

# Advancing tinnitus research and researcher training: a case study review and future perspectives

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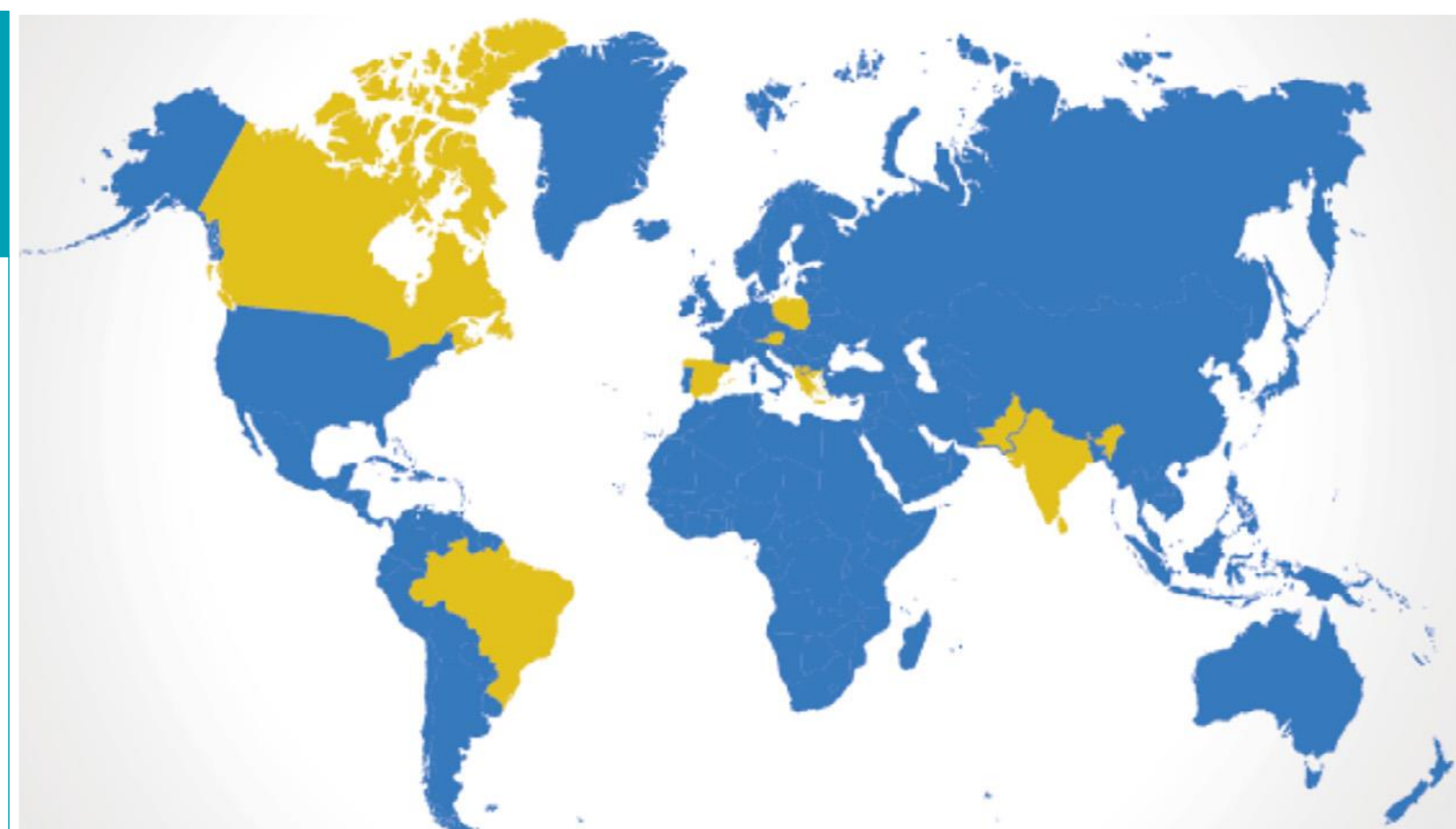
## 1. Background

Tinnitus affects around 1/10 people and can have a major impact on quality of life. More research is needed to address even the most fundamental questions, such as whether it is a symptom or a condition.

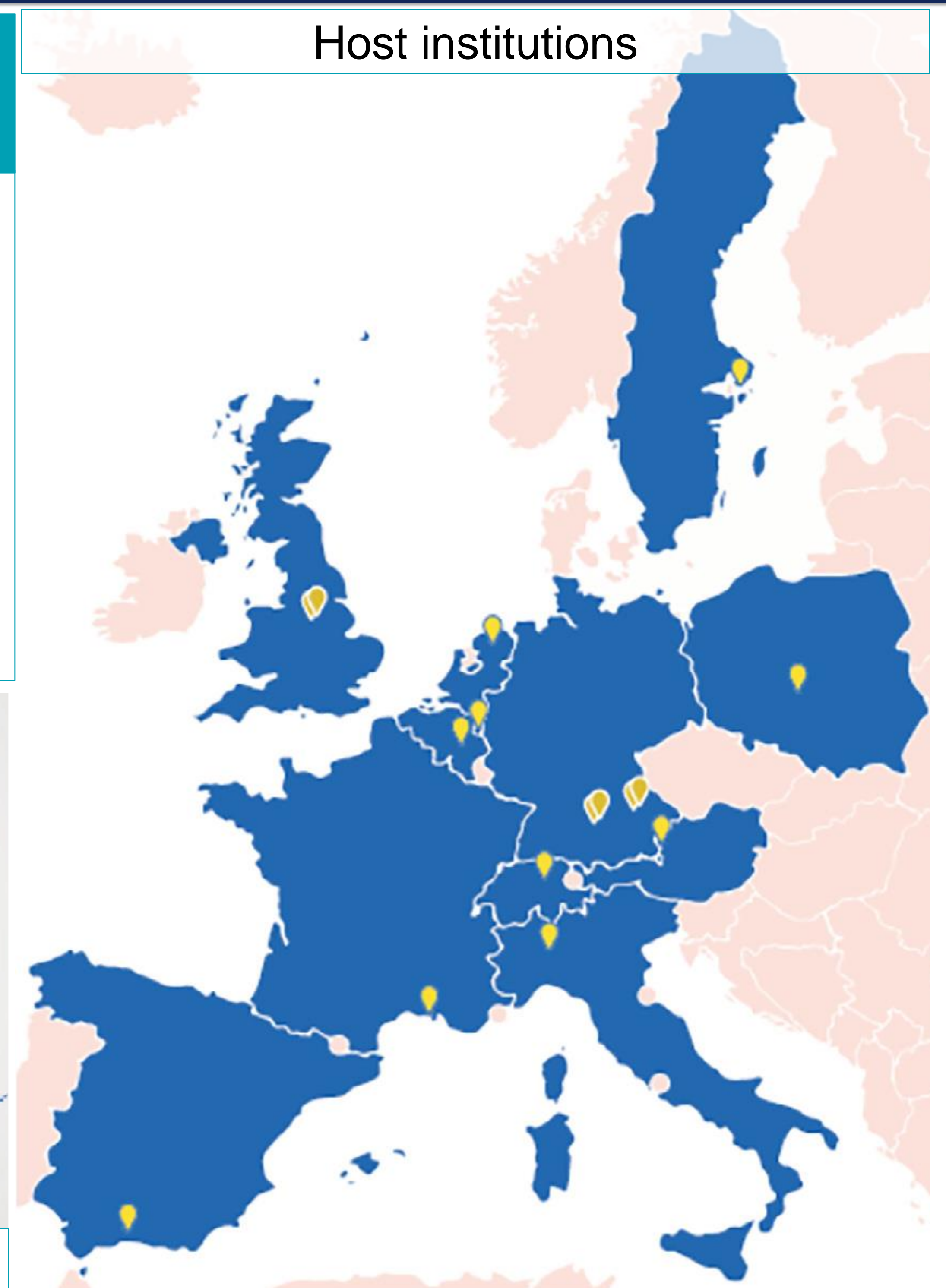
ESIT (European School on Interdisciplinary Tinnitus) was a step in the right direction: an EU-funded DTP (Doctoral Training Partnership) comprising clinicians, academics, commercial partners, patient organisations, and public health experts from various European countries, with students from across the world.

## 2. How ESIT Worked

An interdisciplinary and intersectoral DTP, it offered network-wide training, integrating academic, clinical and industry partners and benefactors, where individual PhD projects interconnected and novel.



Origin countries of students



Host institutions

## 3. Results

- Social/networking interaction at Training Schools and conferences was considered most valuable
  - 7 non-ESIT students attended these in total
- Clinical internships provided real-world experience to direct potential impact of research
- Secondments were important: they were collaborative and provided varied perspectives
- International nature of the DTP highlighted language/culture differences, visa issues, even technology problems
- Up to April 2020: 21 peer-reviewed publications, of which 18 student-led, plus student representation at multiple international conferences, including as invited speakers



'The experience highlighted how important it is to engage with patients: they benefit from having a scientist willing to talk to them and to acknowledge their condition, and scientists can generate more meaningful research questions based on patients' suggestions, experiences, stories.'

## 4. Conclusions

- Community is paramount to PhD journeys
- PPI groups should be involved at all stages of research to ensure relevance
- Tinnitus research needs more time, money and input
- Health and wellbeing, and a dedicated support system, must be included in international programmes