VANGUARD INITIATIVE
New growth through smart specialisation

Pilot Mid-Term Review Pitch 2026
Smart Health

Flanders, South Netherlands (Limburg), East Netherlands

September 25, 2026

Pilot Approach

1 Societal & Industrial Challenge(s) To Be Addressed

Long-term objective (2025–2029)

Strengthen connected European value chains in personalised medicine and smart health by combining biomedical, technological and data-driven expertise across regions, while supporting the demonstration, scaling and market uptake of concrete solutions.

Key pillars

- Data and digital tech
- Converging technologies
- Preventive health
- Sustainability of health

Current demo cases focus

- We Are
- Trace-Med
- Cardio-Telerehab
- RegMed XB
- Mobile Health (R)evolution

2 Pilot Objectives in 2026

Six specific objectives

1. Ensuring effective Pilot governance
2. Activating and supporting SMEs
3. Supporting the development and scaling of demo cases
4. Communicating and disseminating concrete Pilot results
5. Screening and mobilising relevant funding opportunities
6. Strengthening interregional cooperation, ecosystem relations and synergies

Targeted services / support to members

Scout for funding opportunities
- Horizon Europe, I3, IHI, VInnovate, EU4Health
- Funding workshops
- Matchmaking
- Application support

Organise Pilot meetings
- Working groups
- Projects
- Site visits

Communicate and network
- S3 CoP
- Interreg Europe
- EP PerMed
- European Commission
- EEN, Eureka, NCPs
- LinkedIn
- Flash News

Support demo cases development
- Targeted support
- Ideation
- Dedicated meetings

3 Pilot Governance

Coordination team

Composed of the three co-leading regions (with bimonthly coordination calls) and G.A.C. Group supporting the management.

- Flanders
- South Netherlands (Limburg)
- East Netherlands
- G.A.C. Group — *Management support*

Co-leading regions

Online Pilot meetings

Twice a year

- Beginning of the year: Finalise the Action Plan
- End of the year: Take stock of the year and prepare the next Action Plan

In-presence Pilot meetings

Twice a year, including in collaboration with the S3 MedTech Partnership.

Working together across regions, ecosystems and EU initiatives.

Pilot Activities

1 Mapping of activities within Pilot methodology

Connect & Learn
BUILDING CONNECTIONS FOR GREATER IMPACT

Connection with prospect region Cantabria,
including a presentation of the region during an online Pilot meeting

3 Pilot meetings held:
1 online and 2 in-person

Participation in the S3 CoP Annual Conference
as speaker at the Partnership Forum (Industrial Modernisation)

Shared Google Workspace
to reflect on targeted funding opportunities

Demonstrate & Commercialise
FROM IDEAS TO REAL IMPACT

Development and implementation of a funding strategy
Screening of funding opportunities, shared online working environment, working groups during Pilot meetings, expression of interest and partner matchmaking

Project pipeline for 2027
including Horizon Europe, I3 and VInnovate (around 10 project fit forms received)

Support to existing and new demo cases
On-demand meetings, targeted support, presentation of new concepts and facilitation of the launch of new demo cases

2 Highlights of 2026
TWO KEY EVENTS TO STRENGTHEN COLLABORATION



Jena
22–23 September 2026
In collaboration with the S3 Medical Technologies Partnership



Brussels
25 June 2026
Back-to-back with the S3 CoP Conference

Smart Health Pilot meetings in 2026



Brussels, 25 June 2026

Back-to-back with the S3 CoP Conference

- **DG REGIO** and **S3 Community of Practice**
- **DG RTD Life Science Strategy** and activities on **ATMPs**
- **Inspiring projects and ideas** for new democase
- **Insights on Pilot Reform** (Klaus)
- **Working groups on funding opportunities for 2027**
  services from EEN and Eureka networks, training session from NCP Flanders, orchestration session



Jena, 22–23 September 2026

Smart Health, MedTech and Photonics

- **Learnings on regional innovation ecosystems and expertises**
  Aragon, Thuringia, Saxony-Anhalt
- **Inspiring projects and ideas for new democase**
  rehabilitation
- **Working groups on funding opportunities for 2027**
  identified calls, discussion on coordination capacities, expression of interest, identification of complementary expertise, tips and tricks, next steps, focus group on hospital at home
- **Site visits**
  Jena University Hospital and Innovation Center

Smart Health Pilot meetings in 2026 in photos



Brussels, 25 June 2026











Jena, 22-23 Sep 2026









Assessment of Pilot Progress

1 Pilot Engagement



10 active regions

Multiple tools used to maximise Pilot engagement

Monthly Flash News: funding, events, important news and networking opportunities

LinkedIn communication: 184 followers

Regular Pilot meetings, including on-demand meetings to support democases

Working groups and interactive sessions: thematic focus groups, funding sessions and Action Plan brainstorming

Active collaboration between Smart Health members, with clusters acting as intermediaries between research and industry across regions

Strong collaboration with other networks: S3 Partnerships (MedTech and Photonics), EP PerMed, etc.

Ongoing Pilot projects: PRECISEU (EIE), INSHAPE (I3), RISEMED4EU (Interreg)

2 Key Advances

Aragon successfully onboarded as a new dynamic region since 2025

New democase on **Cardiac Telerehabilitation,** originating from a Vinnovate application

Development of a new democase se concept on **rehabilitation**

Democases: significant technological development and implementation of new use-cases

3 Key Challenges

Engage more regions in the Pilot

Examples:
AURA, Malopolska, Cantabria, etc.

Elements to use for VI Communication

Link with Innovation Implementation

- **Launch of a new demo case – CARDIO-TELEREHAB :** https://www.s3vanguardinitiative.eu/smart-health-pilot-launches-new-demo-case-on-cardiac-telerehabilitation/
- **Collaboration with the S3 Medical Technologies Partnership and Photonics Partnerships**
- **Coordination with European Commission policy officers:** DG REGIO and DG RTD
- Two Pilot meetings :
  - Brussels: https://www.s3vanguardinitiative.eu/the-smart-health-pilot-gathered-in-brussels-to-reflect-on-strategic-priorities-and-upcoming-opportunities-for-personalised-medicine/
  - Jena: Article to be provided soon to Valentina
- **Two I3 case studies** : InnoMedCatalyst and HelathChain (see after)

CASE STUDY

HealthChain

Interregional digital health value chains for real-world impact

CO-CREATION | REAL-WORLD VALIDATION | SCALE-UP OF DIGITAL HEALTH SOLUTIONS

Programme
I3
(Strand 2a)

Duration
Jan 2023 – Feb 2026

Total project cost
€ 9.63 million
(€ 6.74 million EU grant)

Project objective and overview

HealthChain strengthened interregional digital health value chains through a demand-driven co-creation model connecting healthcare organisations, SMEs and ecosystem supporters across **10 European regions**. The project enabled **24 digital health solutions** to be validated in real healthcare environments, accelerating SME scale-up, healthcare adoption and cross-border innovation deployment while reinforcing regional innovation ecosystems and investment readiness.

Partners and regions



Key figures and results

33 companies
collaborated with healthcare organisations across 10 European regions

> 2,100 patients and 1,100 healthcare professionals
in real-world validation activities

24 digital health solutions
validated in real healthcare environments

TRL 6–7 → 8–9
for most solutions

€ 1.6 million
additional public and private investment

5 Mirror Regions
replicated the methodology
15 additional regions joined the Community of Practice

Innovation focus and demo cases

Mobile Health (R)evolution	We Are	Trace-Med	RegMed XB	Cardio-Telerehab
Patient-centric solutions	Patients and health data	Radiotracers / nuclear medicine	Regenerative medicine	Cardiac rehabilitation

Key added value of the Smart Health Pilot

In developing the proposal
The philosophy of the Pilot Project (VI Smart Health) Mobile Health Revolution was implemented in WP2 and WP3 of HealthChain. It was one of the triggers for co-creation of patient friendly solutions.

In implementation and post-project roll out
The upgrading of the VI Pilot was successfully proved and validated through HealthChain and the Community of Practice. It is currently in the implementation phase in a public hospital in Jesenice, Slovenia.

Key success factors

Direct access to healthcare organisations
as real-world testing and validation environments

Business readiness support for SMEs
mentoring, business modelling, procurement preparation and market validation

Interregional collaboration
aligning clinical needs, business support, procurement readiness and operational integration

CASE STUDY

InnoMedCatalyst

Strengthening precision and personalised medicine ecosystems across Europe

5P MEDICINE | STARTUP ACCELERATION | INTERREGIONAL INVESTMENT PROJECTS

Programme
I3
(Strand 2b)

Duration
14 Oct 2024 – 13 Oct 2026

Total project cost
€ 1,495,046.80
(€ 1,495,046.67 EU grant)

Project objective and overview

InnoMedCatalyst aims to enhance the regional innovation capacity of precision and personalised medicine ecosystems across Europe. It supports startups, spin-offs, scaleups, innovators and healthcare providers to develop, test and refine digital health solutions as viable business cases, while preparing a portfolio of interregional investment projects ready for further investment and exploitation by 2026.

- Value chain analysis in digital precision medicine
- Regional innovation roadmaps in 5P medicine
- Peer learning and region-to-region exchange
- Twinning programme and accelerator support
- Innovation network platform and investment project portfolio

Partners and regions

11 partners across diverse regional ecosystrens



Key figures and results

- **47 startups supported** through the InnoMedCatalyst Accelerator Programme
- **Most solutions progressed from TRL 4 to TRL 6**
- **40+ mentors and experts** involved
- **10 hours** of personalised mentorship
- **6 expert webinar modules**
- **3 Demo Days:** Bologna, Iaşi and Madeira
- **3 thematic forums** / host events

Innovation focus and flagship activities

Precision & personalised medicine
Innovation in 5P medicine ecosystems

Digital health solutions
From concept to refined business cases

Accelerator programme
Structured support for startups and scaleups

Twinning & peer learning
Cross-regional exchange and capacity building

Investment pipeline
Projects prepared for further funding and exploitation

Key added value for Smart Health

In proposal development

Not applicable

In implementation and post-project roll-out

The project creates a strong foundation for future Smart Health pilot actions by strengthening hospital–startup collaboration, matchmaking between healthcare providers and innovators, and twinning/tripling links between regional ecosystems. These results can be further capitalised through follow-up support and dedicated calls such as VInnovate.

Key success factors

- **Hospital–startup coupling**
- **Investment-readiness** support
- **Cross-regional cooperation** and knowledge transfer
- Strong basis for future VInnovate proposals

Your Observations & Elements to Share

Feel free to use this space as you wish!

- Strong collaborations with S3 CoP Partnerships (MedTech, Photonics, etc.). **Develop more collaborations with other Vanguard Pilots** (3D Printing, …) to foster joint project applications, identification of partners with complementary expertise, etc. **You are welcome to Smart Health events !**
- **Communication support** very appreciated by the Pilot
- **Communication / Prospection campaign to engage new regions**