



Joint industry contribution on the Multiannual Financial Framework

Beyond innovation – supporting large-scale digital health deployment in Europe

The European Union is now in a critical phase to determine its future priorities and activities. In the context of these on-going discussions on the next Multiannual Financial Framework, the co-signing associations present the following contribution. We aim to support policy makers in their efforts to make the right investment choices and support one of the most innovative industry sectors in Europe.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Healthcare represents a significant part of the EU economy, an average of 7.8 % of **GDP**¹. The EU has 18 million **healthcare professionals**, and another 1.8 million **jobs** will be created by 2025². The highest number of **patents** in the EU are filed in the medical technology sector³. The ratio of **working people** to the 'inactive' population is shifting from 4 to 1 today to 2 to 1 by 2060.⁴ Public and mandatory private spending on **benefits and paid sick leave** for people with disabilities accounted for 2% of GDP in 2013. People with chronic disease face more challenges in finding jobs; therefore, the **employment rate** is much lower than for those who do not have any. This also means that they incur greater number of **sick days**⁵ than the average.

WHAT DO WE AIM FOR?

Digital health and medical technologies can contribute to achieve the **triple win for Europe**: better **quality of care** for citizens, more **efficient and resilient** health and care systems, and **jobs & growth** in the European economy. If the right elements are in place, digital innovation will enable the delivery of patient-centred care, population health management and care-coordination. Success will also stimulate **job market** participation for both informal carers and for older citizens themselves, and drive market growth, **opening up avenues for investment and employment** elsewhere⁶. However, urgent steps need to be taken to lay the ground for the digital transformation of European health and care systems.

¹ [Report on Single Market integration and competitiveness in the EU and its Member States, European Commission. 2016](#)

² [State of Health in the EU: Companion Report, European Commission. 2017](#)

³ [EPO. Granted patents per field of technology. 2016.](#)

⁴ [The 2015 Ageing Report, European Commission. 2015](#)

⁵ [Health at a Glance: Europe 2016-State of Health in the EU Cycle, Joint publication of the OECD and the European Commission. 2016](#)

⁶ [Blueprint on the Digital Transformation for Health and care in the ageing society. January 2017.](#)



WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

We would like to draw the attention to some critical elements that should inform future innovation policy measures in this area:

1. Build a multi-dimensional policy response to the challenges of the health and social care sectors by aligning innovation, industrial and health policy measures. Scaling-up digital health requires **Europe to address in sync the "health" and "digital" challenges.**
2. Develop a **coherent funding framework for digital health innovation** in Europe by:
 - o Seeking alignment (all instruments to support a common vision and goals) across regional, national and international R&D&I instruments (including the upcoming Framework Programme FP9) to replace the current siloed approach.
 - o Ensuring complementarity between regional, national and international financing and investment tools (including access to financing under the new European Innovation Council).
3. Use **European Regional Development Funds** to fund large-scale deployment of complex digital health solutions. Currently structural funds in the healthcare sector are largely spent by Member States and regions to procure ICT equipment. Funding infrastructure projects makes it easier to meet the execution path deadlines of this instrument. There is a need to adapt regional funds to the specificities of the digital health sector.
4. Focus R&D&I funding on: **connected care** to improve quality and efficiency of care through standards and evidence-based practices, while enabling precision medicine and personalised treatment, data harmonisation across digital platforms that ensure privacy and security, and technologies to support **definitive diagnosis, biomedical modeling and treatment optimisation** (theranostics).
5. Ensure the **right level of scale investments** to enable the health and care transformation especially in the early stages and implement **appropriate incentives.**
6. Provide conditions and funding to harness the **competitiveness and growth** of the digital health European market by supporting all players, **large and small companies**, to compete at international level.
7. Set up **smart procurement mechanisms** that support continuous innovation and large-scale deployment of digital health.
8. Invest in **digital skills** and **health literacy** to empower patients and make them active partners in managing their own care and well-being.

SIGNATORIES

COCIR – The European trade association representing the medical imaging, radiotherapy, electromedical and health ICT industries.

www.cocir.org

MedTech Europe – The European trade association representing the medical technology industries, from diagnosis to cure.

www.medtecheurope.org