

# **PODCAST big data and health care**

**Voice 1: Brian**

**Voice 2: Sarah**

## **JINGLE to open intro to podcast**

VOICE 2

You're listening to the European Parliamentary Research Service podcast on big data and health care.

VOICE 1

Better diagnostics, more effective treatments, new cures...

VOICE 2

... big data can unlock many new opportunities in health care. But how can we ensure that the benefits reach ALL citizens? Stay with us!

END OF INTRO JINGLE

VOICE 1

Companies and governments around the world are using the growing mountains of data to improve many aspects of our daily lives!

VOICE 2

Thanks to big data, for instance, we can optimize traffic flows based on real time traffic information, improve waste collection and provide better customer services...

VOICE 1

But one of the most important sectors where big data can make a real difference is health care...

VOICE 2

Think, for instance... if large data sets collected for medical surveys were to become accessible to the wider research community, clinical trials could be made cheaper and faster!

VOICE 1

And with an increasing number of sensors tracking our position, counting the steps we walk or the hours we sleep... the collection of data sets has reached new levels!

VOICE 2

The growing numbers of sensors monitoring our activities will also allow for more personalised health care services.

VOICE 1

So, in much the same way that sensors in cars monitor their eye-blinking rates to warn drowsy drivers, sensors in our clothes could, in the future, warn us if the risk of a heart attack is particularly high, or if our immune system is particularly weak and we are in high danger of contracting a flu.

VOICE 2

The benefits are huge, but there are issues to consider... such as data protection.

VOICE 1

The protection of personal data is a key issue in any clinical study... But if researchers in the future are granted access to larger amounts of datasets from clinical trials, this will become even more critical...

VOICE 2

... even more so when we consider that, in the future, phone manufacturers, telecoms operators and internet search engines will collect larger and larger amounts of health-relevant data about their clients!

VOICE 1

So, what should policy makers do?

#### VOICE 1

Well, one of the most important things is to ensure that the use of big data in health care benefits citizens, above all. Imagine, for instance, that we develop cancer. In that case, would early detection by body sensors serve to increase our chances of healing and lower the costs of treatment OR would the technology mainly serve the interests of insurance companies...??

#### VOICE 2

Also, in an increasingly interconnected world, it might become more difficult to hide a disease such as cancer... so we'll need to find the right balance between personal privacy and the benefits society could reap from easier access to anonymised medical data that could hold the key to medical breakthroughs.

#### VOICE 1

So, since even the best laws might not be able to guarantee full privacy, lawmakers could provide an extra line of protection by enacting new laws against discrimination against patients.

#### VOICE 2

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