



# Climate change REsilience framework for health SYStems and hospiTALs

## D4.4 - [CASE STUDIES: CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION STRATEGY AT A PILOT HEALTH SYSTEM]

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Preparation Slip			
	Name	Partner	Date
<b>From</b>	Gabriella Abruzzo	HCWHE	03/12/2024
<b>Reviewer</b>	Hope Robinson	HCWHE	04/12/2024
<b>For delivery</b>	Gabriella Abruzzo	HCWHE	04/12/2024

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## Executive summary

This deliverable was produced as part of DC4.4 aiming to outline the climate adaptation strategy present at the two LIFE RESYSTAL pilot health systems: the Galician Health Service (SERGAS) and the Agence Régionale de Santé (ARS) Occitanie. The deliverable was developed after two workshops with the health systems.

The deliverable contains an overview of the:

- Health system structure and regional-level competencies
- Climate resilience competence
- Policy Framework



## Table of content

Executive summary .....	2
Introduction .....	5
Galician Health Service (SERGAS), Spain .....	6
1. Structure and regional-level competencies .....	6
2. Climate resilience competence .....	6
3. Policy Framework.....	7
Agence Régionale de Santé (ARS) Occitanie, France .....	7
1. Structure and regional-level competencies .....	7
2. Climate resilience competence .....	7
3. Policy Framework.....	8
References .....	9



Table of abbreviations	
Abbreviations	Meaning
<b>HCWHE</b>	Health Care Without Harm Europe
<b>SERGAS</b>	Galician Health Service
<b>ARS</b>	Agence Régionale de Santé
<b>SNS</b>	Spanish National Health System
<b>PLATERGA</b>	Galicia Territorial Emergency Plan
<b>PNACC</b>	National Climate Change Adaptation Plan
<b>GHT</b>	Territorial Hospital Group
<b>PRS</b>	Regional Health Plan
<b>PRSE</b>	Regional Health Environment Plan



## Introduction

In the context of the LIFE RESYSTAL project and as a preliminary action for the development of the Practical Guide for Building Climate-Resilience Health Systems, Health Care Without Harm (HCWH) Europe organised two workshops with the pilot health systems of the LIFE RESYSTAL project: the Galician Health Service (SERGAS) in Spain and ARS Occitanie in France. The workshops focused on policies and actions for climate change adaptation at a health system level and aimed to understand the resilience capacity and potential of the two health systems. Based on this experience, the following case studies have been developed.



## Galician Health Service (SERGAS), Spain

### 1. Structure and regional-level competencies

The Galician Health Service (SERGAS) is one of the seventeen regional health authorities that operate under the Spanish National Health System - Sistema Nacional de Salud (SNS), attached to the Department of Health of the Xunta de Galicia, the government of the autonomous community of Galicia. While national planning and regulation remain the responsibility of the Ministry of Health, SERGAS, like the other 16 regional health authorities, enjoys wide autonomy and decision-making power in operational planning at the regional level, resource allocation, purchasing and provision.<sup>1</sup> SERGAS is divided into seven health areas that are dependent on the regional health authority for major decisions and works.

### 2. Climate resilience competence

SERGAS has not completed a vulnerability and risk assessment covering the entire health system so far. However, interviews and assessments were conducted in the three hospitals of the health area of Ourense, Verín y o Barco de Valdeorras as part of the LIFE RESYSTAL project.

The main climate hazards identified in this area are:

- Heatwaves: The hospitals have experienced heatwaves in the past, which have led SERGAS to rethink its infrastructure
- Wildfires: The hospitals are surrounded by forest areas
- Heavy storms: Galicia experiences stormy weather frequently

The hospitals might also be at risk of floods because the water and wastewater networks overflow during storms. Ground-floor areas are especially at risk.

These climate hazards can also be identified in the other Galician health areas. However, the health area of Ourense, Verín y o Barco de Valdeorras experiences the most extreme conditions.

SERGAS is responsible for two aspects significantly relevant to the health system climate resilience: infrastructure and procurement. Procurement is managed by the health system and not the hospitals, as well as infrastructures, their life cycle and equipment. If hospitals want to implement measures to increase their climate resilience, they need to be authorised by the health system. As a consequence, it is crucial that the health system is aware of the impact of climate change on healthcare facilities and services and committed to increasing their climate resilience.

SERGAS enjoys a significant commitment from the Xunta de Galicia in making the Galician health system more sustainable and climate resilient, as well as shared strategic visions with different plans currently under development. However, they also lack an executive arm and a specific unit or department that can focus on implementing projects and identifying barriers and opportunities. The intense collaboration between SERGAS and the regional authority is inspired by *One Health*, an approach that recognises the interconnectivity and interdependency of human health and the wider environment. This approach encourages the decisions made by the Xunta concerning the climate to also consider the healthcare sector, as indicated by the forthcoming climate policy which will prioritise healthcare.



### 3. Policy Framework

Although a specific plan for healthcare climate resilience is missing, both SERGAS and the Xunta de Galicia are planning to work on plans that will improve the climate resilience of the health system. Some plans already exist, such as the *Plano de Calor* (Heat Plan) and *Plan territorial de emergencias de Galicia* (Galicia Territorial Emergency Plan, PLATERGA).<sup>2</sup>

At the national level, the healthcare sector is included in the *National Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2021-2030* (PNACC)<sup>3</sup> and the *Climate Change Adaptation: Work Programme 2021-2025* (NAP).<sup>4</sup> Health represents one of the 18 areas covered by the PNACC that aims to facilitate adaptation actions.

## Agence Régionale de Santé (ARS) Occitanie, France

### 1. Structure and regional-level competencies

The Agence Régionale de Santé (Regional Health Agency, ARS) Occitanie is one of the eighteen regional health administrations that operate under the French Ministry of Health. The Ministry also acts through various national entities, such as the French National Authority for Health (Haute Autorité de Santé, HAS), the Agence Nationale d'Appui à la Performance des Établissements de Santé et Médico-Sociaux (National Agency Supporting the Performance of Health and Medico-Social Institutions, ANAP), the Direction Générale de l'Offre des Soins (General Directorate of Healthcare Provision at the Ministry of Health, DGOS) and Caisse nationale de solidarité pour l'autonomie (National solidarity fund for autonomy, CNSA). Following the national policies outlined by the Ministry of Health and coordinated by the agencies mentioned above, the ARS defines and implements regional health policy adapted to the local needs and represents the main point of contact for all health stakeholders in the region.<sup>5</sup>

The ARS is divided into 14 Groupements hospitaliers de territoire (Territorial Hospital Groups, GHT). The GHT gathers hospitals in a certain territory but does not enjoy particular competencies regarding climate resilience.

### 2. Climate resilience competence

The ARS Occitanie has identified the following main climate risks occurring in the region:

- Heatwaves
- Droughts
- Flood
- Coastline modification

Through the 2020 “Ségur de la santé”, a national investment scheme, the Minister of Health, the agencies and the 18 ARS gathered and decided on a social and green transition strategy which includes, in particular, the following pillars: Energy performance improvement, water management, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and resilience to climate hazards. While their two major missions are to pilot public health policy and regulate regional health provision, the ARS also have the mission to contribute to the Green transition of regional healthcare by taking action in the areas of mitigation and climate resilience.





Despite the existing plans that could provide support to the ARS management, especially the Regional Health Plan (Plan Regional Santé, PRS) and Regional Health Environment Plan (Plan Regional Santé Environnement, PRSE), ARS cannot oblige healthcare facilities to act on climate resilience and develop climate resilience-specific projects.<sup>6</sup> However, it can encourage them through its funding and play an advisory role.

### 3. Policy Framework

The ARS has developed the Plan Regional Santé Environnement (PRSE) 2023-2028<sup>7</sup> that recognises the effects of climate change on human health and ecosystems and highlights both the need to initiate climate adaptation actions to strengthen the climate resilience of territories and populations as well as mitigation actions to reduce the contribution of human activities to climate change. In the associated Regional Health Scheme (Schéma Régional de Santé),<sup>6</sup> the challenge of “preventing and adapting to the health impacts of global warming” is identified, and includes the goal of supporting the adaptation of healthcare facilities in an eco-responsibility approach (buildings, techniques, practices, detergent products/biocidal products...)”.

At the national level, the Ministry of Ecological Transition, Energy, Climate and Risk Prevention has issued the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (Plan National d’Adaptation au Changement Climatique, PNACC).<sup>8</sup> Among the 51 measures presented in the plan, three of them concern specifically health and the health system. Measure 16 focuses on the development of the ‘One Health’ approach to prevent climate change-related health risks, while measure 17 aims to improve monitoring and awareness of the impact of climate change on health. Finally, the purpose of measure 29 is to anticipate the impact of climate change on the French health system. In particular, this measure includes a vulnerability study of 14 245 social and medical welfare facilities. The result of this study will serve as a basis for allocating financial resources to health infrastructures more resilient to the impact of climate change.



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