

Reitox development framework: new perspectives for the network

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Introduction

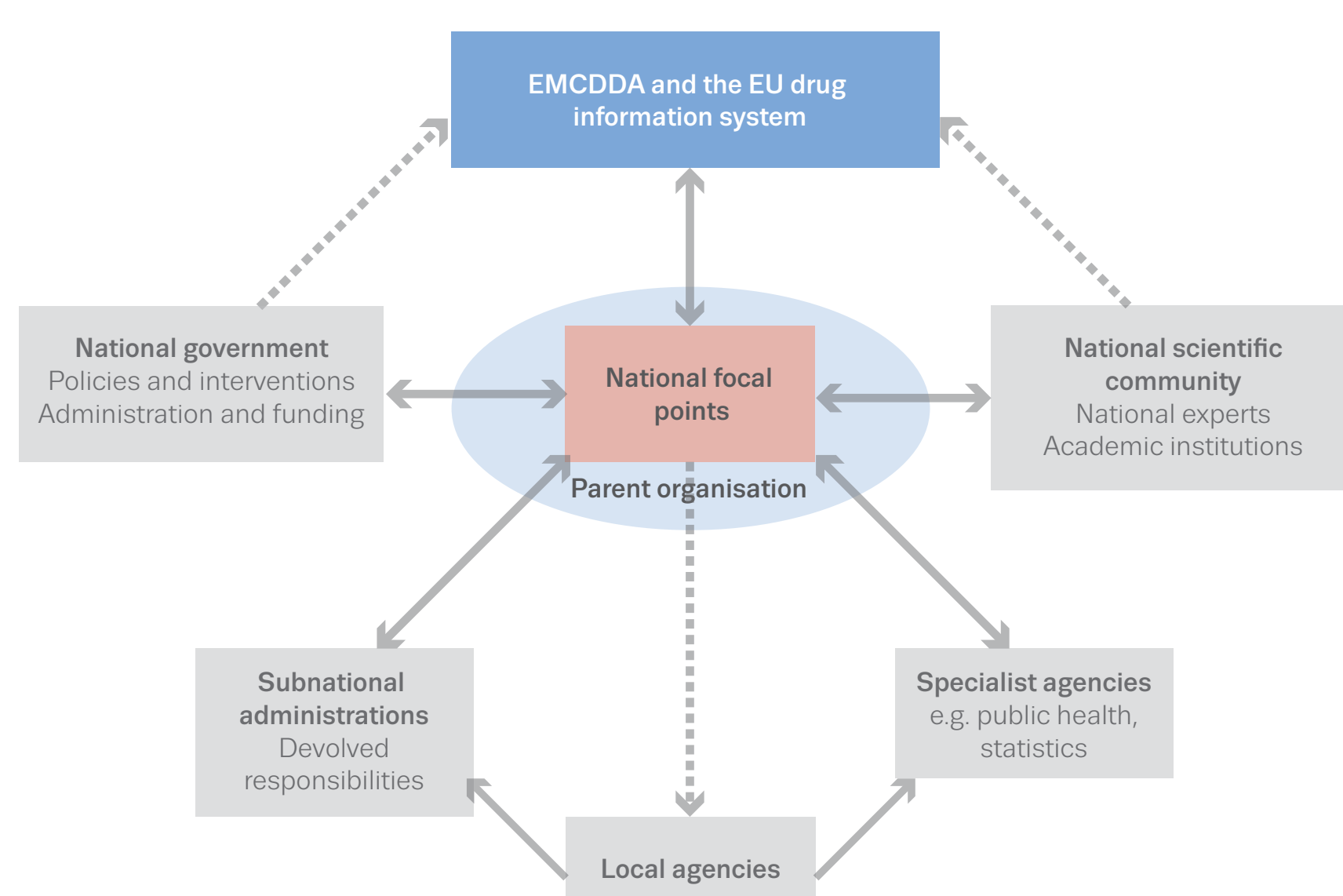
For more than 20 years, the European information network on drugs and drug addiction (Reitox), has been the cornerstone of the European drug monitoring and reporting system, to which it contributes by collecting, analysing, interpreting and disseminating data at national level, as well as by defining the tools for monitoring. Reitox is a partner and an integral part of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA), a key player at EU and international level. The Reitox network currently includes the 28 EU Member States plus Turkey, Norway and the European Commission.

Each year many research projects from all over the EU contribute to an improved understanding of the drug phenomenon. Reitox, together with the EMCDDA, systematically links information coming from research, policy and law enforcement, resulting in a comprehensive picture of the EU drug situation. This broad scope requires well-defined strategic goals and appropriate analytical and reporting tools to combine heterogeneous data into a full picture.

Reitox network mandate

The Reitox is a mandated network type, managed by the EMCDDA. Collectively, the focal points are responsible for the majority of the EU drug-related data collection and the development of harmonised data collection tools in various areas. Besides monitoring, the Reitox focal points, among other responsibilities, promote best practices and play a key role at national level, such as contributing to the evaluation of national drug strategies (Figure 1).

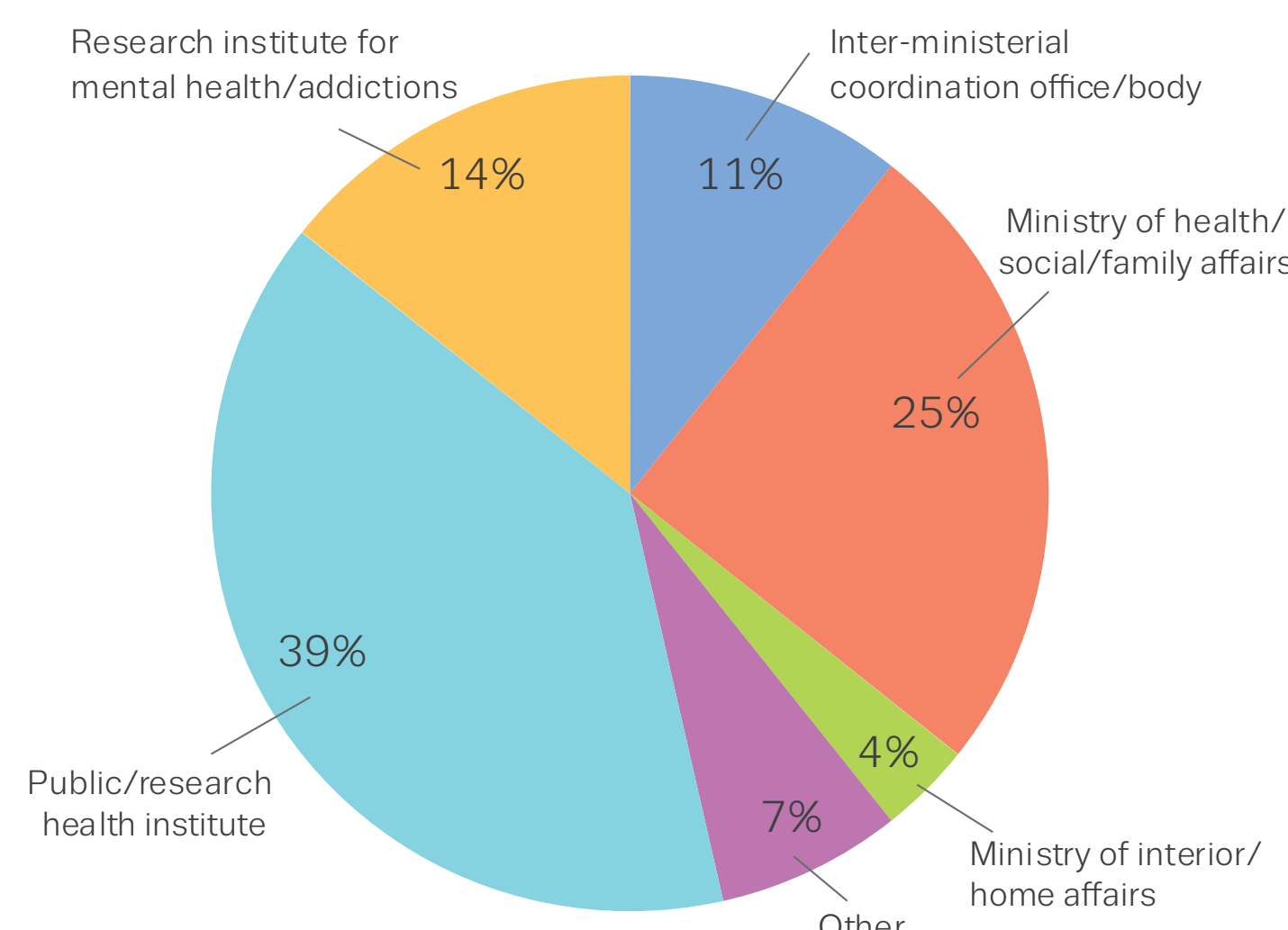
FIGURE 1 | National focal points: heart of network



Source: Alan Lodwick, Viktor Mravčík, Tim Pfeiffer-Gerschel.

The appointment, setting up, functioning and maintenance of a national focal point is the responsibility of the national authorities (Figure 2). Twice a year, the EMCDDA organises meetings for the heads of national focal points to discuss and endorse data collection tools, reporting requirements for the upcoming reporting cycle and to further develop and consolidate the network and its members. Reitox is also represented on the EMCDDA's Management Board and in the EMCDDA's Scientific Committee, ensuring that the network participates in the agency's main strategic and scientific developments.

FIGURE 2 | Parent organisations of national focal points



Source: Survey among national focal points on mandate and functions, May 2017.

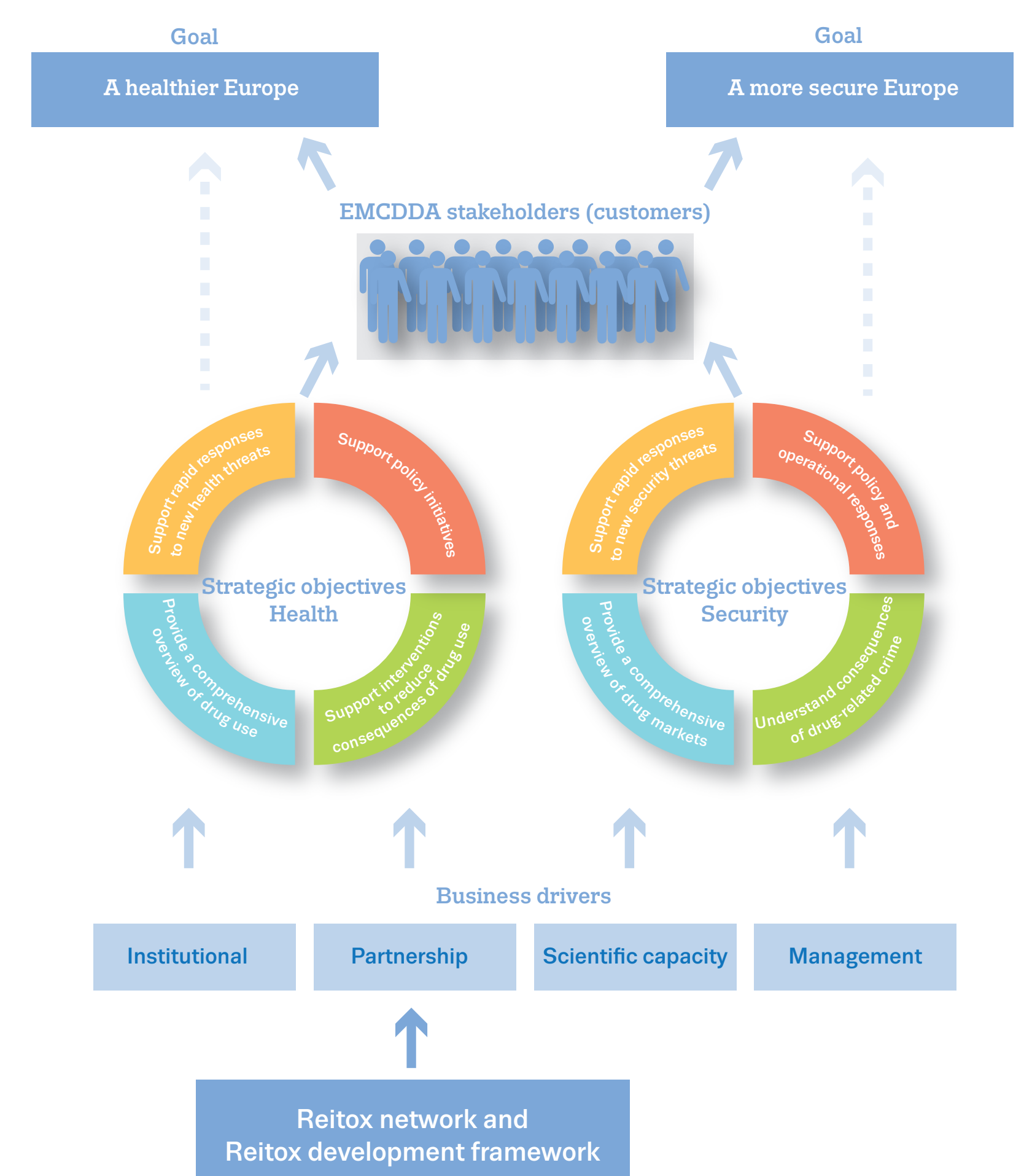
Reitox in focus

- Reitox stands for *Réseau Européen d'Information sur les Drogues et les Toxicomanies*
- 1995: 15 national focal points (NFPs) from EU Member States
- 2017: 30 national focal points: 28 EU Member States, Norway and Turkey, and European Commission
- Maintain 30 national focal points websites with the newest data on drug situation in 24 national languages
- Deliver annually to the EMCDDA: 900 statistical tables and 300 thematic workbooks
- NFPs are involved in cooperation projects with the Western Balkan countries, the Southern and Eastern EU neighbouring countries, Central Asian countries and Latin America and Caribbean countries;
- Share expertise in EU or national research projects, in evaluation of drug strategies among many others

Reitox development framework

The EMCDDA 2025 strategy, endorsed in 2016, aims at contributing to a healthier and more secure Europe. In this context, Reitox is currently defining the new strategic goals for the network as a whole and how these will be operationalised and achieved (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3 | Reitox development framework and the EMCDDA



Source: EMCDDA Strategy 2025.

In the face of an evolving drug situation, the EMCDDA, together with Reitox, recognises the need to ensure that the tools used to measure drug use and its public health consequences remain fit for purpose. Work is also needed to further develop the tools used to observe changes in the drug markets and other areas threatening the security of EU citizens.

The way forward for Reitox is to review and update its priorities and consolidate them in a new 'Reitox development framework'. At stake will be the sustainability, effectiveness and future evolution of the network, taking into account all the priorities of the members of Reitox and of their customers.

Reference

www.emcdda.europa.eu/about/partners/reitox-network