

SESSION TWO - PUBLIC HEALTH: EUROPE

The Health Systems and Policy Monitor (HSPM) network and its Health Reform Tracker

Katherine Polin, OBS/TU Berlin & Wilm Quentin, University of Bayreuth

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Agenda

- (1) Brief background
- (2) Demonstration of the Health Reform Tracker
- (3) Insights from the Health Reform Tracker

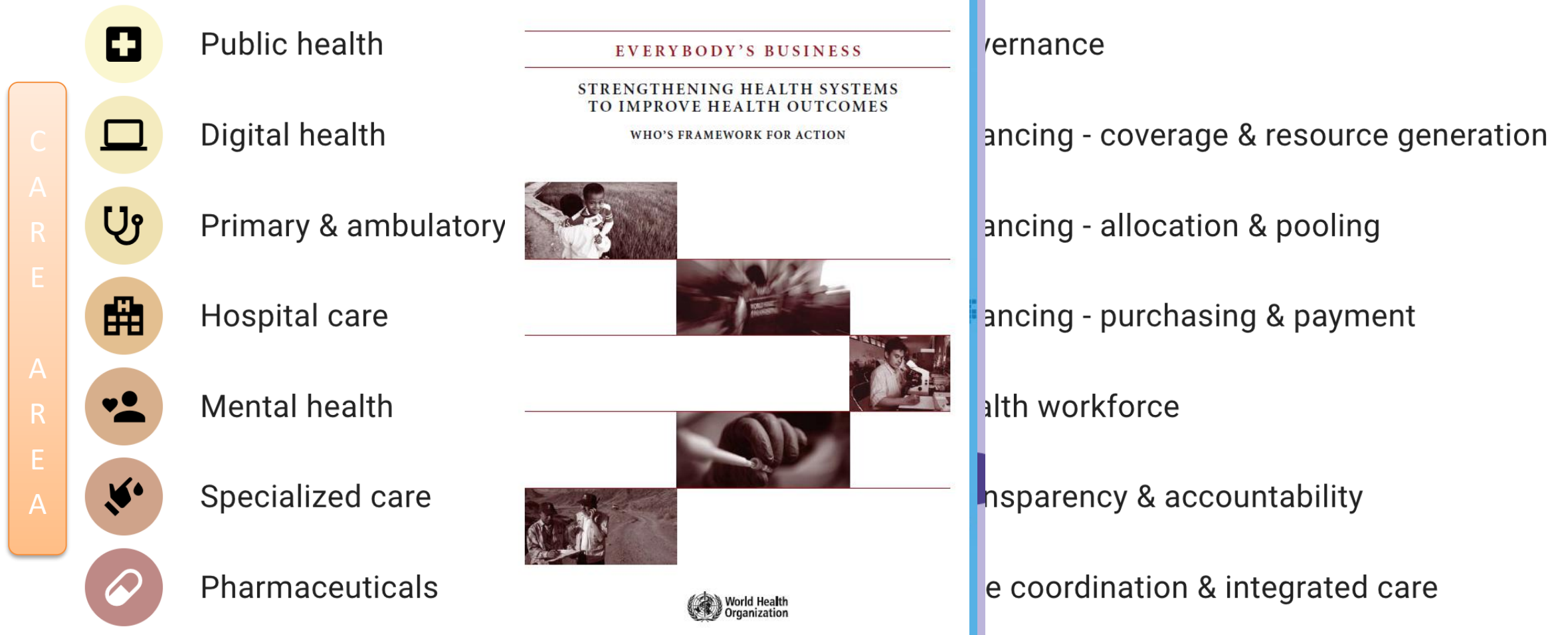
(1) Brief background



Why did we create the online Health Reform Tracker (HRT)?

- HRT grew from an annual exercise with the Observatory's **Health Systems and Policy Monitor (HSPM) network**
- HSPM network comprises health system and policy experts from **30 countries in the WHO European Region and North America**
- Since 2018, the Observatory has asked HSPM network to provide information on **“top three” health reforms**
- This has accumulated information on **+620 health reforms**
- The tool uniquely allows users to survey trends **across countries, years, reform content, type, and originator, and implementation status**

Reforms are classified into up to two clusters



(2) Demonstration of the Health Reform Tracker

<https://www.obshealthreformtracker.com/>



Featured



Health System and Policy Monitor

HSPM Monitor provides up-to-date information on reforms and changes that are particularly policy relevant.



Health Reform Tracker

To explore trends and characteristics in health policy reforms in the HSPM countries over time and by geography



PASH Simulator 2.0

PASH simulator is a tool to understand the implications of population ageing for health financing



MOVE Simulator

To estimate the value of changes in health status for an individual or a population based on data from HETUS.



Monitors

[Health Systems and Policy Monitor](#)[OBS-PACE \(Progress In Addressing Cancer In Europe\)](#)[COVID-19 Health System Response Monitor](#)

The European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies is a partnership hosted by WHO that identifies and generates the evidence that Europe's decision-makers need. The Observatory shares this evidence on health systems in print, in person and online – acting as a knowledge broker and bridging the gap between academia and policy.

Featured publications

[All publications >](#)

14 MAY 2025
Tajikistan:



Health Systems and Policy Monitor (HSPM)

An innovative platform that provides a detailed description of health systems and provides up-to-date information on reforms and changes that are particularly policy relevant.

For detailed information on country policy responses to the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020-2021, see our separate COVID-19 Health Systems Response Monitor (HSRM).

[Overview](#)[Countries](#)[Updates](#)[Analyses](#)[Tracker](#)[Compare](#)[Network](#)

European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies

Health Reform Tracker

The Health Reform Tracker provides a first-ever overview of the content and dynamics of health reforms in over 30 countries across the WHO European Region and North America over time. The Observatory's [Health System Policy Monitor \(HSPM\)](#) network of experts has been collecting the “top three” health policy and system reforms for each country annually since 2018. These are organized, validated and synthesized by the Observatory.

The reforms are classified according to two types of clusters - health system functions and care areas - as well as by their type and policy originator.

Analyse functions and areas

Get country reports >

Governance

Financing - coverage & resource generation

Financing - allocation & pooling

Financing - purchasing & payment

Health workforce

Transparency & accountability

Care coordination & integrated care

Public health

Digital health

Primary & ambulatory care

Hospital care

Mental health

Specialized care

Pharmaceuticals

About page: background, methodological information and recent literature

Health Systems and Policy Monitor (HSPM) network

The [Observatory's HSPM network](#) convenes an international group of around 50 national health systems researchers from over 40 institutions in more than 30 high-income countries. The countries include all EU countries, Canada, Israel, the UK and the US. The HSPM network participates in a wide range of collaborations keeping the health policy community up to date on health system developments and contributing their expertise on the dynamics of health systems to reports, studies, and knowledge transfer exercises for a variety of audiences, including ministries of health and international organizations. The HSPM network also informs the HSPM website, an innovative platform that provides a detailed description of health systems and provides up-to-date information on reforms and changes that are particularly policy-relevant.

History of the tool and the Reform Round-up

The HSPM network brings together prestigious academic institutions with a strong track record in health systems and policy analysis. The network meets annually to exchange knowledge and experiences from the various health system activities across Europe and beyond. It fosters comparative research collaborations and generates evidence to inform policymaking.

Every year since 2018, the Observatory has asked the network members to share what they understand to be the current year's "top three" health reforms in their respective countries. This exercise is called the Reform Round-up and has resulted in a repository of over 620+ reforms in the Health Reform Tracker. The assessment exercise also informs cross-country comparative studies and supports HSPM members and health policy makers.



Methodology

HSPM national experts are asked via e-mail to identify the "top three" recent reforms in their respective countries in a standardized survey in English. This survey asks for the name of each reform, a short description, including details on what it addresses and how, as well as the type of reform (e.g., legislation, a directive, a strategy or plan), and the originator of the reform (e.g., executive government, parliament/legislature, health insurance). The implementation status of each reform is also tracked over time.

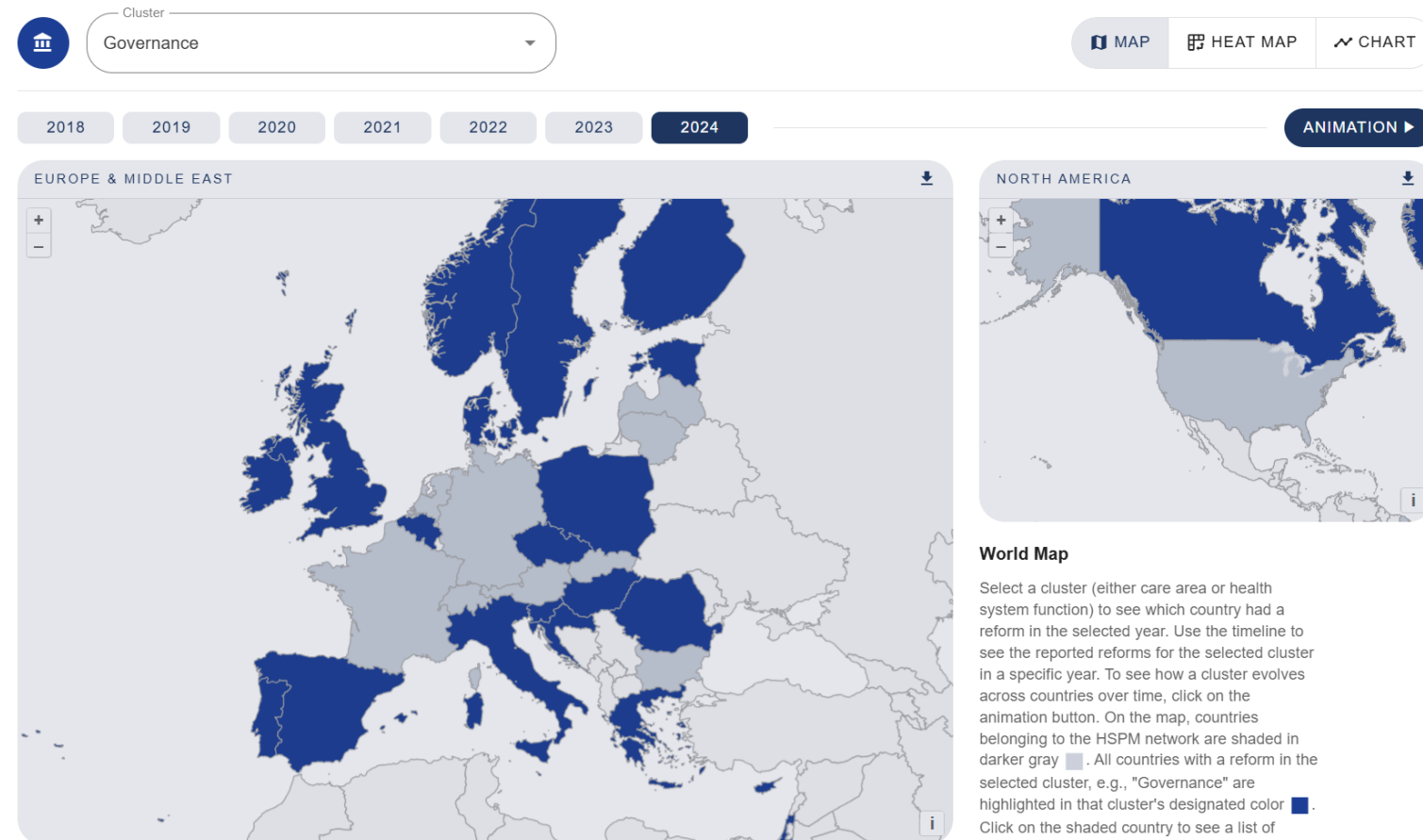
No limitations are imposed on HSPM experts' choice of reforms, i.e. experts were free to select whatever they felt were the most important in their country in that year. From 2018-2020, reforms were iteratively organized across nine pre-defined clusters. These clusters were derived from the template for the Observatory's Health Systems in Transition series and the WHO Health Systems Framework (2007), and then aligned with the OBS and WHO HSPA framework (2023). Information on the implementation status of reported reforms is also solicited. Since 2021, the experts themselves are asked to do an initial clustering, which is then checked and validated by researchers at the Observatory. Given the complex and multifaceted nature of health reforms, a second cluster allocation was also introduced in 2021. As the exercise evolved, two additional clusters were added, bringing the total to 11. The reforms from 2018-2021 were subsequently re-clustered across these 11 areas. Most reforms are now included in two distinct clusters to give users different entry points for understanding reforms.

Latest literature

Polin K, Hjortland M, Maresso A, van Ginneken E, Busse R, Quentin W. "Top-Three" health reforms in 31 high-income countries in 2018 and 2019: an expert informed overview. *Health Policy* 2021;125 (7): 815-832 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthpol.2021.04.005>.

Map function for geographic and temporal view of selected cluster

Functions and Care Areas



Numerical heat map over time and by country for selected cluster

Functions and Care Areas



Cluster
Governance

MAP

HEAT MAP

CHART

Heat Map

Select a cluster to see which country had a reform in this health system function or care area over the years. Countries that had more than one reform in the selected cluster are highlighted by blue ●. Those with only one are in gray ●.

Country	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Austria	1	2					
Belgium	2	1					1
Bulgaria	1	3	2		1		
Canada	1	2		1		1	1
Croatia		1		3	1		1
Cyprus	3	1	1	1	3		2
Czechia		1		2	2	1	1
Denmark	1		2	2			2
Estonia				1	1		1
Finland	2	1	1	2	1	1	1
France							

Chart for the evolution of a selected cluster over time

Functions and Care Areas



Cluster

Governance

MAP

HEAT MAP

CHART

Number of reforms per year / Share of reforms per year

Explore the distribution of reforms across clusters from 2018 to 2024. Select a cluster to view its frequency over time. You can toggle between viewing the **number of reforms** assigned to the cluster or the **share of reforms** in each year that include the cluster.

Please note: The percentages do not add up to 100% because a reform can belong to multiple clusters.

☒ number of reforms ☐ share of reforms

Number of reforms

40

30

20

10

0

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022


2023

2024

2022

● Governance	35
● Financing - coverage & resource generation	18
● Financing - allocation & pooling	2
● Financing - purchasing & payment	14
● Health workforce	18
● Transparency & accountability	4
● Care coordination & integrated care	11
● Public health	5
● Digital health	6
● Primary & ambulatory care	19
● Hospital care	13
● Mental health	5
● Specialized care	8
● Pharmaceuticals	3

Country page enables a more detailed overview of reforms over time

Health Reform Tracker

Overview

Countries

Reforms

Implementation

About

Countries

This page allows you to explore specific details of reforms by country over years. Below a chronological list of reforms since 2018 can be found, along with their associated clusters. Click on a reform for more details. The implementation chart provides an overview of the implementation status (at last data update) of all reforms for the selected country reported in a given year.

Country

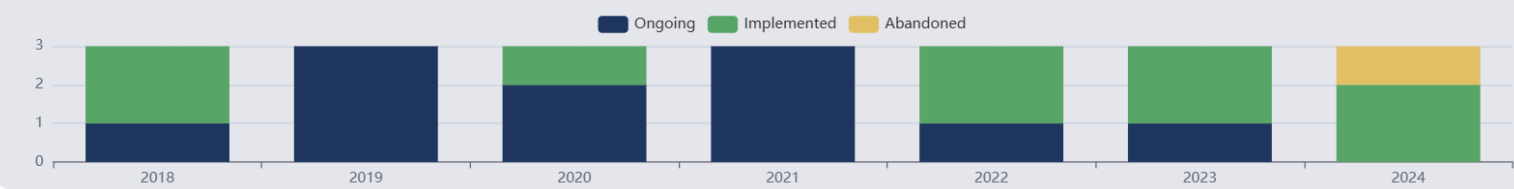
France

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF REFORMS REPORTED IN A GIVEN YEAR

Ongoing

Implemented

Abandoned



Year	Ongoing	Implemented	Abandoned
2018	1	2	0
2019	3	0	0
2020	2	1	0
2021	3	0	0
2022	1	2	0
2023	1	2	0
2024	0	2	1

2018

2019

2020

● France increases investments into digital health and telemedicine

France | 2018

● Development of local accountability for health

France | 2019

● Adapting health professionals to new needs

France | 2019

● Supporting the digital shift in health

France | 2019

● Commitment to invest in telemedicine



France | 2020

● Investment in hospital staffing under "Ségur de la santé" reform

France | 2020

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Reform calling cards link to the HSPM website for more contextualization

Countries

This page allows you to explore more details. The implementation status is shown on a reform for


Country
France

IMPLEMENTATION

2018

2019

New guidelines for training of nurses and medical assistants

Reform	Training of nurses and medical assistants
Country	France
Year	2018
Description	Changes to the training & education of providers.
Type of Reform	Legislation
Policy Originator	Parliament / legislature
Implementation Status	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Ongoing
Clusters	
More information	https://eurohealthobservatory.who.int/monitors/health-systems-monitor/countries-hspm

The reform page enables a detailed analysis and keyword search



Reforms

This page enables a detailed analysis of the health system and policy reforms since 2018 as reported by country experts. You can filter the reforms by type, policy originator, country, year, and cluster or cluster combination (of two). Alternatively, you can search for a reforms by name or keywords in the keyword-search.

Keyword-Search

Q COVID-19

ADVANCED FILTERS

Advanced Filter

CLUSTER COMBINATIONS (CARE AREAS AND FUNCTIONS)

Here you can select a combination of clusters; e.g. select all reforms that have both 'Hospital Care' AND 'Governance'. You can select two clusters in the drop-down.

Cluster

FILTER BY TYPE, AUTHOR, COUNTRY, YEAR, AND REFORM OBJECTIVES

Here you can select more advanced filters.

Type

Policy Originator

Country

Years

Reform Objectives

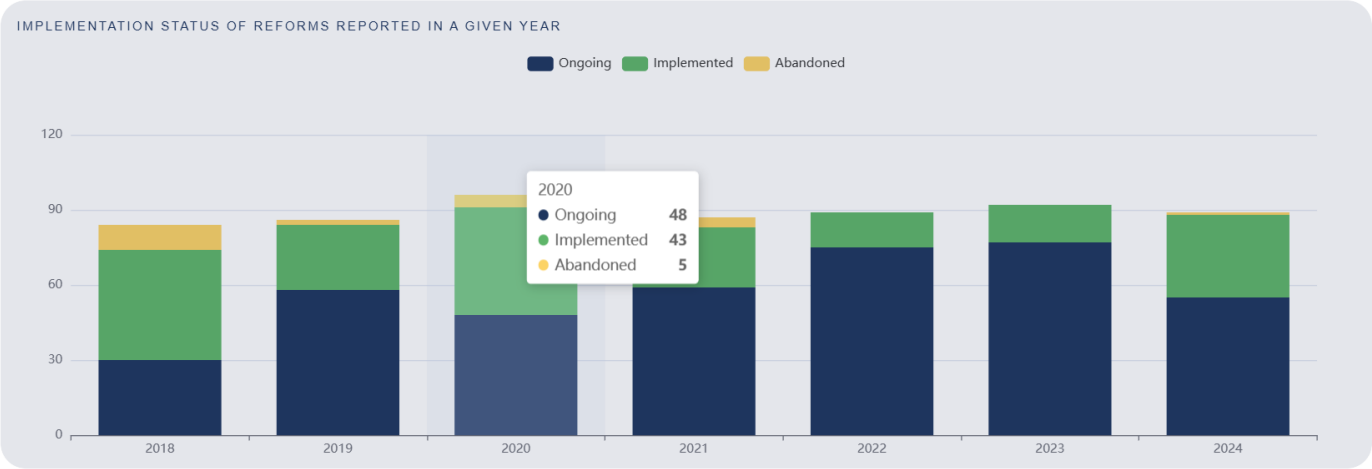
RESET FILTERS

CLOSE

Implementation page tracks overall implementation status across reforms

Implementation

Here you can see information on the implementation status of the reforms reported in a given year, as of the date of the last data update. The health reform tracker is updated yearly and helps to monitor the progress of the reforms as well as the reasons why reforms were abandoned. Some of these are highlighted below.



Why are reforms abandoned?

With the Health Reform Tracker we not only track the progress of implementation but also the reasons why reforms are abandoned. Click on a reform to see the reasons why it was abandoned.

It was a temporary measure due to COVID

Spain | abandoned in 2021 | Legal provisions introduced for care personnel switching roles

Due to end of pandemic.

Canada | abandoned in 2022 | Mandatory COVID-19 vaccinations for health and long-term care workers

Not all virtual care services were removed from physician fee schedule but there was a scaling back to incentivize in-person, longitudinal care

Canada | abandoned in 2022 | Remuneration of virtual care implemented

With the change of government, may come back later on but so far it is on pause, especially as the current government is really conservative on societal issues

France | abandoned in 2024 | End-of-life care draft bill: France plans to...

There is no change of enacting a single payer system under the Trump administration.

United States | abandoned in 2025 | Discussion on "Medicare for all" (single-payer system) or a public option

Additional tax abandoned 2022. Reform funding to social care repurposed and delayed.

United Kingdom | abandoned in 2022 | Introduction of Health and Care Levy

GLOSSARY

(3) Insights from the Health Reform Tracker

<https://www.obshealthreformtracker.com/>



Quiz – question 1

(1) Which 2 reform clusters were among the top 3 in 2024?

Digital health

Care coordination & integrated care



Hospital care

Financing – Coverage & Resource generation



Quiz – question 2

(2) Which 2 topics were important cross-cutting issues in 2024?

Access challenges



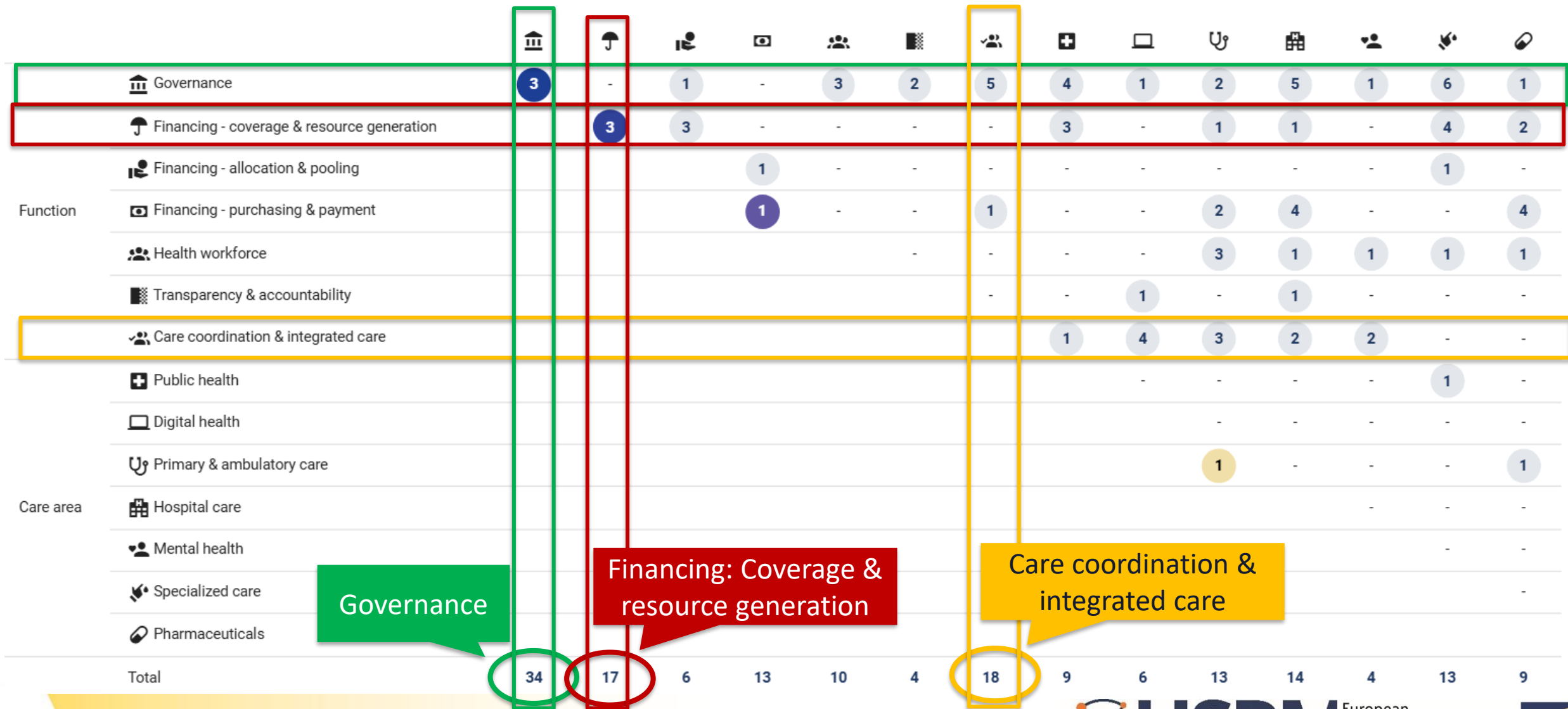
Prevention and screening



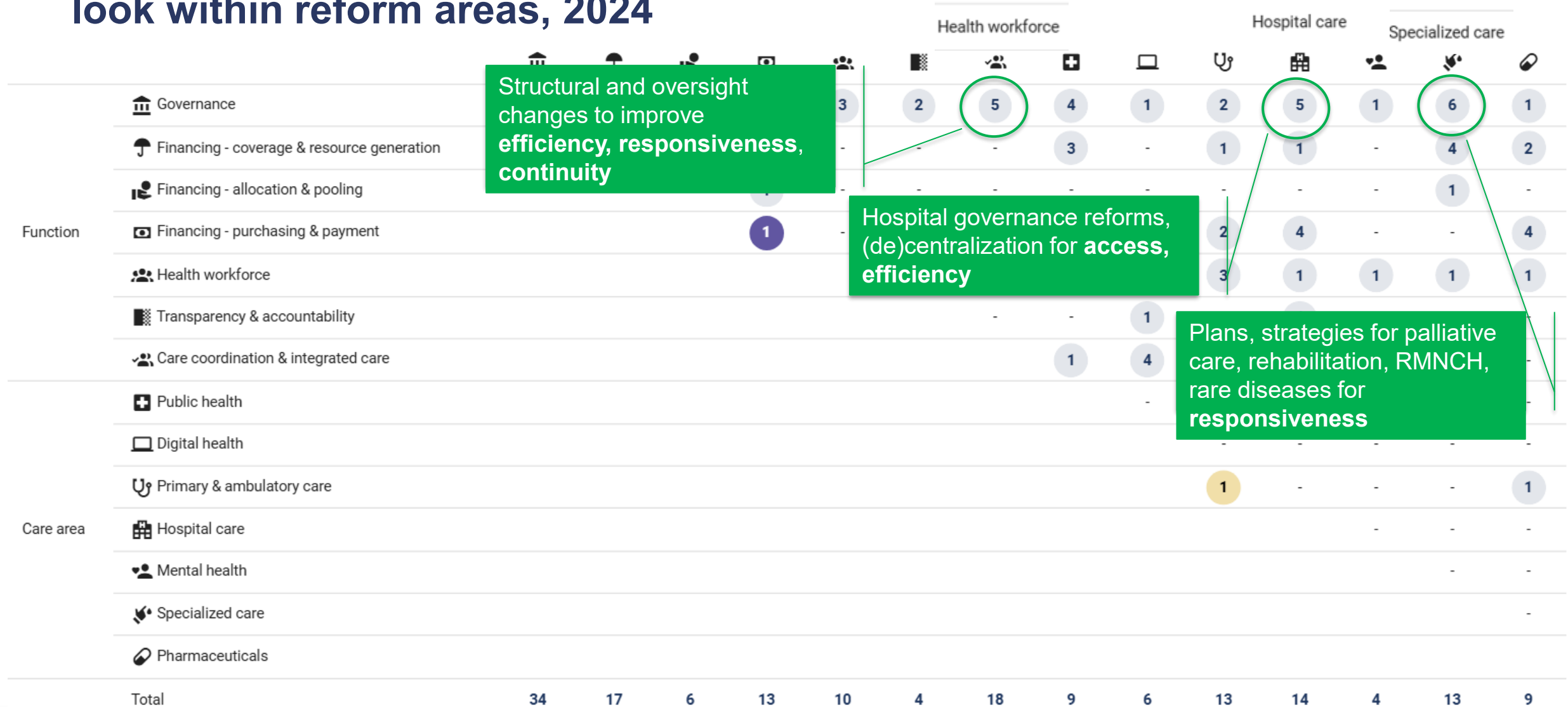
Pandemic preparedness

Budget challenges

Top 3 reform areas in 2024



Cluster combinations enable better understanding of reforms: A closer look within reform areas, 2024



Cluster combinations enable better understanding of reforms: A closer look within reform areas, 2024

Look with different areas, 2021															
Function	Governance	3	-	1	-	3	2	5	4	1	2	5	1	6	1
	Financing - coverage & resource generation		3	3	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	1	-	4	2
	Financing - allocation & pooling				1	-	-	-	-	-					
	Financing - purchasing & payment				1	-	-	1	-	-					
	Health workforce					-	-	-	-	-					
	Transparency & accountability						-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
Care area	Care coordination & integrated care							1	4	3	2	2	-	-	
	Public health							-	-	-	-	-	1	-	
	Digital health									-	-	-	-	-	
	Primary & ambulatory care									1	-	-	-	-	1
	Hospital care												-	-	-
	Mental health												-	-	-
	Specialized care														-
	Pharmaceuticals														
	Total		34	17	6	13	10	4	18	9	6	13	14	4	13

Coverage of specialised care, e.g palliative care, fertility treatments, rare diseases

Coverage of preventive care, e.g., screenings, vaccination, smoking cessation

Digital tools as first entry, continuity of care, improved communication

Cross cutting topics

Keyword-Search

🔍 access = 33 reforms (in 2024)

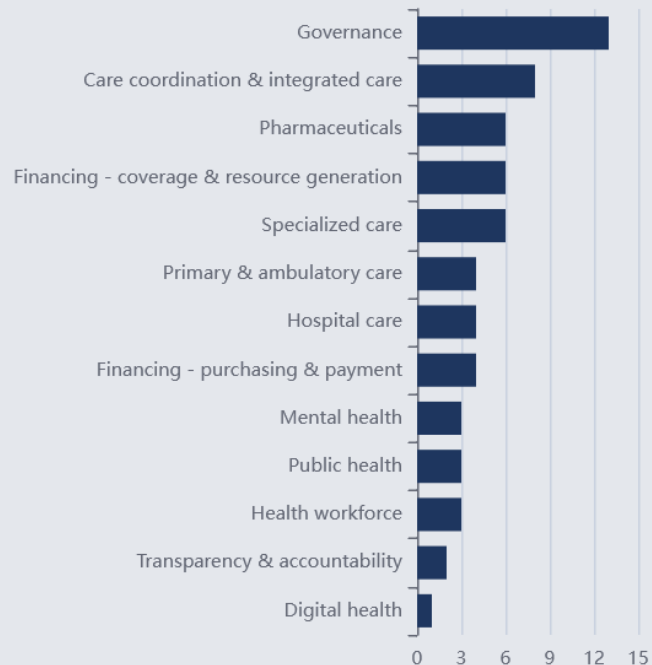
Keyword-Search

🔍 prevention = 8 reforms (in 2024)

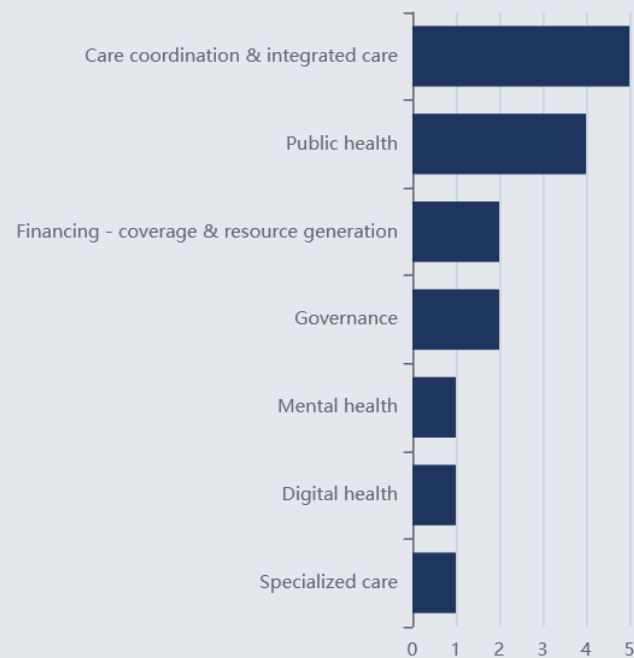
Keyword-Search

🔍 pandemic = 2 reforms (in 2024)

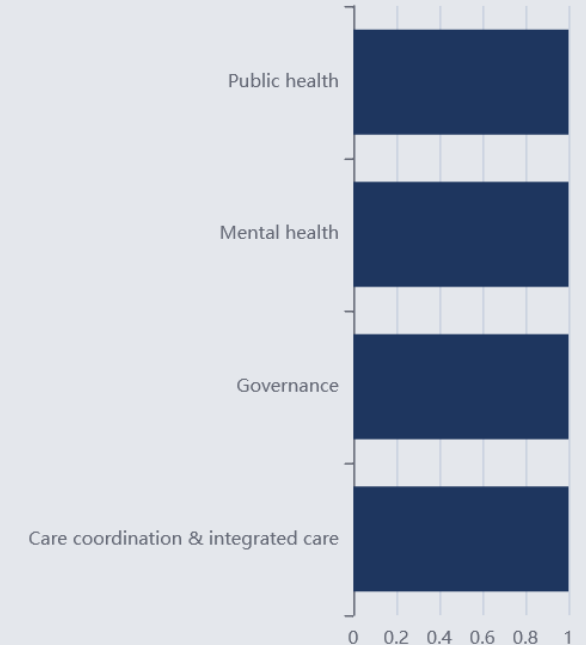
DISTRIBUTION OF REFORMS BY CLUSTER



DISTRIBUTION OF REFORMS BY CLUSTER



DISTRIBUTION OF REFORMS BY CLUSTER



Several themes cut across clusters – access, efficiency, responsiveness

- Access challenges (rationale behind payment reforms, digital, and organizational reforms)
- Human resources - planning and expanding provider competencies (nurses, pharmacists), especially linked to PHC, care coordination and specialized care
- Further expansion of prevention and public health; PHC integration
- Further expansion of digital health (prevention, access, PHC, coordination)
- Expanding coverage and access, especially to primary & ambulatory care and medicines (generics and innovative)
- Efficiency challenges

Going deeper: Panel discussions at HSPM meeting 2024



Governance
(Andrea Schmidt)

1

Care coordination & integrated care
(Mircha Poldrugovac)

2

Financing – coverage & resource generation
(Andrew Barnes)

3

Going deeper: Example care coordination and integrated care reforms in 2024

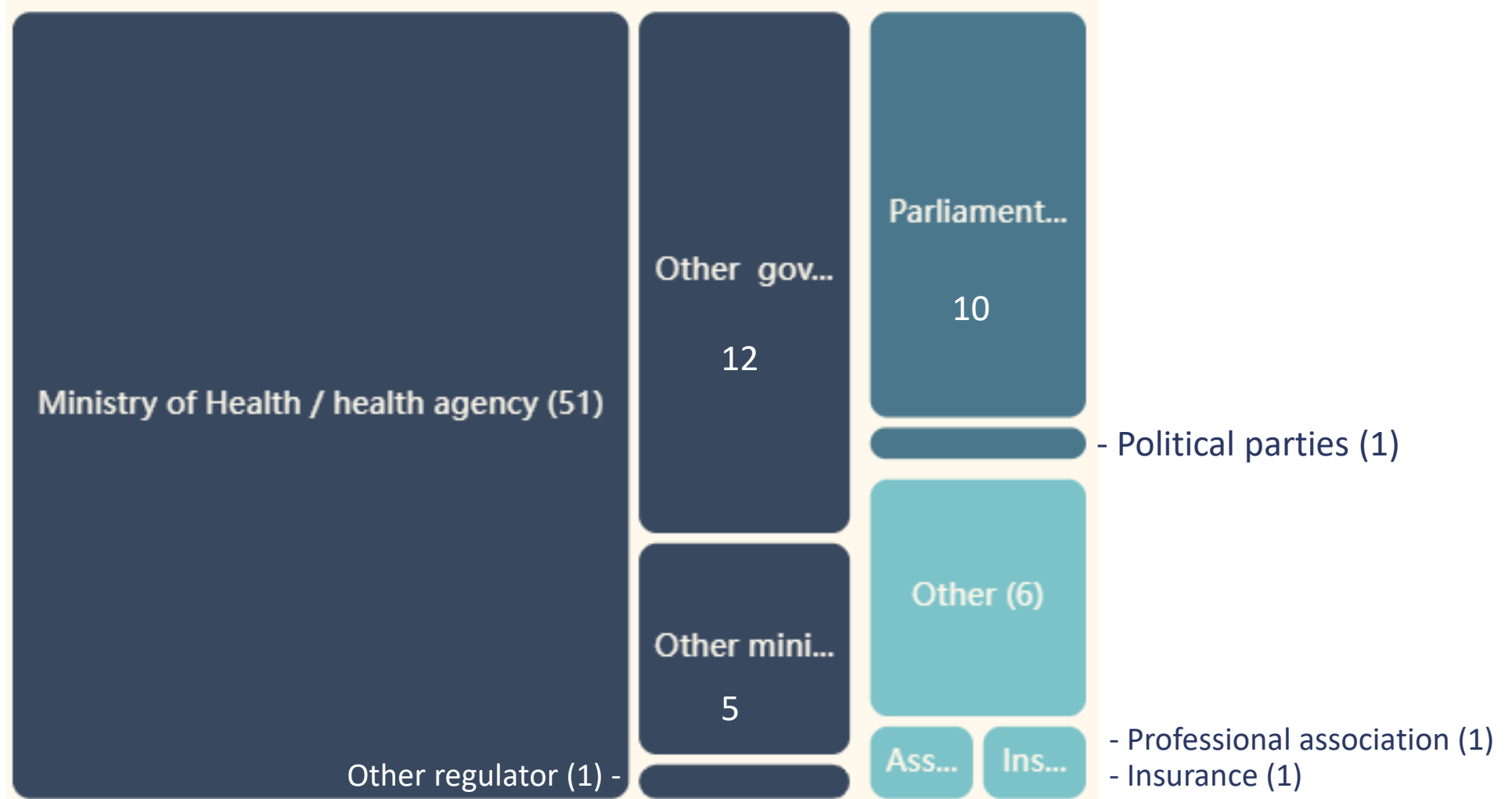
Country	Reform
Institutional integration	
Ireland	New integrated regional health administration: merging Hospital Groups and Community Health Organisations
Portugal	Creation of Local Health Units to better coordinate primary care and hospital care
New payment mechanism for integrated care	
Netherlands	The new cross-sectoral care agreements: A new structure to pay for integrated care based on local/regional proposals
Better coordination at primary care level	
Slovenia	New Primary Health Care Strategy aims to improve care coordination and integration of care amongst others
Lithuania	Introducing health care centres for primary (and some secondary care) and care coordinators to improve coordination of care

Country	Reform
Vertical coordination	
Austria	Reform package under the slogan: "Digital before outpatient before inpatient" + maybe linked: expansion of outpatient departments, day clinics, primary care in hospitals
Cyprus	Introduction of clinical referral guidelines for 21 conditions and diseases
Coordination of specialised care	
Germany	Establishment of integrated emergency centers as part of a large-scale emergency care reform
Estonia	The Mental Health Action Plan 2023-2026: better coordinated mental health care
Israel	Mental healthcare initiatives after the October 7th attacks

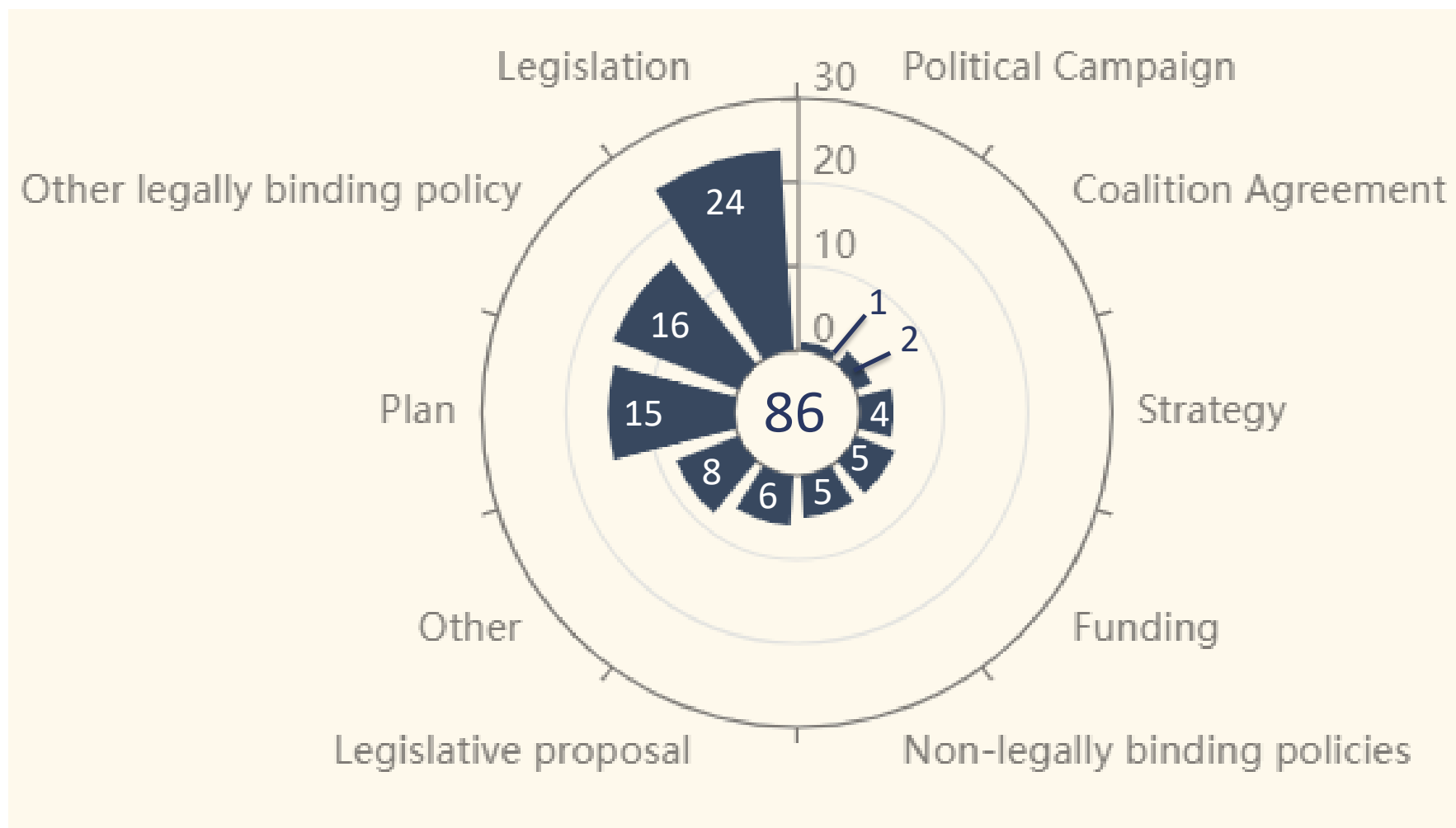
Zooming out: Reform trends over time: Governance, purchasing & payment, and coverage & resource generation are most active areas

Cluster	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Governance	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Financing: coverage & resource generation				2	3		3
Financing: allocation & pooling							
Financing: purchasing & payment	3		2	3		2	
Health workforce					3	2	
Transparency & accountability							
Care coordination & integrated care	2	2					2
Public health							
Digital health			3				
Primary & ambulatory care		2		2	2	3	
Hospital care		3					
Mental health							
Specialized care							
Pharmaceuticals	Pre-COVID		COVID			Post-COVID	

51 of 88 (57%) reforms in 2024 originate from MoH/ exec. health agency



Almost half of reforms (47%) in 2024 were legally binding



Conclusions

- There are a lot of interesting reforms happening across Europe.
- Often similar reforms are happening in different countries.
- Clear trends are visible over time (centralization vs. decentralization, improving care coordination, strengthening primary care).
- More research is needed to better understand determinants of reform implementation/failure.
- Policymakers, researchers and students (!) can learn from reform experiences across countries.

Thank you for being here!

Thank you to the HSPM expert network for their continued and enthusiastic support.

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