



EUROPEAN WEEK OF  
REGIONS & CITIES

2003 - 2022

New Challenges for  
Europe's Cohesion

# The Vanguard Initiative: Boosting the digital transition by connecting regional innovation ecosystems



#EURegionsWeek





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# The Vanguard Initiative: Boosting the digital transition by connecting regional innovation ecosystems

New Challenges for  
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**Session moderator:**

**Farha Brahmi**, Vanguard Initiative

## Speakers:

- **Michael Berz**, Project Adviser, EU and place-based Innovation Ecosystems, European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA)
- **Eddy van Hijum**, Regional Minister Province Overijssel, Member of the EU Committee of the Regions and Chair of the Vanguard Initiative
- **Martijn van Gruijthuijsen**, Regional Minister for Economy, Finance, Knowledge and Talent development of Noord-Brabant, Committee of the Regions shadow rapporteur on the EU Chips Act
- **António M. Cunha**, President of Norte Portugal Regional Coordination and Development Commission (CCDR-N)
- **Gabriela Macoveiu**, Director for Communication Innovation and External Cooperation ADR Nord-Est, North East Romania
- **Patricia Argerey**, Director of the Galician Innovation Agency (GAIN)
- **Maritta Perälä-Heape**, Professor of practice (PhD) , Centre for Health and Technology, University of Oulu

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# 13

Interregional  
Innovation  
Investment  
**Instrument**

## European Week of Regions and Cities

### 12 October 2022

Michael Berz, EISMEA





# European Innovation Council & SMEs Executive Agency

**Established** 1 April 2021

**In collaboration** R&I, GROW, JUST,  
REGIO, and CNECT

**Focus on** innovators, researchers,  
Innovation ecosystems, SMEs,  
consumers

**To support** innovation, modernisation,  
growth,



# EISMEA Portfolio



Horizon Europe

European  
Innovation  
Council

€ 10 billion



European  
Innovation  
Ecosystems

€ 500 million



SMP

Single Market  
Programme

€ 1 billion



ERDF

I3 Instrument

€570 million

# Interregional Innovation Investment (I3) Instrument

What	For whom	How	How much
Commercialisation and scaling up of <b>innovation projects</b> for the development of <b>European value chains</b>	<b>Interregional Q-Helix ecosystems:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Researchers</li><li>• Businesses</li><li>• Civic society &amp; public administrations</li></ul>	Implemented under <b>direct management</b> .  DG REGIO supported by EISMEA	<b>Cohesion Policy</b>  <b>ERDF (Art. 13)</b>  <b>€ 570 million</b> (current prices)



## Strengthening innovation, cohesion and resilience in EU regions

- 



# Total budget per strand 2021 - 2022

## THEMATIC AREAS

## STRANDS



**DIGITAL  
TRANSITION**

**Strand 1** | Focus on developed regions  
Budget: € 39.8 million (2021) & € 36.7 million (2022)  
Indicative Project size: **€ 4-10 million**



**GREEN  
TRANSITION**

**Strand 2a** | Focus on less developed regions  
Budget: 2021: € 36 million & 2022: € 32.9 million  
Indicative Project size: **€ 2-3 million**



**SMART  
MANU-  
FACTURING**

**Strand 2b** | Capacity building for less developed regions  
Overall budget: € 28.5 million

**Strand 3** | Technical assistance & experimentation  
Overall budget: € 11.4 million

**€ 570 million**



# Focus of the calls

*Strong cohesion dimension in both strands, focus on S3 priorities*

## STRAND 1

- To **accelerate market uptake** and **scale up** of **innovation solutions** in shared S3 priority areas
- To support partnerships developing, connecting or making complementary use of **testing and demonstration facilities**
- To finance the implementation of a **portfolio of investment projects**

## STRAND 2a

- To **develop the capacity** of regional innovation ecosystems in less developed regions (LDR) to **participate in EU value chains**
- To support LDR participation in **investment partnerships with other regions**
- To develop **value chains in LDR**
- To **improve investment readiness**



# Some further statistics

- **Strand 1**

- Number of submitted proposals: **16**
- Success rate: **44%**

For the successful projects:

- Ø requested EU contribution: **7.976.508,93 €**
- Ø total project cost: **11.395.014,52 €**
- Ø # consortium members: **28 (range: 10-45)**
- Ø # SME consortium partners: **11 (range: 3-22)**
- # projects using financial support to 3<sup>rd</sup> parties: **4 out of 7 = ~€10.5 million**

- **Strand 2a**

- Number of submitted proposals: **7**
- Success rate: **57%**

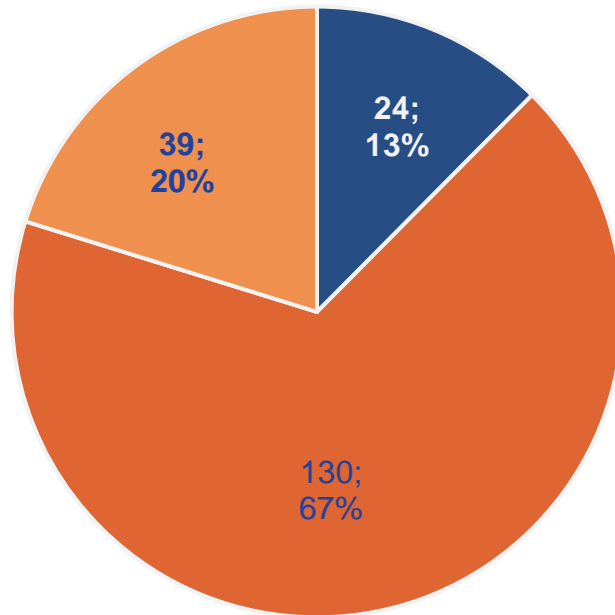
For the successful projects:

- Ø requested EU contribution: **2.660.467,69 €**
- Ø total project cost: **3.803.666,67 €**
- Ø # consortium members: **14 (range: 9-22)**
- Ø # SME consortium partners: **5 (range: 3-8)**
- # projects using financial support to 3<sup>rd</sup> parties: **1 out of 3 ~€0.49 million**



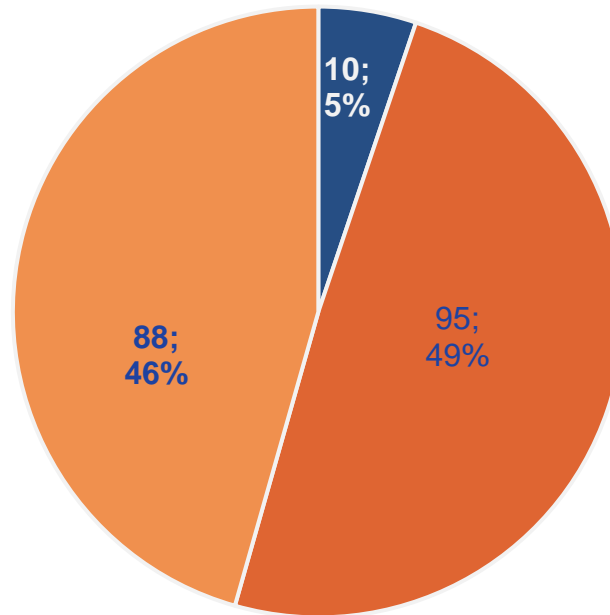
# 1st cut-off results: cohesion - Strand 1

Applicants per Region



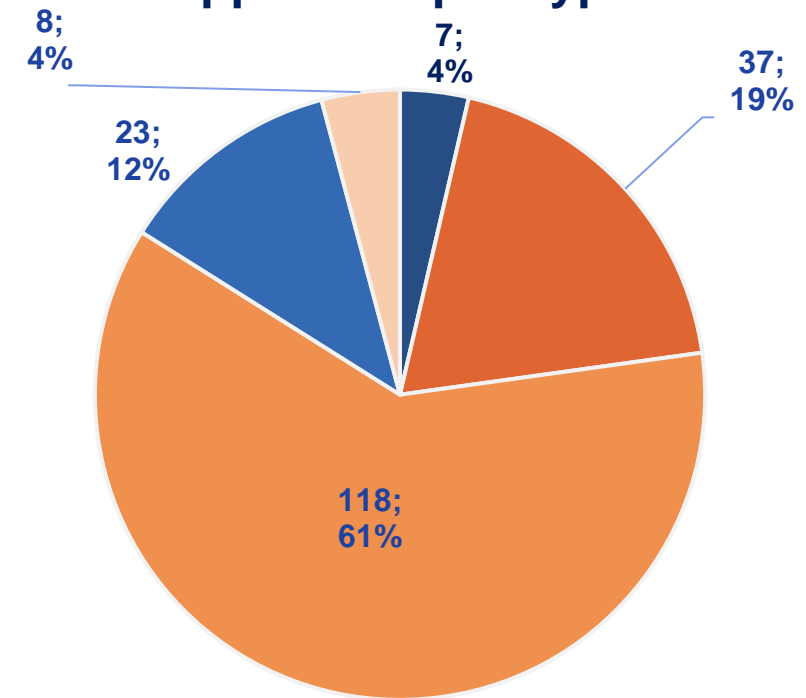
■ LDR ■ MDR ■ TR

Applicants per Topic



■ Digital ■ Green ■ Smart Manu

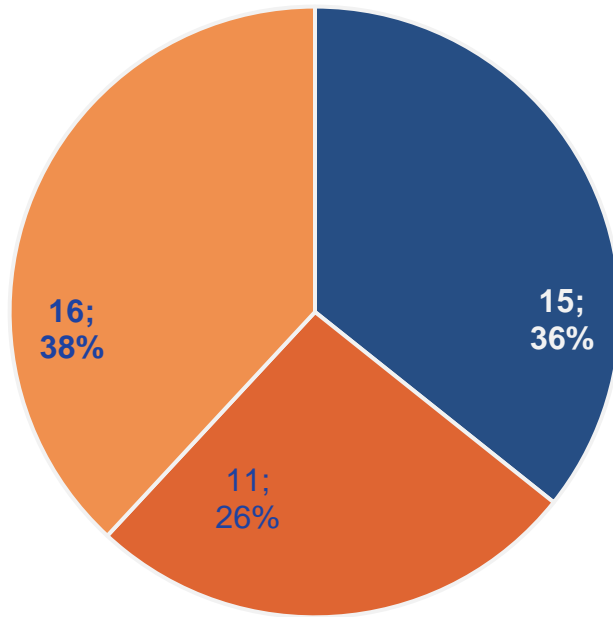
Applicants per Type



■ Public ■ Other ■ Private  
■ Research ■ Higher Edu

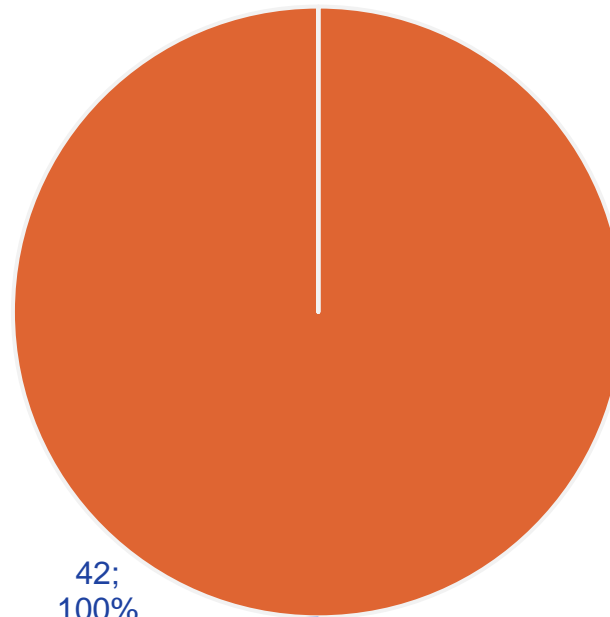
# 1st cut-off results: cohesion - Strand 2a

## Applicants per Region



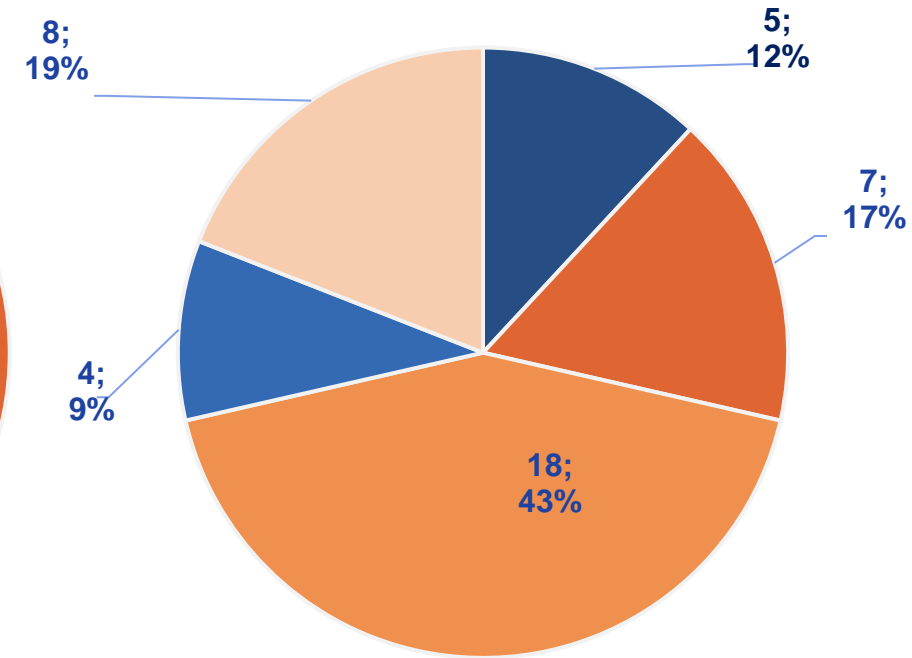
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## Applicants per Topic



■ Digital ■ Green ■ Smart Manu

## Applicants per Type



■ Public ■ Other ■ Private  
■ Research ■ Higher Edu



# Thank you!



<https://eisma.ec.europa.eu>



[EISMEA-I3-INSTRUMENT@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EISMEA-I3-INSTRUMENT@ec.europa.eu)



#I3Instrument



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# North-East Region Romania in Vanguard Initiative



Gabriela Macoveiu, North-East RDA  
12th of October 2022





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**North-East Romania** – a region with resources and opportunities but also significant challenges

**2021- we joined Vanguard Initiative** as a member (observer statute) - interested to be active in *Personalized Medicine and Artificial Intelligence Pilots*.

We see VI as **a strategic alliance** to advance innovation diffusion at regional level.



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**ITC** ➡ making our region in the following 10 years a national and European Hub in AI, Data Management and Cybersecurity with the support of existing regional talents.

Between 2021-2027, the region will focus 150 mil investments from **North-East Regional Program** in digitalization of the companies and public administration, and increase ITC companies' capacity with investments in R&D and technologies.

**IT&C is a key enabler for other smart specialization sectors**

**Health** ➡ innovation generator, that should increase its benefits for the society and the medical industry, using efficient public-private partnerships and investments in medicine and pharma for advanced technologies and digitalization.

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## VI benefits - we advanced our SMEs and facilitators in new EU value chains

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### Case study 1- TRACE-MED Demo Case

- Imago-Mol member of the Personalized Medicine Pilot - unique cluster in Romania includes 54 members from the entire regional health ecosystem (34 are enterprises).
- Imago-Mol submitted a proposal together with *VI members from Emilia Romagna IT and Slovenia* (13 stakeholders clusters, RD organizations and regional facilitators) for **TRACE-MED - Inter-regional platform for new radiotracers development in personalized medicine Demo Case.**
- The demo case was accepted and in 2022, **SECURE project** was submitted successfully under Horizon Euratom Program. The project consortia includes *15 VI members from 10 countries*, plus the European Nuclear Education Network and European Federation of Organisations for Medical Physics and is coordinated by POLATOM Polonia. It starts this month and will receive *3.6 mil. Euro to strengthen the European Chain of supply for the next generation of medical radionuclides.*





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## Case study 2 – Science Meet Regions Events

- Together with East Netherlands and Lower Austria, North-East RDA Romania organized in 2022 a series of events dedicated to *accelerating digital transformation of the health system in VI regions*, in the framework of the Science Meets Regions Program, coordinated by the Joint Research Centre
- The Innovation Labs brought together quadruple helix stakeholders in all partner regions to assess their challenges and identify solutions for digitalization facilitated networking and generation of new project ideas.

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VI benefits - *we advanced with implementation of our RIS3, based on interregional collaboration projects oriented to technological developments, demonstration and piloting*

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## Case study 4 – DIZ North-East AI Demo Lab Grid

- Dialogue with Artificial Intelligence VI Pilot coordinators and brought forward our European Digital Innovation Hub – Digital Innovation Zone, structure established in 2019 with 27 members (6 universities, 6 business facilitators, 2 ITC clusters and 13 companies). DIZ North-East applied for the *Demo Lab Grid Initiative of AI Pilot*.





VI benefits - *we advanced with implementation of our RIS3, based on interregional collaboration projects oriented to technological developments, demonstration and piloting*

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## Case study 4 – Digital Twin Project AI Redgio 5.0

- In February 2022 our region joined the **HE Digital Twin project AI Redgio 5.0** consortia initiated by Politecnico di Milano Institute. This project brings together *40 partners, VI Regions and (E)DIHs* to promote *AI-at-the-Edge adoption by European Industry 5.0 Manufacturing SMEs*.
- Our regional stakeholders introduced in this project are the **Technical University Gheorghe Asachi Iasi**, that will contribute to the development of Data Space and AI for Manufacturing toolkit, act as didactic factory to promote Circular Economy Pathways to Digitalization and **Katty Fashion SRL**, that will participate in SME-driven experimentation for a close loop AI production. The project was successfully evaluated by EC and *the grant agreement for 7,99 Mil. Euro* is under preparation.





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North-East RDA, as regional development, smart specialization and entrepreneurship policy maker and managing authority for North-East Regional Program 2021-2027

- advocate for RIS3 internationalization → IDEA 'VI Members Smart Specialisation Strategies' mapping process, development of the 'Matrix of Linkages Pilots-Priorities' and the 'Repository of S3 characteristics'.
- active involvement and VI Pilots for AI Personalized Medicine
- reiterates its readiness to participate in projects in the field of digitalization of the health system and manufacturing, to increase our innovation ecosystem performance



# Thank you!

Gabriela Macoveiu

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# Health Data Driven Innovations in Vanguard Smart Health Piloting

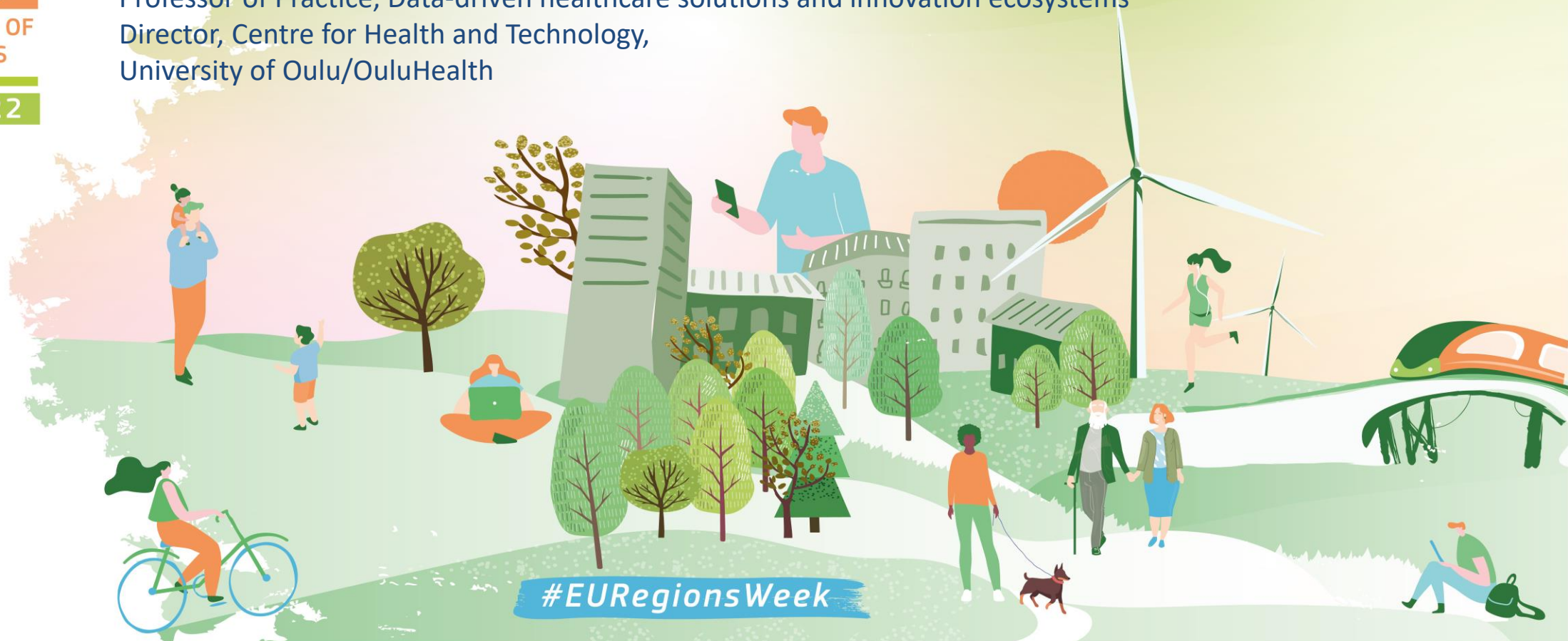
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Maritta Perälä-Heape,

Professor of Practice, Data-driven healthcare solutions and innovation ecosystems

Director, Centre for Health and Technology,

University of Oulu/OuluHealth







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## Introduction of the region East and North Finland co-operation



East & North  
FINLAND

## New Challenges for Europe's Cohesion



Smart Specialisation Strategy 2019–2023  
[https://issuu.com/ip-suomi.elmo/docs/elmo-strategy\\_english\\_web](https://issuu.com/ip-suomi.elmo/docs/elmo-strategy_english_web)





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## Oulu Region

### **Our solution to boost digital transition –**

- Oulu Innovation Alliance collaboration agreement (2021-2027) between eight regional partner organizations



**Stakeholders roles and responsibilities  
for successful digital transformation need to be jointly defined  
and properly implemented throughout the involved  
organizations**

- Shared vision and strategy between regional stakeholders
- Shared S3 Planning processes
- Spear head Program management
- National and international collaboration & Resource allocation





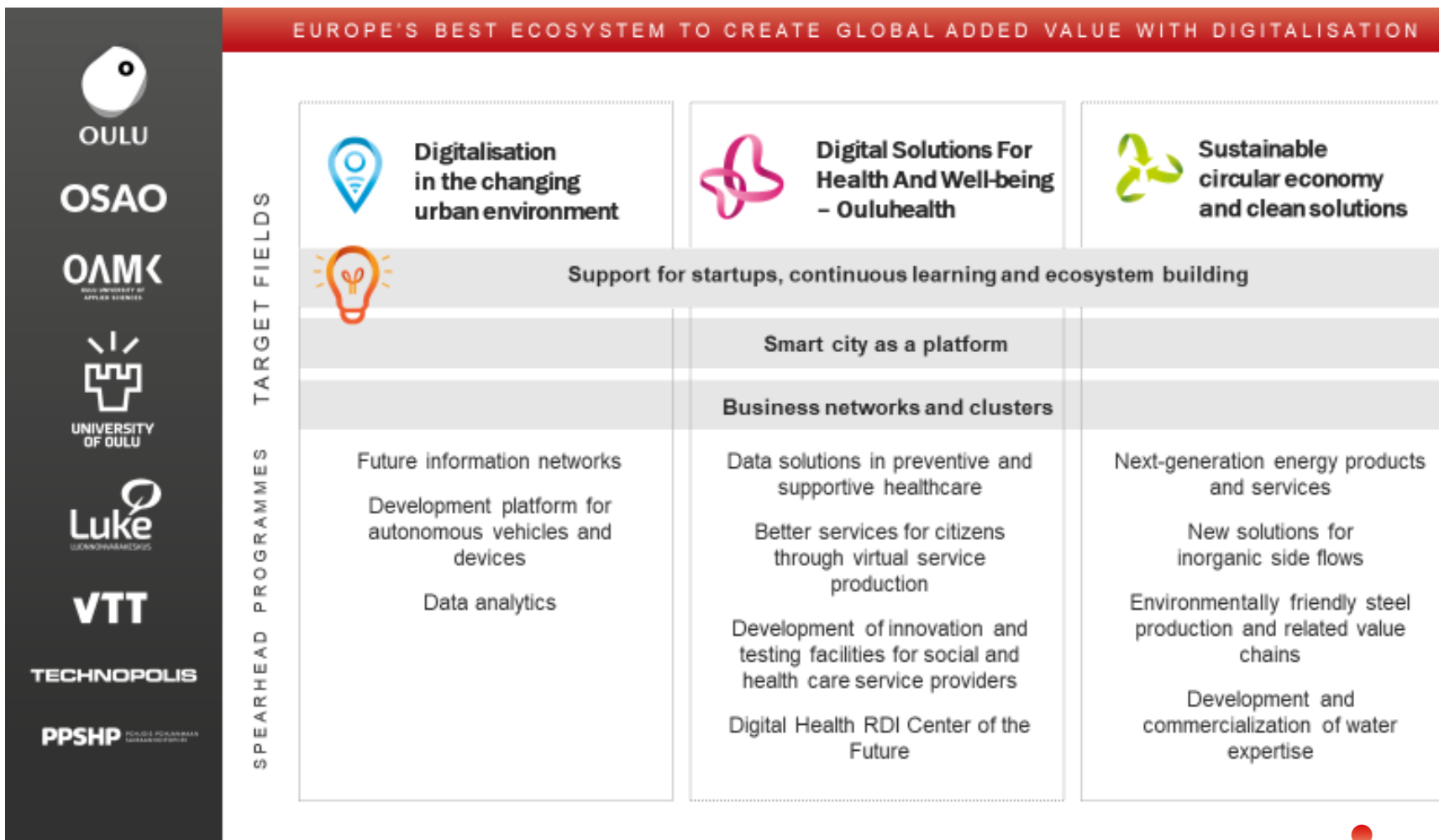
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# Oulu Innovation Alliance

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EUROPE'S BEST ECOSYSTEM TO CREATE GLOBAL ADDED VALUE WITH DIGITALISATION



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<https://www.businessoulu.com/en/company-networks/oulu-innovation-alliance>





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## East and North Finland participating in the Smart Health Vanguard Initiative (VI)

### VI Smart Health:

- Transform the connected European value chains on personalized medicine and smart health, by combining biomedical, technological and data driven expertise
- Towards preventive medicine, health, well-being




### Smart Health pilars:

- Data and digital tech, digital therapies & preventive health are well aligned with our regional objectives
- Interregional collaboration on citizen driven ecosystem of personal health data

## New Challenges for Europe's Cohesion








### CO-LEADING REGIONS

-  East Netherlands
-  Flanders
-  South-Netherlands

### PILOT CONTACTS

Kathleen D'Hondt  
Policy Analyst

### PARTICIPATING REGIONS

-  Autonomous Province Of Trento / Trentino
-  East And North Finland
-  Emilia-Romagna
-  Piemonte
-  Slovenia





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# Thank You!

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East & North  
**FINLAND**

