



**Equity** and its corollary, **the fight against inequity**, is now a key issue on the healthcare agenda in Latin America and a **guiding principle** in healthcare reforms. Despite advances in the last decade in the expansion of healthcare systems, inequity still affects the access of certain groups to these services and their effective right to healthcare.

EUROSociAL has launched an action designed to improve equity in reform of the healthcare systems. With that purpose in mind, it focuses on **three working principles**:

- Tools to **measure and monitor health equity** (national monitoring systems, observatories, intersectoral commissions).
- **Human resource management policies**, to improve planning of healthcare policies, the quality of service provision, and to provide greater coverage, especially for poorly-served territories.
- National models for **rational use of medicines**, to improve transparency and access to information about medicines, prevent improper use (which mainly affects vulnerable groups), and reduce healthcare expenses.

## Working for



### Colombia

- Design and implementation of a national programme of rational use of medicines.
- Consolidation of monitoring mechanisms for the Ten-Year Health Plan (intersectoral commission and observatory of inequality in health).
- New comprehensive healthcare model with a community and family focus (and incorporation of university programmes specialised in family and community medicine).

### Peru

- Establishment of a health equity monitoring system.

### Panama

- Predictive model for human resource planning in healthcare.

### Regional

- Regional dialogue on measuring and monitoring health inequities

### Uruguay

- Implementation of the health equity monitoring system.
- New curriculum for distance training of medical staff to improve the quality of care to the population in poorly served areas.
- Predictive model for human resource planning in healthcare.

Socio Coordinador:



Socios Operativos:





## Ensuring complementarity with other EU initiatives

There is a clear **complementarity in Colombia between the actions of EUROsociAL and the EU's anti-corruption and transparency programme, ACTUE**. Both programmes support the **implementation of a national pharmaceutical policy** and work with the same team (Directorate-General of Medicines) in two areas: improvement of transparency in pharmaceutical practices (ACTUE), and rational use of medicines and reduction of healthcare expenses (EUROsociAL). In a cross-cutting way, both programmes are participating in the pilot project being led by EUROsociAL. The role of the ministry, which is coordinating this cooperation, is proving decisive in ensuring this complementarity, avoiding overlap and taking advantage of synergies.

## Tools to improve equity in health policies

In Uruguay, EUROsociAL supported the establishment of a Health Equity Monitoring System for the purpose of **raising the visibility off socially-produced inequalities** (which are therefore unjust and avoidable) and the context in which they arise, in other words, their stratification and the disparities in power, resources and prestige that cause them.

**This tool is intended to become the pillar of the large-scale health system reform** started in 2005 to support the **reorientation of health policy** and improve equity in both access to services and quality of care. The SVES complies with several international recommendations, such as those of the WHO Commission on Social Determinants of Health.

## A story of change



**High blood pressure** is a priority public health problem in Colombia. There are two common groups of drugs used to treat it, but one piece of information stands out: during the last few years the use of one of these two groups has increased by 600% and its average price by 800%. This trend is not justified by improvements in treatment. According to Health Minister Alejandro Gaviria "*part of this increase could be explained by unsuitable practices*".

This example illustrates the **challenges** facing the country in **reducing prices and improving transparency and rational use of medicines**. Colombia approved its pharmaceutical policy in 2012 and is benefiting from the support of EUROsociAL in its implementation. Inspired by the experiences of Autonomous Communities of Madrid and Navarra, and those of England, a comprehensive pilot plan has been launched that provides healthcare professionals with independent information and prescribing tools in five hospitals. This will make it possible to analyse changes in consumption and healthcare spending, and a National Rational Use of Medicines Programme will be created.

## Numbers:



## Publications:



Handbook for the construction of monitoring systems for health inequalities



[www.eurosoci-al-ii.eu](http://www.eurosoci-al-ii.eu)

