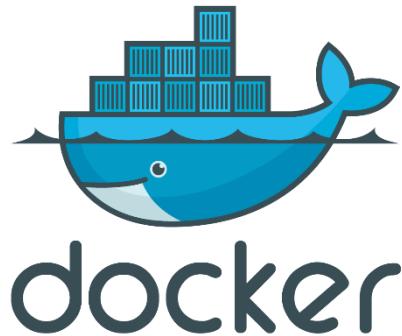
# Orchestration of a use case: PHIRI Federated Analysis Application (Docker)



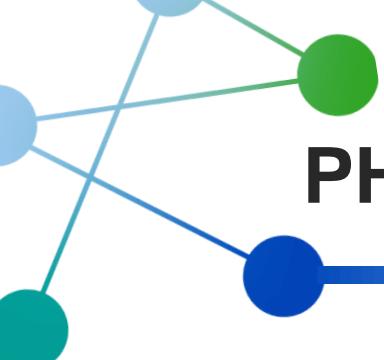
- All-in-one solution



# Orchestration of a use case: PHIRI Federated Analysis Application (Docker)



- DQA (HTML interactive report)
- Local outputs (HTML report)
- Aggregated data outputs (CSV file)



# PHIRI Research Use Cases – Ongoing Work



Help desk to support use cases' deployment



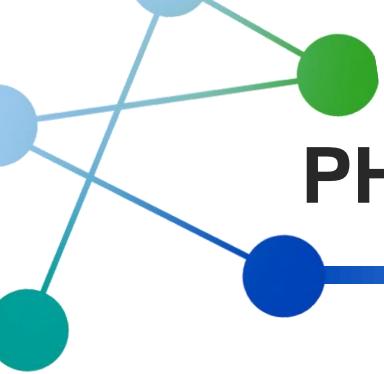
43  
*Tickets*



274  
*Email  
threads*

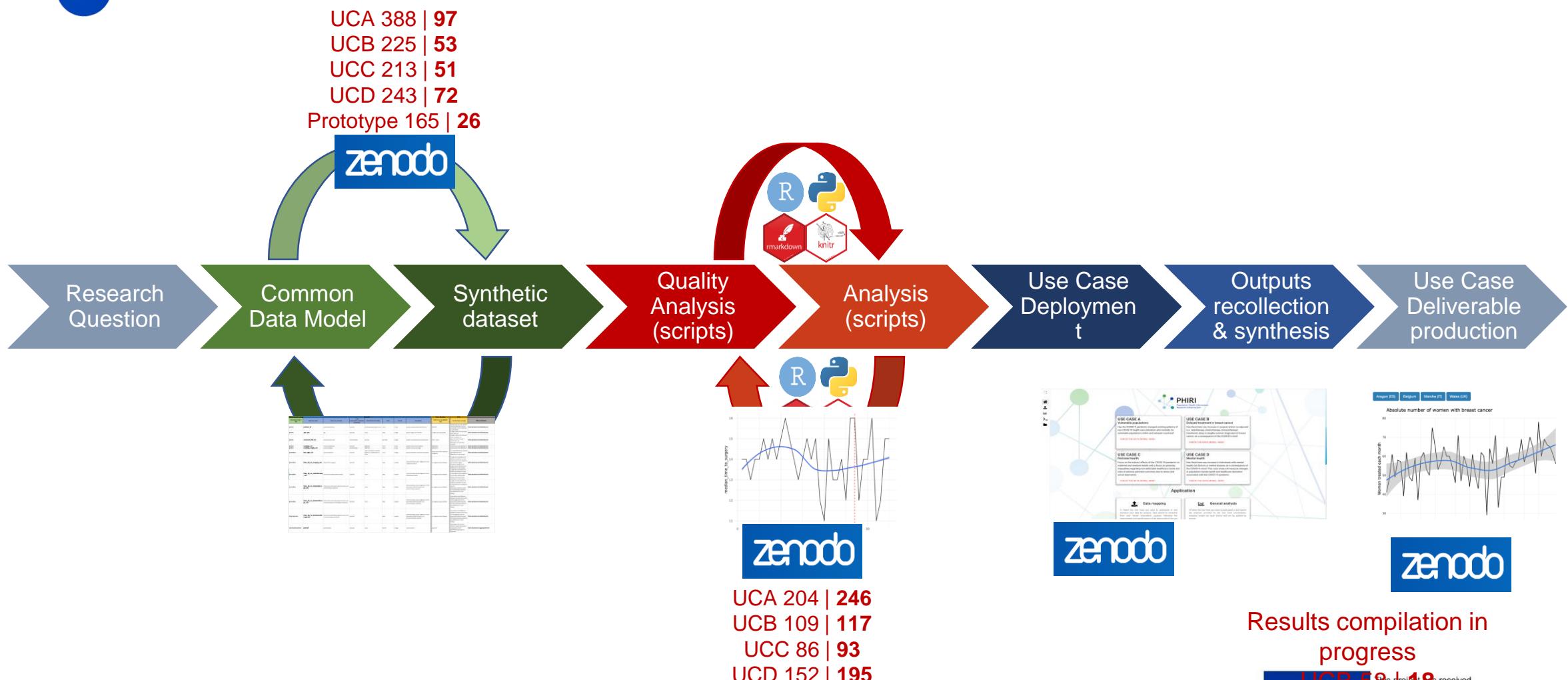


29  
*Meetings*



# PHIRI app - [10.5281/zenodo.5729310](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5729310)

1,527 views  
204 downloads





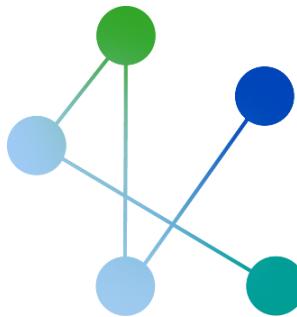
## Ongoing work

- Methods and outputs dissemination
- Implementation of more sophisticated analyses (on the same data)
- In the **lab**, testing algorithms for **full federated analyses**
- **Continuous update and publication** of all digital objects in
- **Mapping** WP6 CDMs to **OMOP CDM**
- **IT developers' forum**
  - Workshops and help desk for newcomers



# Towards an enhanced Federated Research Infrastructure for Population Health

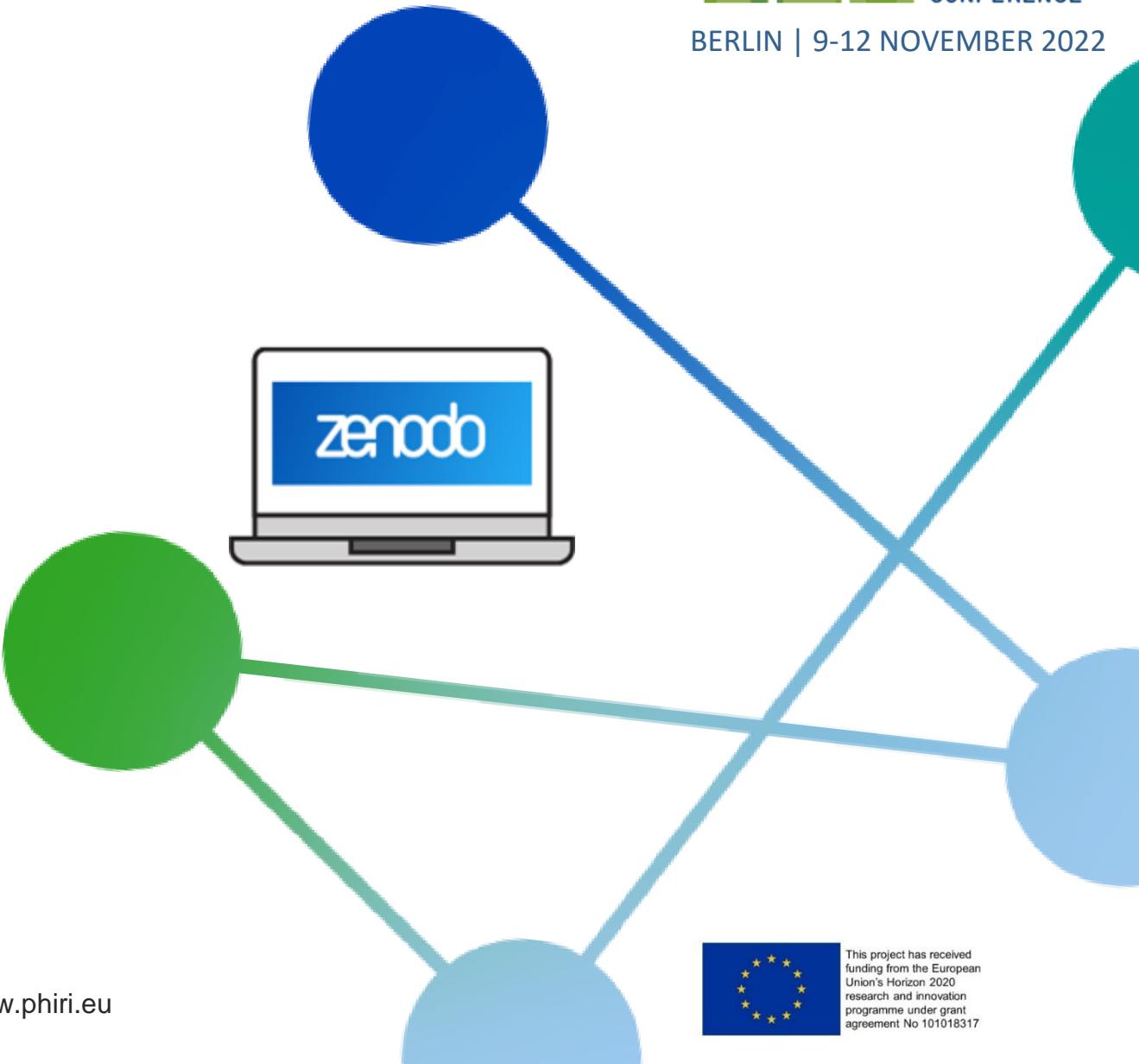
- More complex queries, more actors involved (distributed algorithms implementation)
- Testing computational and software solutions (lab)
- Early adopters EGI-ACE in EOSC (IaaS)
- Role of PHIRI as part of EDHS2 & EOSC (services)
- Sustainability



**PHIRI**  
Population Health Information  
Research Infrastructure

# Thank you!

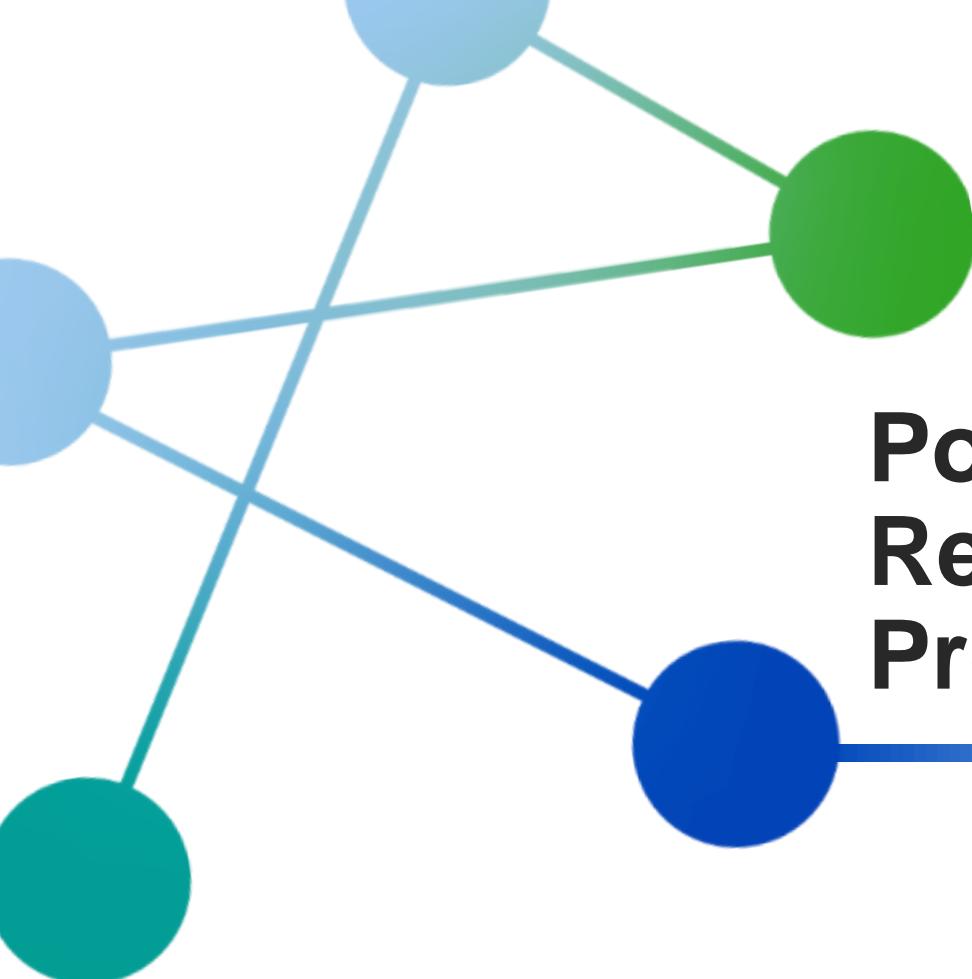
Name: Francisco Estupiñán-Romero  
E-mail: [festupinnan@iacs.es](mailto:festupinnan@iacs.es)  
 @PHIRI4EU  
 /company/phiri



# An enhanced version of the PHIRI infrastructure: improving the technological solutions

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Pascal Derycke



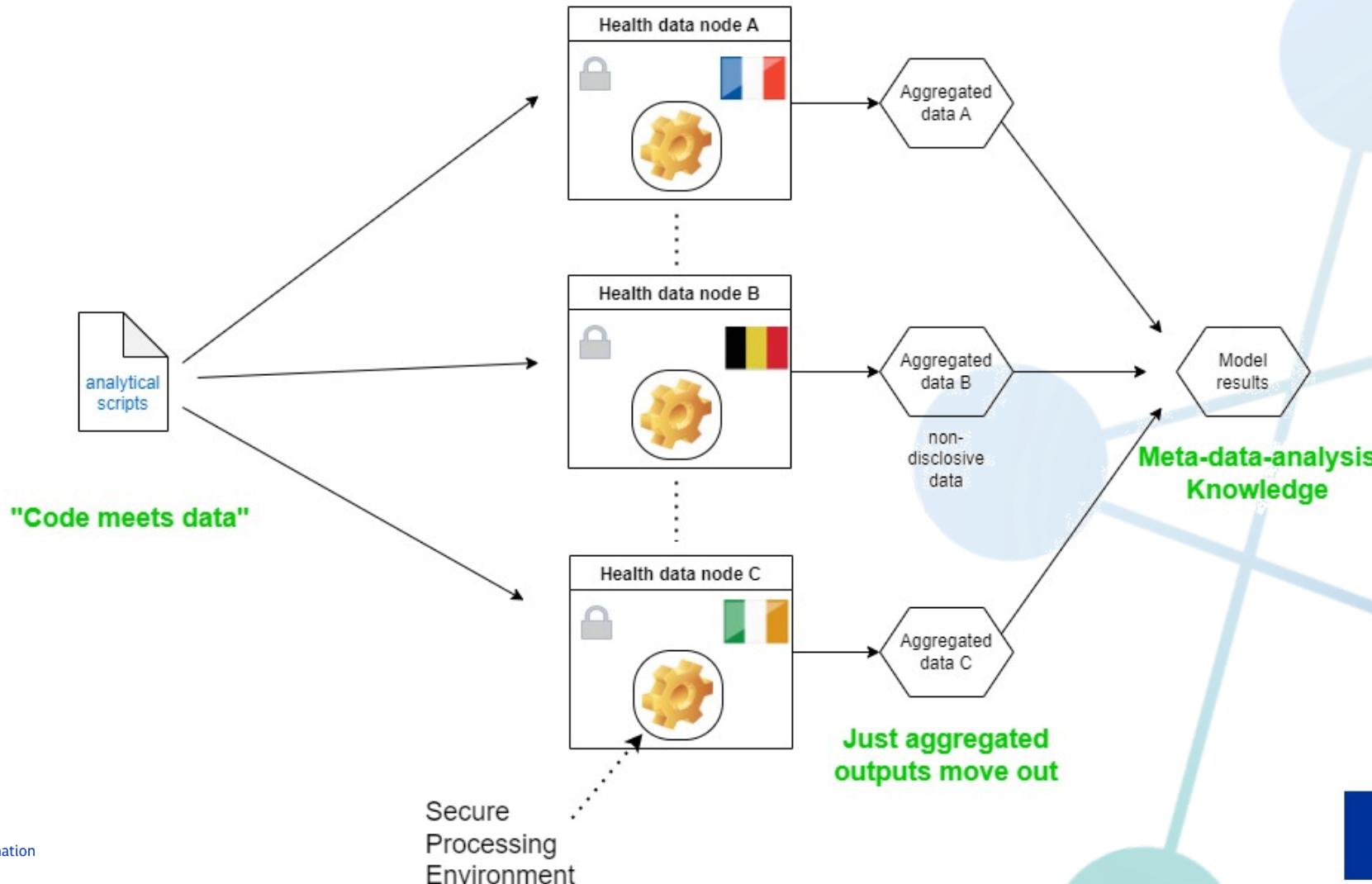
# Population Health Information Research Infrastructure (PHIRI) Proof of concept:

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## CODE MEETS DATA



# Distribution of a research question in multiple data hubs using a federated approach (as-is)



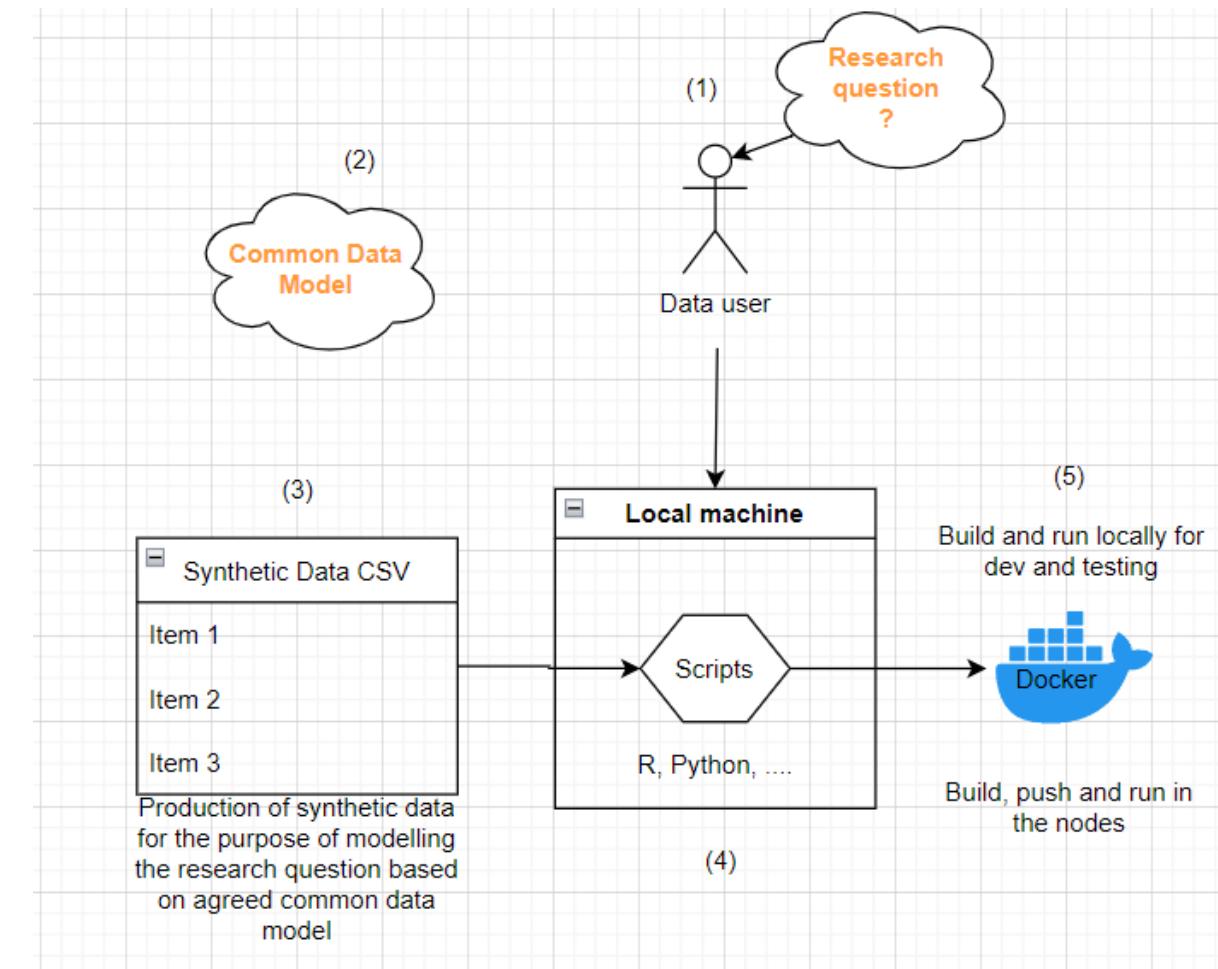


# Prerequisites: Development of the analytical pipeline for a federated analysis project

## PHIRI analytical pipeline (as-is)

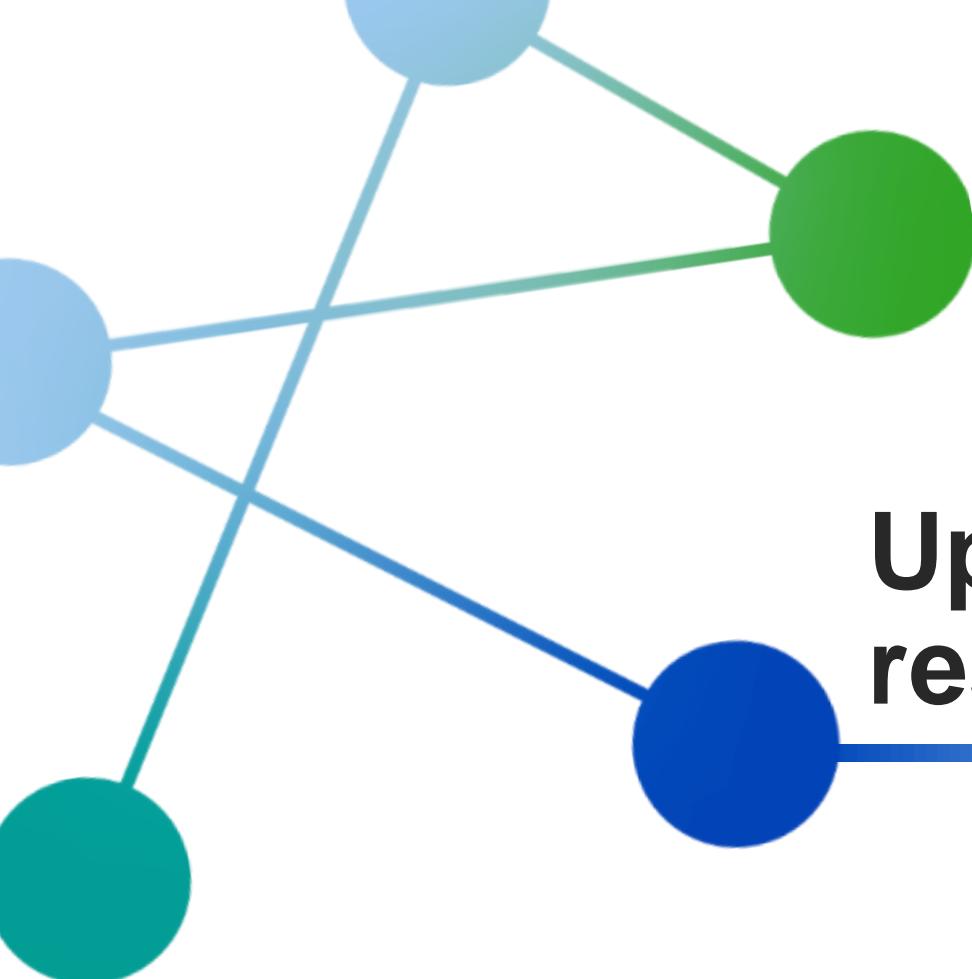
### Steps:

1. Shape the research question
2. Design a Common Data Model
3. Production of synthetic data
4. Coding (Python, R)
5. Build the Docker image for distribution in the nodes



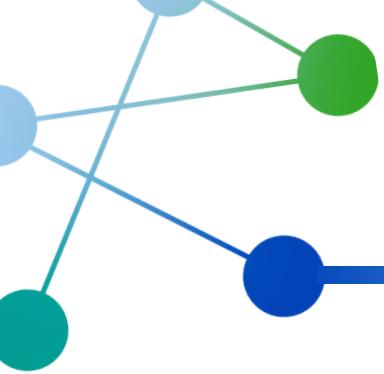
## Lessons learned:

- A stand-alone/portable application (such as a Docker image) made it possible to distribute and run the scripts in the data hubs: “**code meets data**”
- A **minimum knowledge of the available data** is needed to define a **Common Data Model**;
- Generating **proxy (synthetic) data is of importance** to code the analytical scripts for analysing data;
- Capacity building in the data hubs is of eminent importance.



# Upgrading options for PHIRI research infrastructure

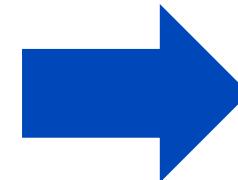
TO-BE



# Upgrading options:

## PHIRI analytical pipeline (as-is)

1. Design of Common Data Models
2. Production of synthetic data
3. Coding (Python, R)
4. Build the Docker image for distribution

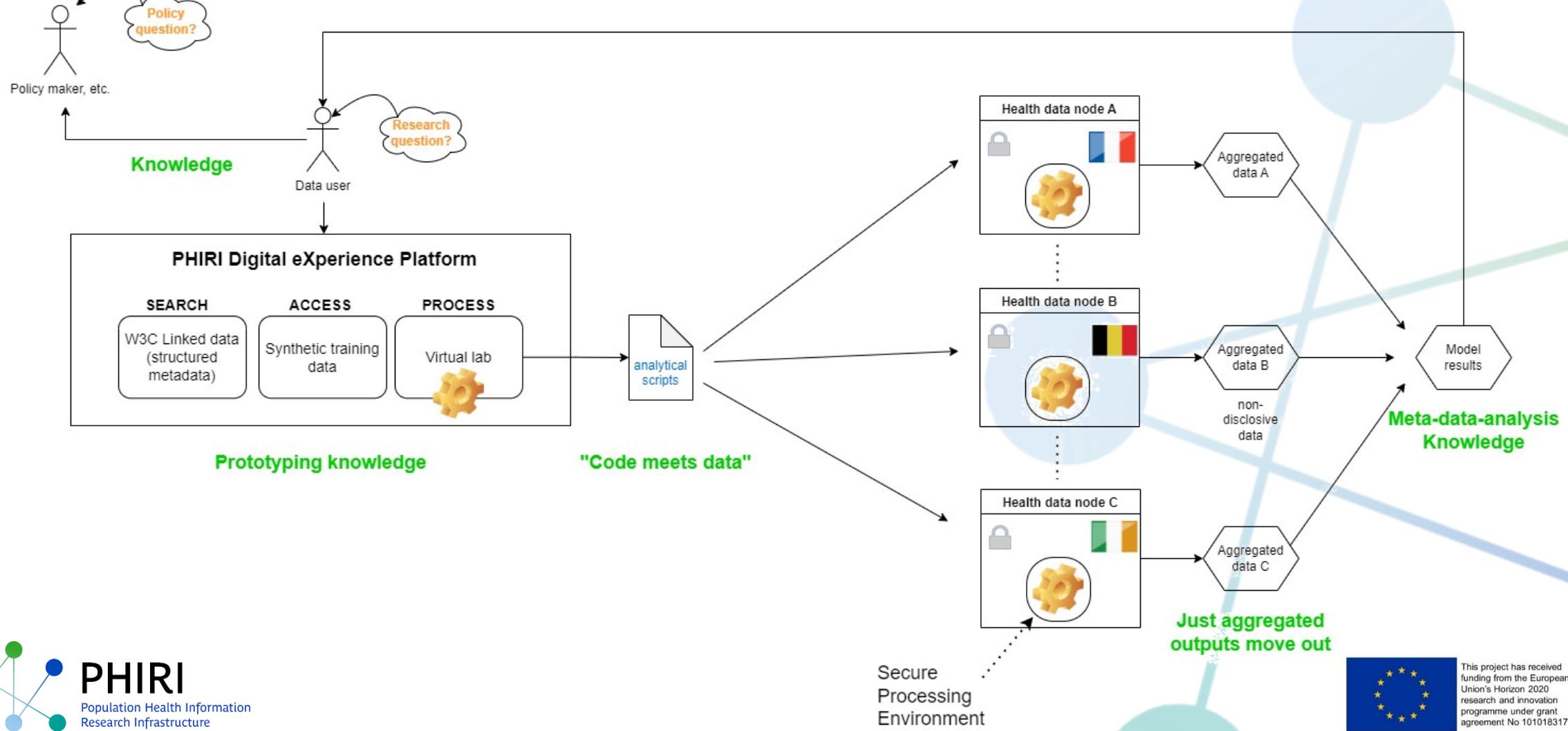


## Integrated information system (to-be)

1. Search for data and information (logical structure of data)
2. Access “proxy” data
3. Coding (Python, R) in Virtual Labs
4. Transfer analytical scripts for execution in the Secure Processing Environment

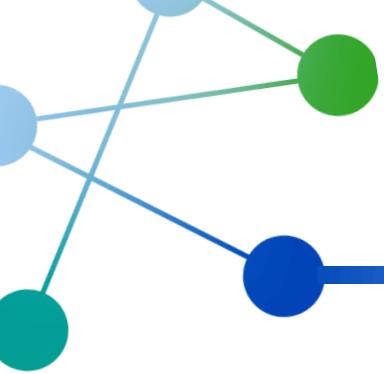
**A Research Infrastructure designed as a DigitalXPlatform**

# PHIRI (to-be): an integrated information system for prototyping knowledge



# Search for health data Data discovery: DCAT metadata catalogue

TO-BE

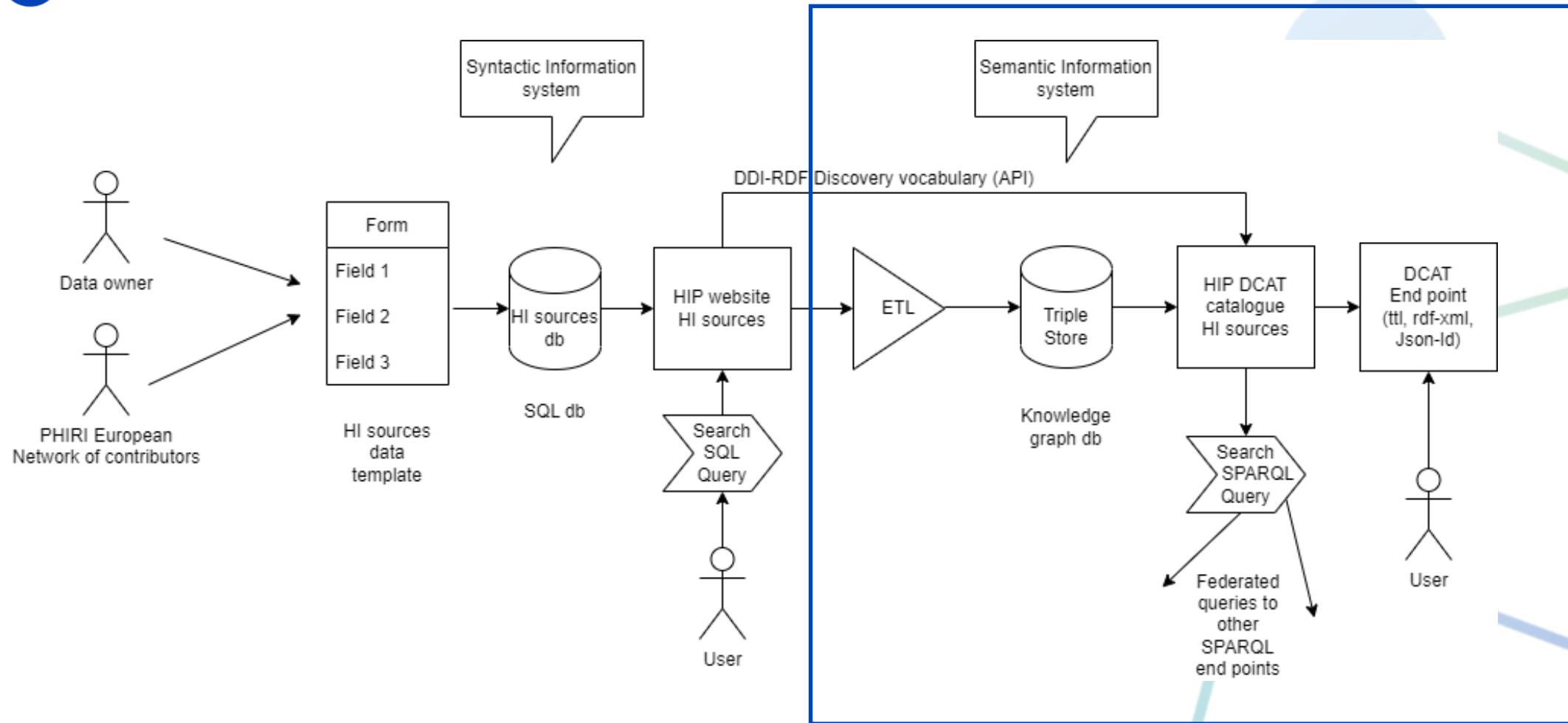


# Requirements: FAIR metadata catalogue (Metadata for machines)

Publish semantically-rich and machine-actionable metadata:

- Use of DCAT W3C metadata standard for describing catalogues of datasets (interoperability)
- Publish in machine readable formats (TTL, RDF-XML, JSON-LD)
- Use unambiguous interpretation (Controlled vocabularies)

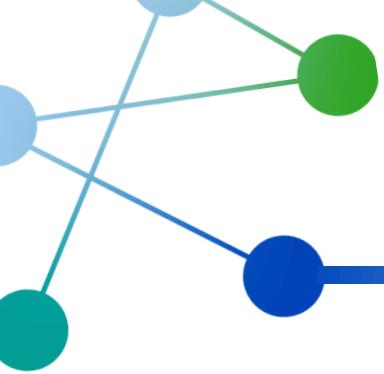
# Upgrading the healthinformationportal.eu



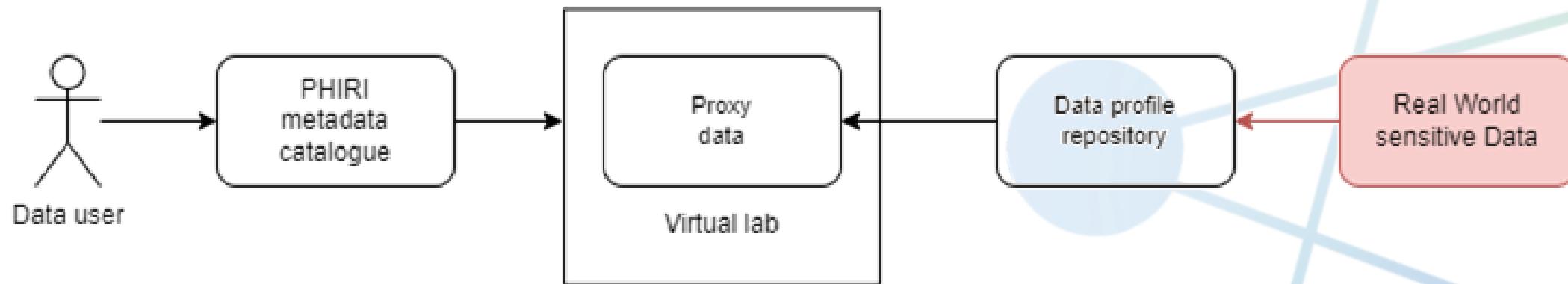


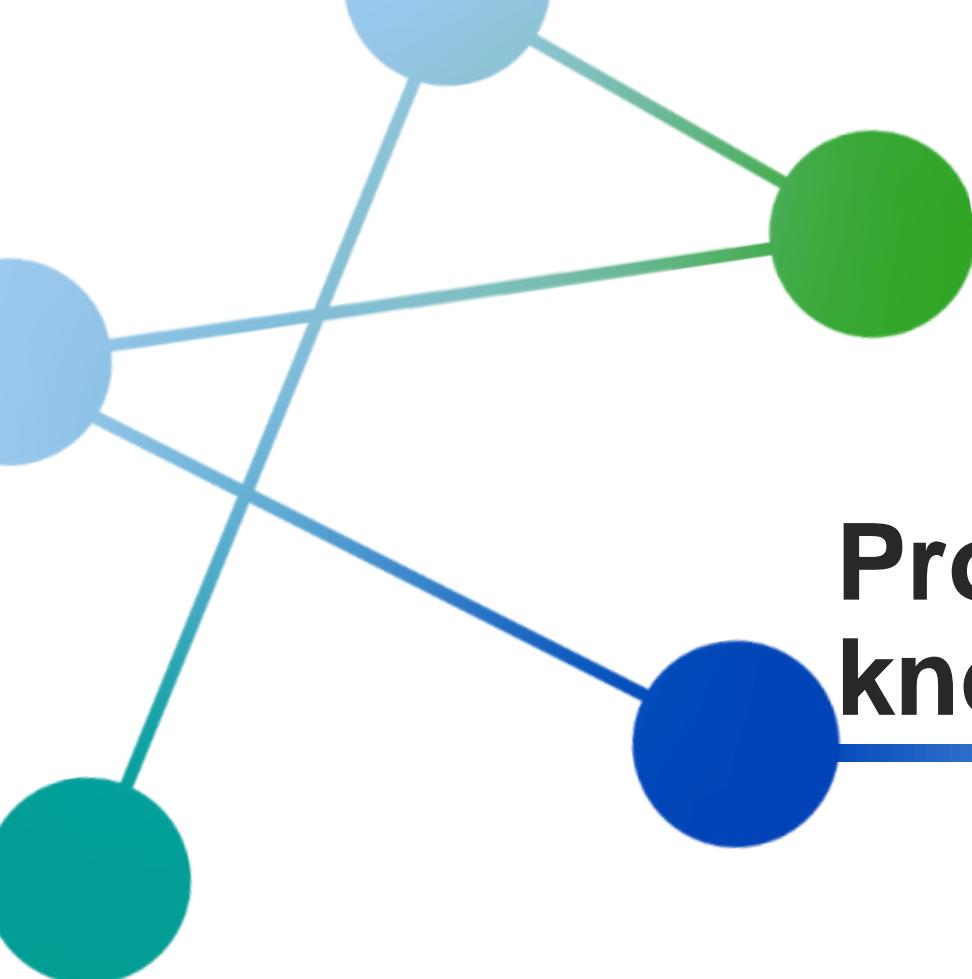
# Access proxy data Data discovery (DDI-RDF Discovery vocabulary)

TO-BE



# Provide information about the logical structure of Real World Sensitive Data and access to proxy data (to-be)





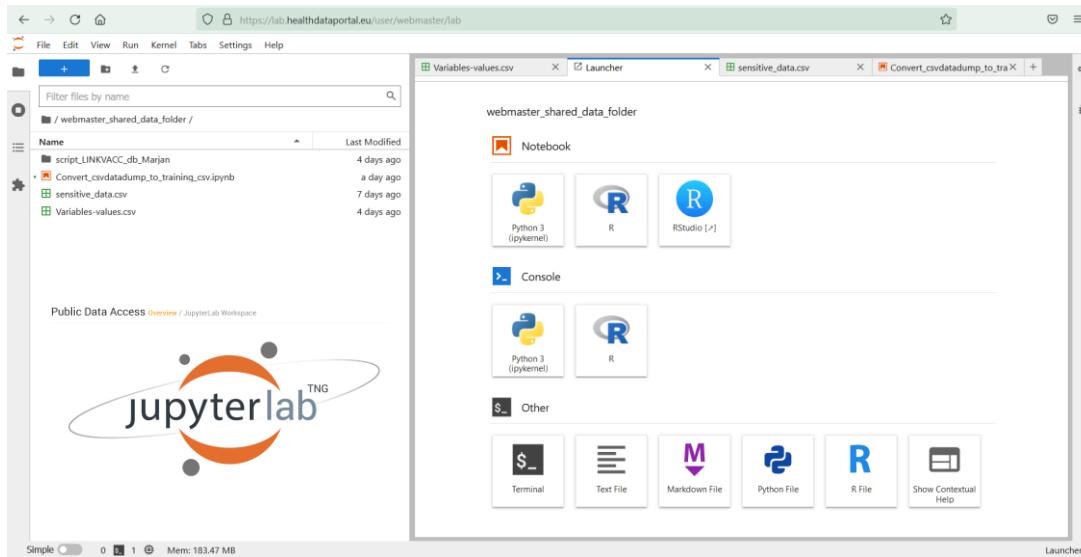
# Process and prototype knowledge

TO-BE



# Research Infrastructure as a DigitalXPlatform

“Open Science  
platform for collaborative  
Population health research”



**PHIRI Virtual  
Research  
Environments  
offering access to  
virtual labs &  
demonstrators:  
binder**

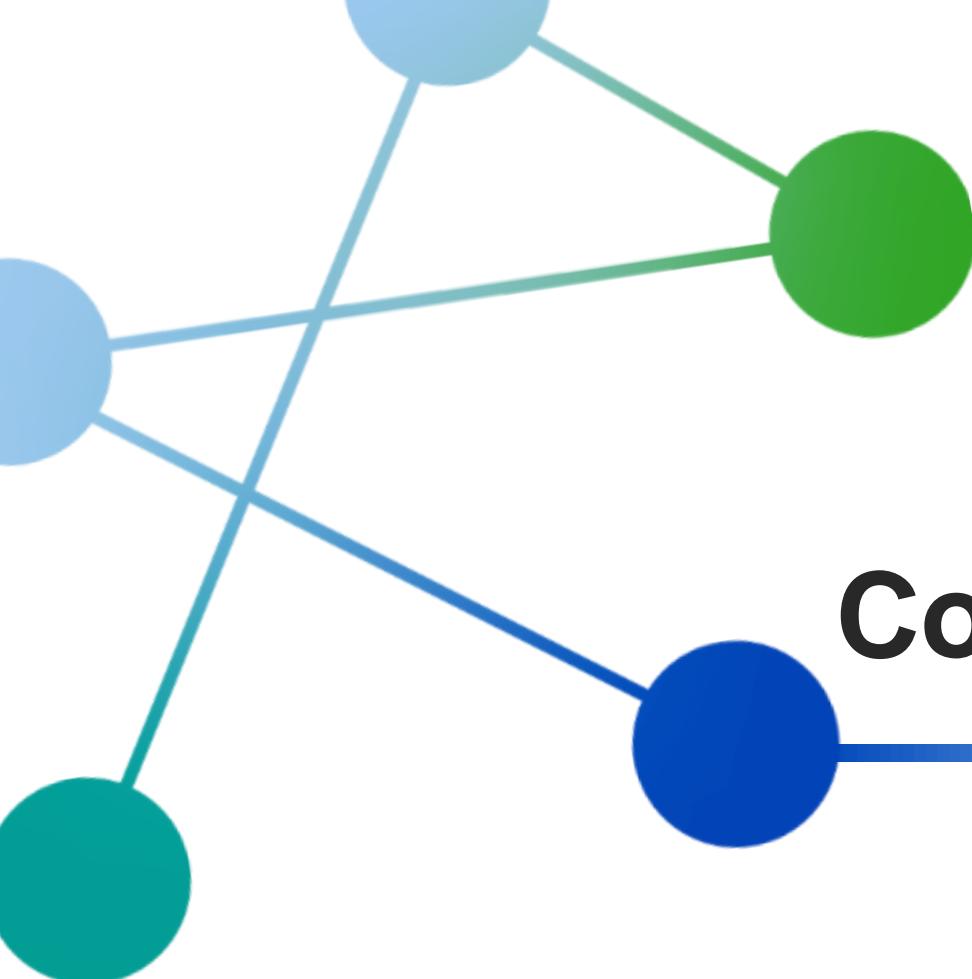


## Conclusion: upgrading the PHIRI federated platform

PHIRI aims to offer a **technical interoperability framework** allowing data analysis to be computationally reproduced in an isolated and secured processing environment.

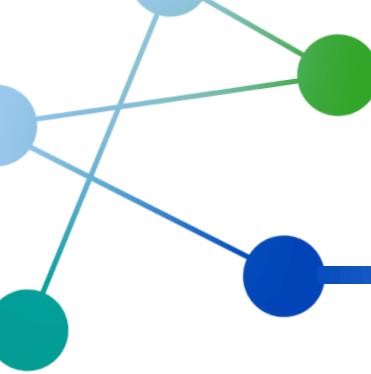
In order to complement/enhance the EHDS2 ecosystem, upgrading options for PHIRI could include:

- A linked open data platform with virtual labs ('playground') offering search, data access (training data) and processing facilities for the prototyping of knowledge.
- A technical interoperability framework to the EHDS2 allowing processing of sensitive data in secure and isolated environments ("codes move to data") for the production of insights

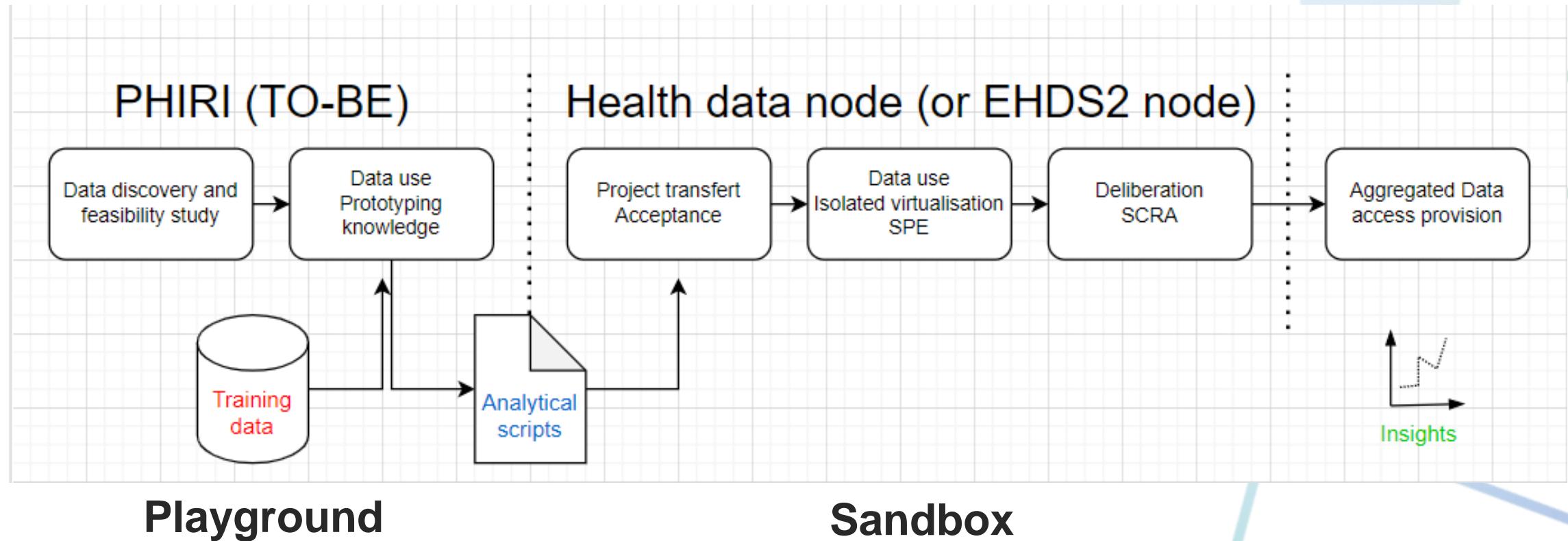


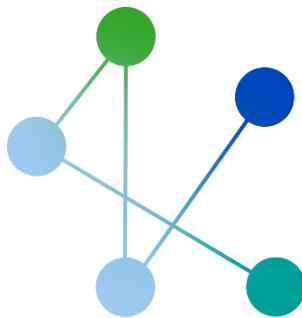
# Conclusion

TO-BE



# User journey for the secondary use of data powered by the PHIRI research infrastructure





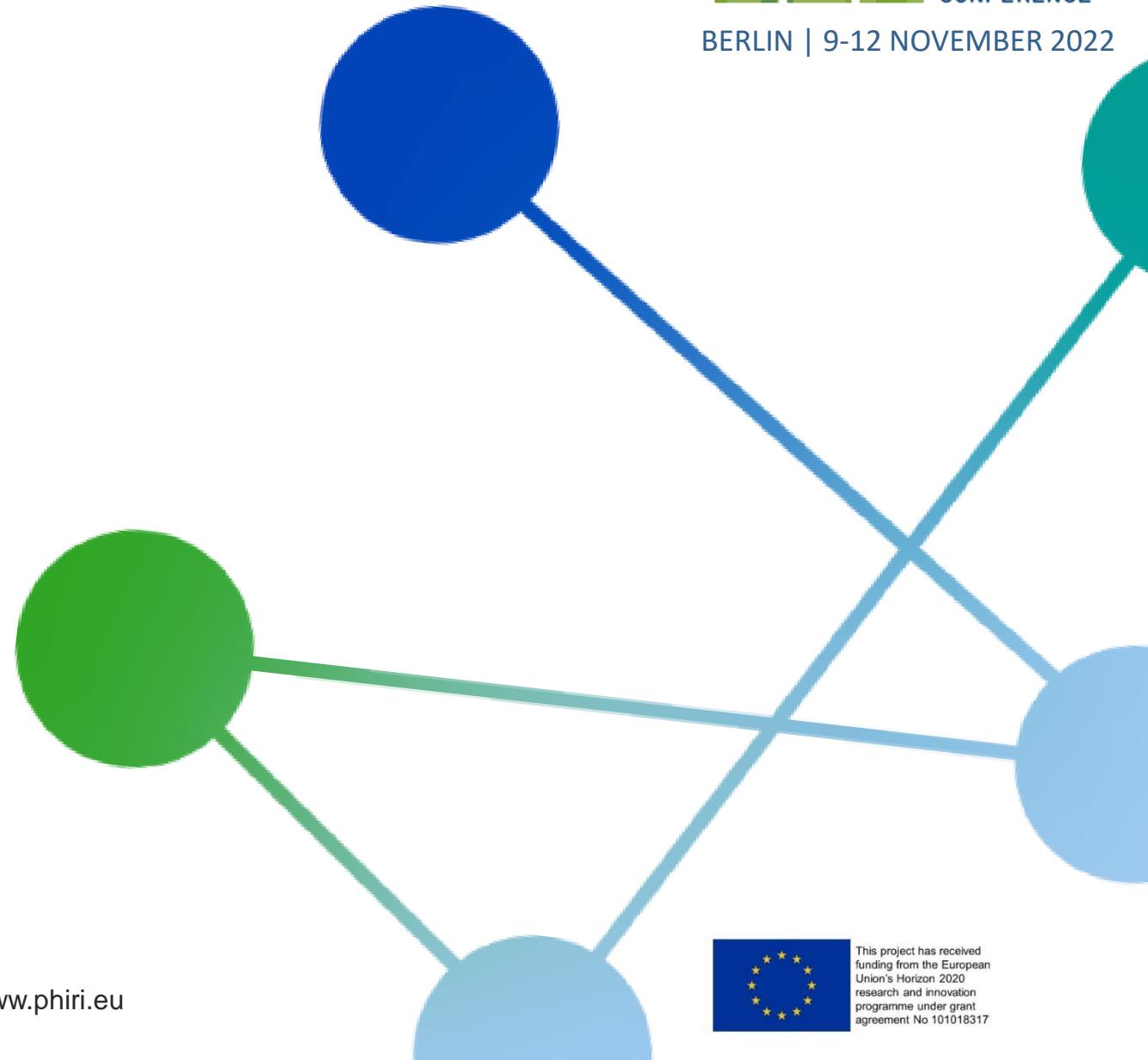
# PHIRI

Population Health Information  
Research Infrastructure

Name: Pascal Derycke  
E-mail: [Pascal.Derycke@sciensano.be](mailto:Pascal.Derycke@sciensano.be)  
 @PHIRI4EU  
 /company/phiri  
[www.HealthInformationPortal.eu](http://www.HealthInformationPortal.eu)



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**EPH** EUROPEAN  
PUBLIC  
HEALTH  
CONFERENCE  
BERLIN | 9-12 NOVEMBER 2022



This project has received  
funding from the European  
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agreement No 101018317

# Improving PHIRI performance and scalability: working within EGI-ACE

**Patrick Fuhrmann**  
DESY

*On behalf of  
Gergely Sipos (EGI-ACE Technical Coordinator)  
EGI Foundation*

*European Public Health Conference  
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# Outline



- **EGI and EGI-ACE**
- **PHIRI use case**
- **Science with EGI Notebooks and Binder**
  - In a scalable way
  - In a reproducible way
- **Conclusions**

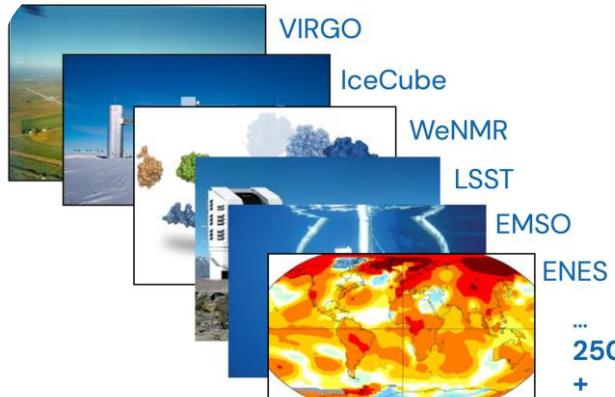


# Advanced computing and data analytics for research and innovation



2010

From the high-energy physics compute grid (WLCG)



2022

To a multi-disciplinary, multi-technology infrastructure

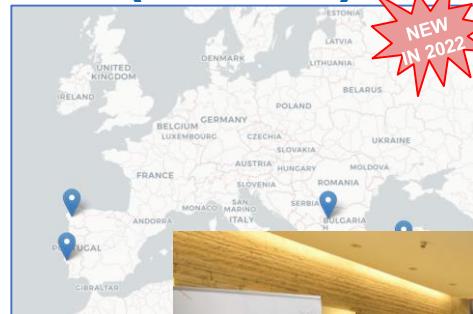
# EGI compute infrastructures (Oct/22)



**200+ High Throughput Compute sites**

(ARC-CE, HTCondorCE, SRM, webdav, XrootD)

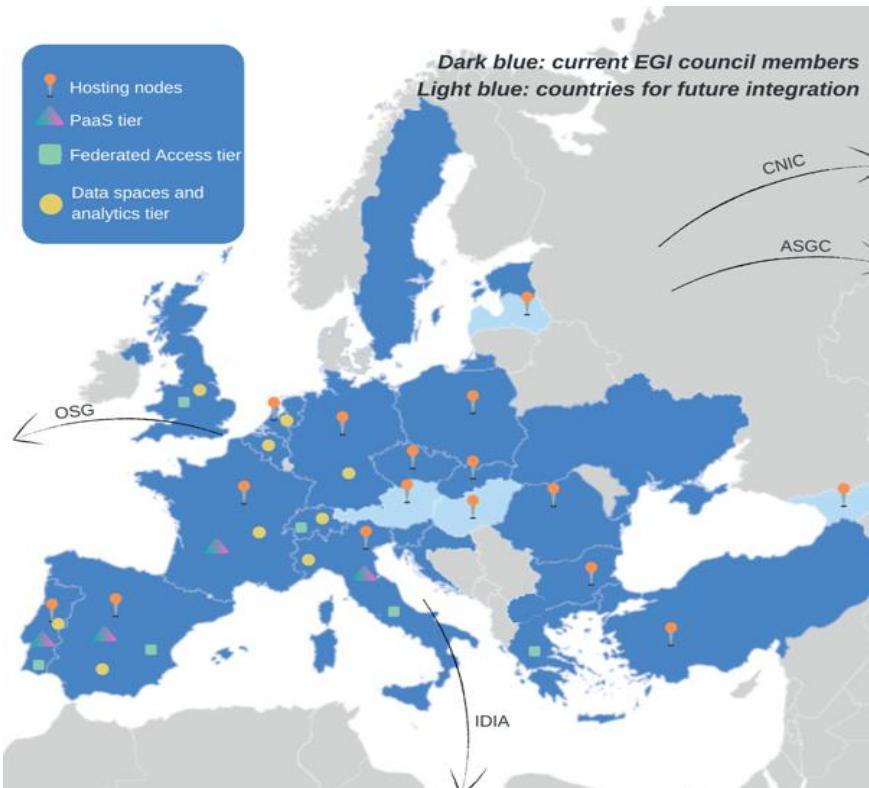
**28 Cloud sites**  
(OpenStack)



**4 HPC sites**

# EGI-ACE = EGI H2020 flagship project because...

EGI Advanced Computing for EOSC (European Open Science Cloud)



## Consortium:

- Coordinator - EGI Foundation
- 33 Partners, 23 third parties
  - Incl. Sciensano for PHIRI

## Duration:

- Jan 2021 - June 2023 (30 months)

## EGI Services for

- Research
- Federation
- Business

## Scope:

- Co-development of services with research communities
- **49% service delivery (Virtual Access)**

# EGI-ACE service delivery activities



Scientific  
users



**Data Spaces  
and Analytics**  
Data and thematic  
data analytics and  
processing tools

**Platforms**  
generic added-  
value platform level  
services

**Federated  
Access**  
Federation-wide  
management of  
data and  
computing

**Federated  
Resources**  
Compute and  
storage facilities

Service Management, Tools, Processes, Policies

Thematic application services

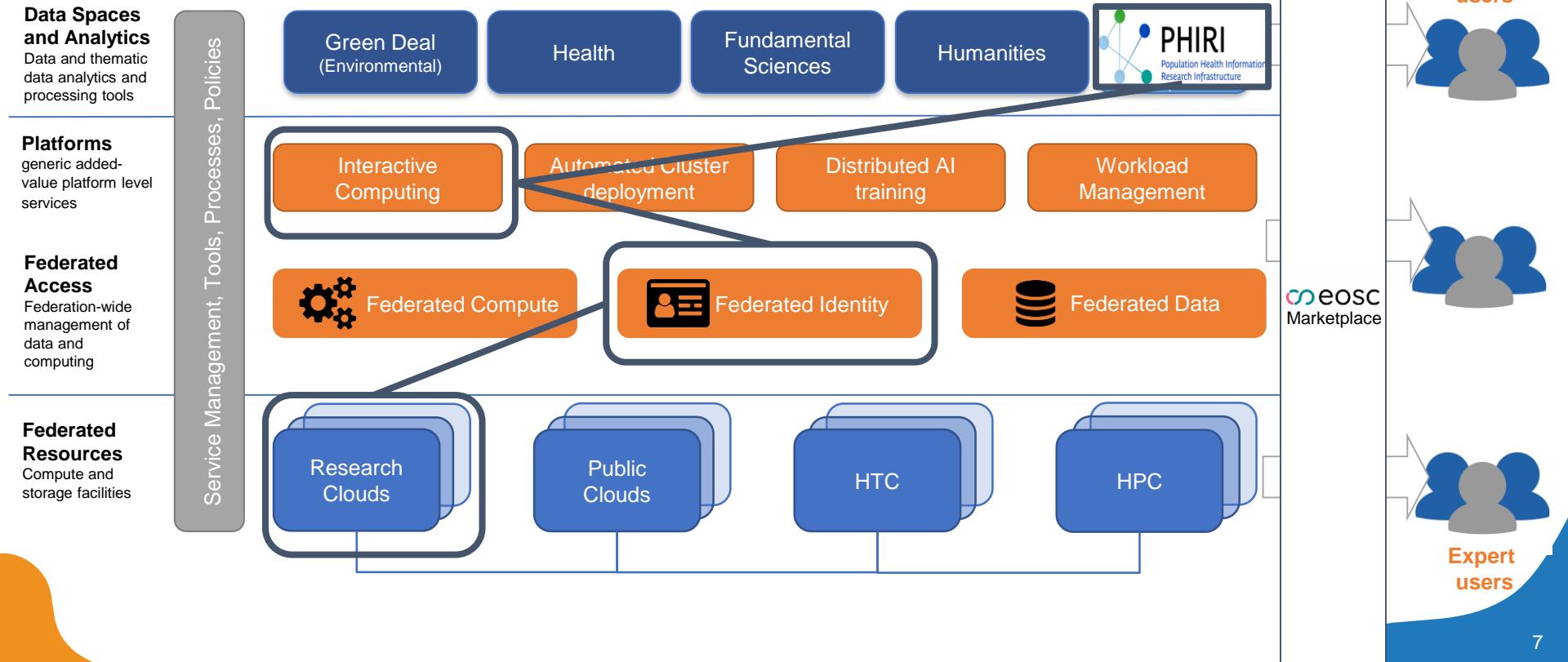
Platform services

Infrastructure services

eosC  
Marketplace

ICT  
users

# EGI-ACE service delivery activities



# PHIRI use case in EGI-ACE



<https://www.phiri.eu/>

## About PHIRI

RI on population health information that aims to facilitate and generate the best available evidence for research on health and well-being of populations as impacted by COVID-19.



## Piloting PHIRI services on EGI

1. **Reproducibility:** write, run, share, re-run data analysis ('FAIR notebooks')
  - EGI Notebooks and Binder services at CESNET (CZ)
  - Using RStudio kernel
  - Notebooks+Binder (as Docker containers), reinstall at other sites
3. **Scalability:** Deploy and operate PHIRI web environments in the cloud
  - **Underlying capacity (scalable within BIFI and to other sites)**
    - OpenStack cloud resource from BIFI (ES)
    - 20 vCPU cores. 50GB of RAM and 1TB of block storage



# EGI Notebooks (based on JupyterHub)



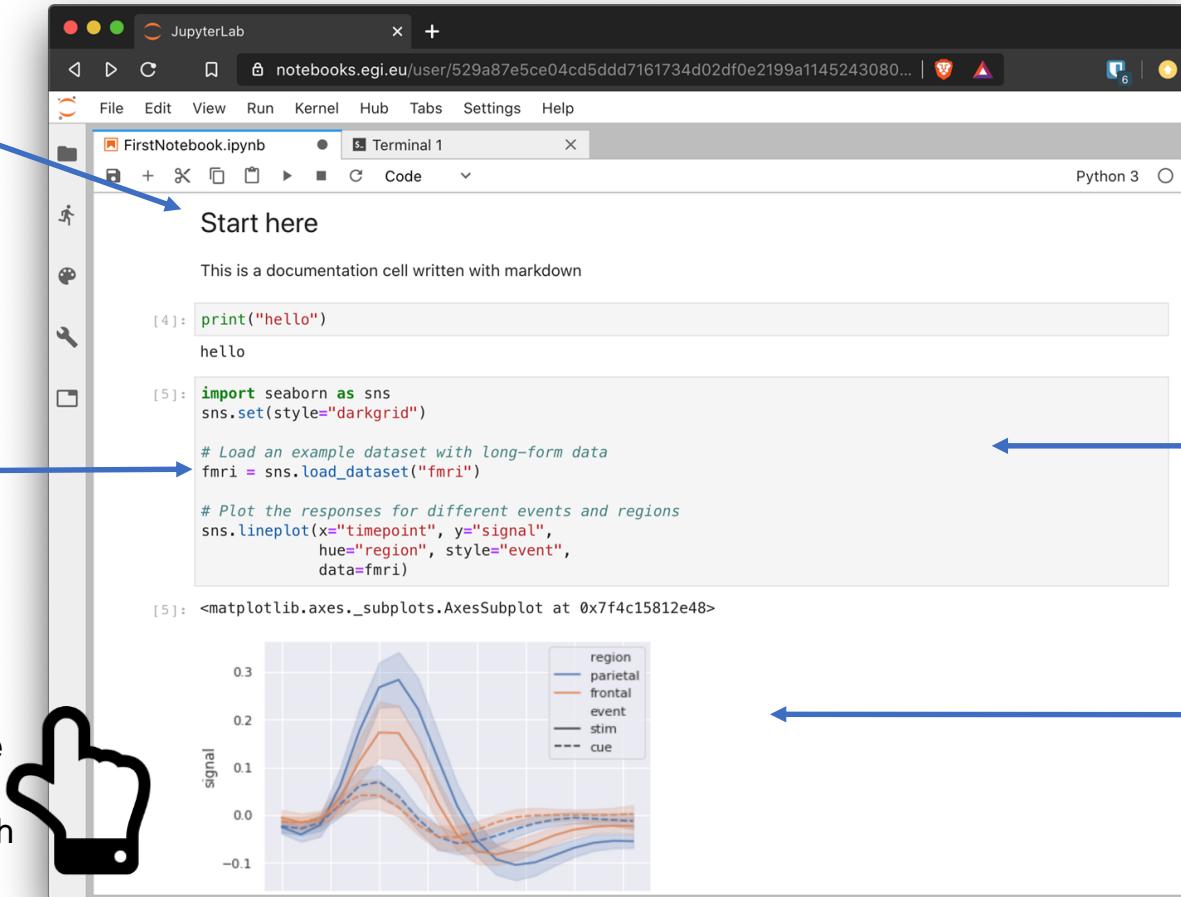
## Documentation

Text formatted using Markdown/LaTeX



## Data

Import from local/remote disk

A screenshot of the JupyterLab interface. At the top, there's a browser-like header with a back/forward button, a refresh button, and a URL bar showing a notebook URL. Below the header is a menu bar with File, Edit, View, Run, Kernel, Hub, Tabs, Settings, and Help. A tab bar shows "FirstNotebook.ipynb" and "Terminal 1". The main area is a code editor with a Python 3 kernel. It contains a markdown cell with the text "Start here" and "This is a documentation cell written with markdown". Below it is a code cell with the following content:

```
[4]: print("hello")
hello

[5]: import seaborn as sns
sns.set(style="darkgrid")

# Load an example dataset with long-form data
fmri = sns.load_dataset("fmri")

# Plot the responses for different events and regions
sns.lineplot(x="timepoint", y="signal",
              hue="region", style="event",
              data=fmri)
```

Cell [5] has an output of "`<matplotlib.axes._subplots.AxesSubplot at 0x7f4c15812e48>`". Below the code is a line plot with a legend. The legend includes "region" (parietal, frontal), "event" (stim, cue), and a line style for each. The plot shows signal values over time for different regions and events. The x-axis is labeled "timepoint" and the y-axis is labeled "signal". The plot area has a light gray background with a grid.

## Code

Use your favourite language



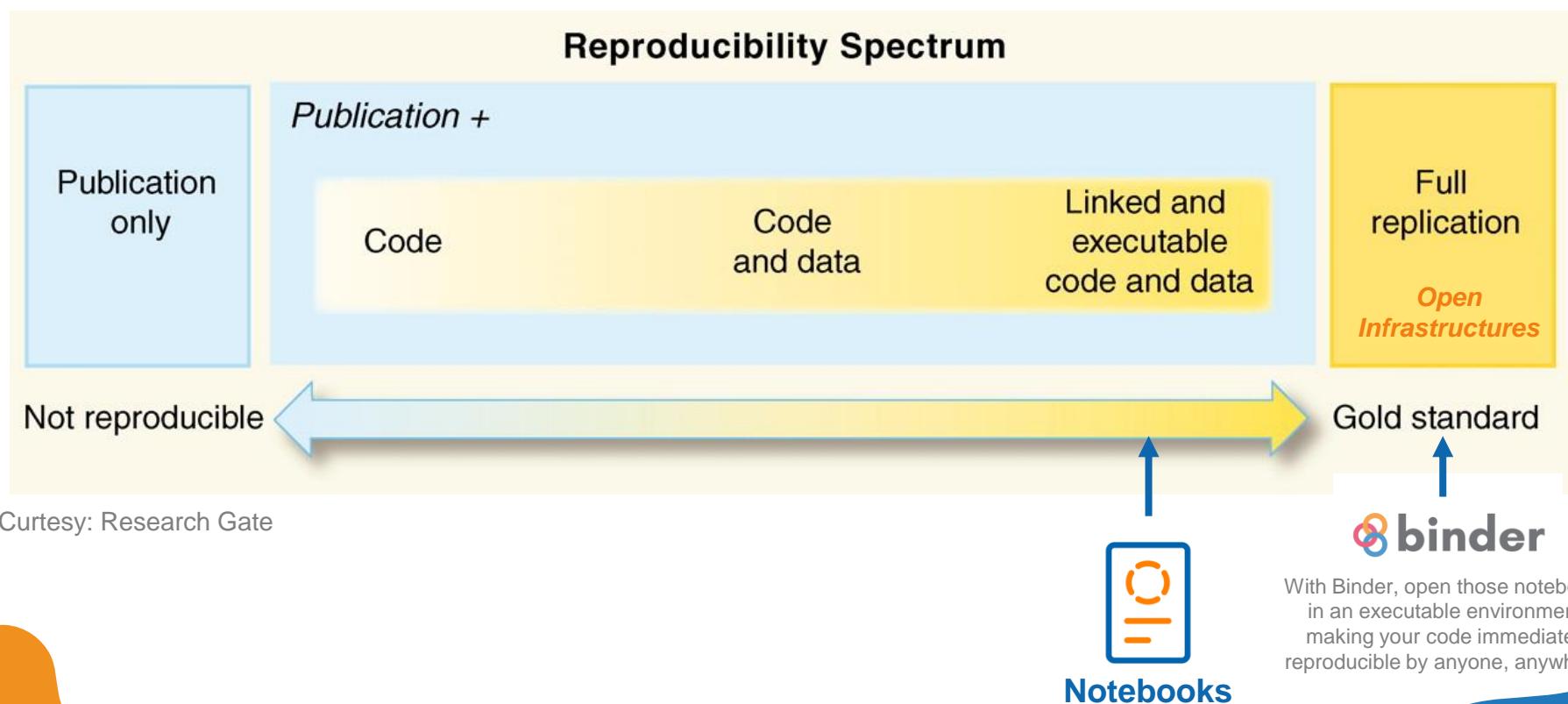
## Output

Results of the code execution(e.g. plots)

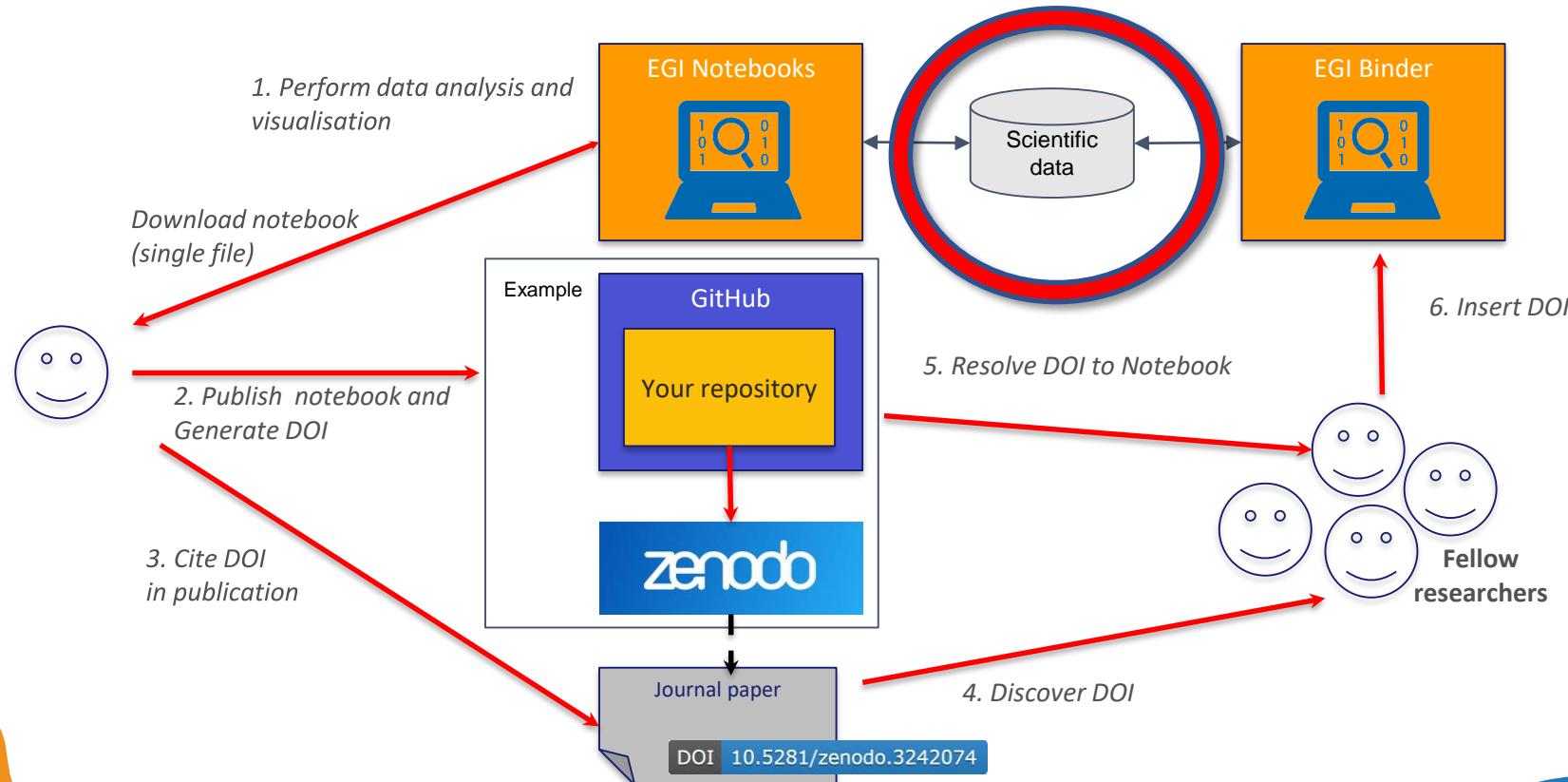
Interactive browser based environment with federated login



# Reproducible science on the way to Open Science



# Reproducible science with EGI Notebooks and Binder



# Conclusions



- PHIRI made first steps to 'cloudify' user environments and analysis applications
  - Scalability
  - 'Remote updates'
  - Sharing and reproducing
    - Notebooks-Binder OR
    - whole setup with Docker
- Partnership with EGI
  - Building on an interoperable compute federation
- Additional areas to explore with EGI in the future
  - Federating data for centralised search and discovery
  - Remote access to datasets from Notebooks and Binder
  - AI/ML from notebooks



# Thank you!

Contact: [support@egi.eu](mailto:support@egi.eu)

Website: [www.egi.eu/projects/egi-ace](http://www.egi.eu/projects/egi-ace)



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