

A strategy on harnessing innovation for public health in the WHO European Region 2025–2030

A strategy on harnessing innovation for public health in the WHO European Region 2025–2030 is a groundbreaking regional strategy designed to harness innovation for public health across the WHO European Region. It defines public health innovation as the development and application at scale of new processes, policies, products or programmes that address the unmet health-related needs of patients, populations or communities, enhancing the quality, impact and efficiency of population health and living environments in an equitable and sustainable way.

The strategy aims to support and strengthen Member States' capacities to bridge the implementation gap between breakthrough innovations and their adoption within public health systems. Although promising innovations exist, financial barriers and policy constraints can delay their implementation for a decade or more. The cost of these delays – including lives lost, preventable hospitalizations, unnecessary emergency department visits, increased disability rates and reduced quality of life – amounts to billions of euros annually.

The strategy builds on extensive consultations, lessons learned from recent public health crises, and emerging opportunities in fields such as artificial intelligence, precision medicine and innovative financing. It integrates five core strategic areas: integrated innovation policy aligned with public health goals, innovative governance and financing mechanisms, strengthening of country capacities, identification and scaling of innovations for sustainable impact and establishment of collaborative platforms. The strategy outlines actionable steps that countries can take to foster a robust innovation ecosystem and provides a framework for WHO support in implementing both cutting-edge and incremental solutions to improve public health outcomes.

The WHO Regional Office for Europe has committed to prioritize innovation, with the second European Programme of Work, 2026–2030 (EPW2), dedicating 30% of efforts towards innovation to tackle megatrends affecting public health, such as noncommunicable diseases, mental health, climate change impacts, demographic shifts and health system resilience.

This working document, along with the related innovation agenda, an implementation support guide and a draft decision, will be submitted to the WHO Regional Committee for Europe for endorsement at its 75th session in October 2025. The strategy is a living document, designed to evolve with the rapidly changing landscape of health innovation and to support the Region in becoming a global leader in public health innovation.

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BACKGROUND

1. The WHO European Region is facing unprecedented public health challenges that require innovative solutions. The second European Programme of Work, 2026–2030 (EPW2), sets an ambitious vision, dedicating 30% of efforts towards innovation to tackle megatrends affecting public health in the Region.¹ This strategic emphasis on innovation comes at a critical time, as traditional public health approaches are proving inadequate in the face of complex, interconnected challenges, often described as a permacrisis. These challenges include geopolitical conflicts, disease outbreaks, antimicrobial resistance,² and the growing health impacts of climate change, air pollution and biodiversity loss.^{3, 4, 5} These crises have compounded existing public health issues, necessitating urgent and innovative solutions.
2. The widespread impact of the permacrisis reveals that all Member States, regardless of their health system maturity or economic status, are vulnerable to a diverse array of threats.⁶ This situation highlights the essential role of innovation in addressing public health challenges across the entire Region. For instance, the shortage of health workers is a critical “pain point”, for which emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) offer opportunities to improve workforce productivity and efficiency.⁷ Innovative community-based surveillance systems can strengthen emergency preparedness by leveraging local knowledge and networks to detect early signs of disease outbreaks and to help evaluate disease control strategies.⁸ Strategies for precision prevention and the implementation of personalized medicine offer promising solutions for reducing the incidence of noncommunicable diseases.
3. However, a wide implementation gap exists between breakthrough innovations and their implementation at scale within public health systems. Factors contributing to the implementation gap include policy and financial constraints, health system readiness for disruptive products, regulatory barriers, and misalignment between innovation and public health priorities. The cost of these implementation delays – including lives lost, preventable hospitalizations, unnecessary emergency department visits, increased disability rates, reduced quality of life and lost workforce productivity – amounts to billions of euros of missed opportunities annually.⁹
4. A strategy for harnessing innovation for public health in the WHO European Region 2025–2030 positions the WHO Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe) as a catalyst in driving public health innovation, particularly the development and implementation at scale of new processes, policies, products or programmes that address the unmet health-related needs of patients, populations or communities, enhancing the quality, impact and efficiency of population health and living environments in an equitable and sustainable way. For the purpose of this strategy, public health innovation is not limited to technological breakthroughs but also encompasses organizational, policy and system-level changes that challenge established approaches and deliver value in new ways. By adopting this comprehensive and inclusive approach, the strategy seeks

¹ [Developing the second European Programme of Work](#). Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2025 (accessed 2 September 2025).

² [Antimicrobial resistance surveillance in Europe 2023 - 2021 data](#). Stockholm: European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control; 2023 (accessed 2 September 2025).

³ [From cradle to cane: WHO's new European Health Report warns of lifelong health crises across the Region](#). Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2025 (accessed 2 September 2025).

⁴ [Climate change impacts on vector-borne diseases in Europe: Risks, predictions and actions](#). Online: Lancet Regional Health - Europe; 2020 (accessed 2 September 2025).

⁵ [The 2024 Europe report of the Lancet Countdown on health and climate change: unprecedented warming demands unprecedented action](#). Online: The Lancet Public health; 2024 (accessed 2 September 2025).

⁶ [WHO European regional consultation – Noncommunicable diseases in emergency preparedness and response: from permacrisis to resilience](#). Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2023 (accessed 2 September 2025).

⁷ [As European doctors retire, could AI help to solve a health workforce shortage?](#) Online: Euronews; 2023 (accessed 2 September 2025).

⁸ [UNITED4Surveillance](#). Copenhagen: Statens Serum Institut; 2025 (accessed 2 September 2025).

⁹ [Health Challenges in European Region Need More Action, WHO Says](#). Online: Bloomberg; 2025 (accessed 2 September 2025).

to foster an enabling environment for transformative solutions that can address the pressing public health challenges of our time and build more resilient, equitable and effective health systems across the Region.

5. To ensure the selection and implementation of relevant innovations, the strategy applies a systematic and evidence-based approach. This includes the use of country-level health assessments, burden of disease analyses and expert consultations to identify priority needs. Innovations targeted for support are chosen based on their potential impact, equity, feasibility and substantiated evidence base.

ALIGNMENT BETWEEN REGIONAL AND GLOBAL LEVELS

6. The strategy is strongly aligned with EPW2. This alignment ensures that the strategy directly supports the focus of EPW2 on transformative solutions across various health domains, including noncommunicable diseases, mental health, healthy ageing, climate change impacts and health system resilience.

7. The strategy also aligns with and draws on several other global and regional initiatives, including the United Nations Framework for Breakthrough Impact on the SDGs Through Innovation,¹⁰ the WHO Global strategy on digital health 2020–2025¹¹ and the WHO Fourteenth General Programme of Work, 2025–2028.¹² It builds on insights from key regional meetings, such as the high-level regional meeting, Health Systems for Prosperity and Solidarity: Leaving No One Behind, held in 2018, Tallinn, Estonia, and the Tallinn Charter 15th Anniversary High-level Conference, Trust and transformation: resilient and sustainable health systems for the future.^{13, 14}

8. The strategy complements actions by WHO/Europe and other regional entities, including the European Union's Digital Single Market Strategy,¹⁵ the Draft council conclusions on the future of the European Health Union: A Europe that cares, prepares and protects,¹⁶ the Western Balkans research and innovation infrastructure roadmap,¹⁷ and the Eurasian Economic Union 2025 digital agenda: Prospects and Recommendations.¹⁸ It also leverages existing WHO/Europe platforms, such as the Empowerment through Digital Health flagship initiative¹⁹ and the WHO/Europe Access to Novel Medicines Platform.²⁰ Furthermore, the strategy incorporates the One Health Joint Plan of Action (2022–2026): Working together for the health of humans, animals, plants and the environment, emphasizing cross-sectoral collaboration and leveraging innovation for disease surveillance, rapid response and health emergency prevention.²¹

¹⁰ [Framework for Breakthrough Impact on the SDGs Through Innovation: a practical guide](#). New York: United Nations Global Compact; 2019 (accessed 2 September 2025).

¹¹ [Global strategy on digital health 2020–2025](#). Geneva: World Health Organization; 2021 (accessed 2 September 2025).

¹² [Draft fourteenth general programme of work](#). Geneva: World Health Organization; 2024 (accessed 2 September 2025).

¹³ [Health Systems for Prosperity and Solidarity: leaving no one behind: meeting background document](#). Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2018 (accessed 2 September 2025).

¹⁴ [Tallinn Charter 15th Anniversary Health Systems Conference: Trust and transformation – resilient and sustainable health systems for the future](#). Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2024 (accessed 2 September 2025).

¹⁵ [Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. A Digital Single Market Strategy for Europe](#). Brussels: European Commission; 2015 (accessed 2 September 2025).

¹⁶ [Draft Council conclusions on the Future of the European Health Union: A Europe that cares, prepares and protects](#). Brussels: Council of the European Union; 2024 (accessed 2 September 2025).

¹⁷ [Western Balkans Research and Innovation Infrastructure Roadmap](#). Sarajevo: Regional Cooperation Council; 2022 (accessed 2 September 2025).

¹⁸ [The EAEU 2025 Digital Agenda: Prospects and Recommendations](#). Washington DC: World Bank Group; 2018 (accessed 2 September 2025).

¹⁹ [Empowerment through Digital Health](#). Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2024 (accessed 2 September 2025).

²⁰ [WHO/Europe Access to Novel Medicines Platform](#). Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2024 (accessed 2 September 2025).

²¹ [One Health Joint Plan of Action \(2022–2026\). Working together for the health of humans, animals, plants and the environment](#). Rome: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization and the World Organisation for Animal Health; 2022 (accessed 2 September 2025).

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

9. The development and implementation of the strategy are guided by principles that prioritize equity and inclusivity, ensuring innovations benefit all populations – especially the most vulnerable and underserved – while placing communities at the centre of innovation efforts through sustained collaborative engagement that addresses specific local needs. This approach adopts an integrated perspective, recognizing the interconnectedness of technological, social and policy solutions, and emphasizes sustainable impact by seeking long-term improvements in public health that consider environmental and economic factors. For example, innovative digital tools for mental health support – particularly among groups traditionally facing barriers to access – illustrate how equity and sustainability considerations can ensure that no population is left behind in the adoption of new technologies.

10. Specifically, the strategy is underpinned by a commitment to ensure that decision-making is firmly rooted in generating robust evidence and data for continual evaluation in order to learn which innovations work and which need further development, that ethical standards and respect for human rights are upheld throughout the innovation process, and that agility and adaptability remain central, enabling innovation systems to respond rapidly and effectively to emerging public health threats and evolving societal needs.

STRATEGIC AREA 1: INTEGRATED INNOVATION POLICY FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

Background

11. Innovation in public health is multifaceted, spanning various policy domains including social, economic, fiscal, monetary, industrial and intellectual property policy. Coherence among these policies is essential to promote effective and equal access to public health services and address complex health challenges. Establishing an integrated innovation policy framework that aligns with national provisions is crucial to fostering a thriving innovation ecosystem. This approach recognizes that the causes of health inequity often lie not in market failure but in deficiencies within health policies.

Strategic objective

12. Develop and implement cohesive, cross-sectoral policies that prioritize health innovation – including the expansion of digital health, personalized medicine and telemedicine – and that address the social, economic and environmental determinants of health. This objective includes supporting actions to build digital skills among both professionals and patients and ensuring that innovation is central to policy-making and contributes to equitable health outcomes across the Region.

Actions for Member States and WHO/Europe

13. The following lists outline actions that Member States and WHO/Europe can take in working towards the strategic objective for integrated innovation policy for public health.

Actions for Member States

- (1) Establish national health innovation strategies or integrate innovation into already existing main strategies and action plans aligned with broader economic and social policies, emphasizing a health-in-all-policies approach.

- (2) Implement policies and actions to incentivize the private sector to invest in needs-driven health innovation, particularly in priority public health areas.
- (3) Implement innovation-friendly procurement policies for public health technologies.
- (4) Develop policy frameworks for emerging technologies in public health (for example AI, genomics and personalized medicine).
- (5) Establish innovation zones with special regulatory and tax incentives.
- (6) Develop policies to facilitate – on voluntary and mutually agreed terms – technology transfer and knowledge sharing in public health innovation.
- (7) Implement policies that promote equitable access to public health innovations, addressing barriers related to affordability, availability and acceptability.
- (8) Establish mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the impact of innovation policies on public health outcomes and health equity.
- (9) Incorporate innovation into public health surveillance and promote the incorporation of new knowledge, technologies or innovative experiences into surveillance.

Actions for WHO/Europe

- (1) Provide guidance and technical support to Member States in developing comprehensive public health innovation strategies or integrating public health innovation into already existing strategies.
- (2) Facilitate regional dialogue on aligning innovation policies with public health priorities and share best practices across Member States.
- (3) Develop guidelines for innovation-friendly procurement in public health systems.
- (4) Provide technical support on policy development for emerging health technologies.
- (5) Establish platforms for cross-border collaboration and knowledge exchange on public health innovation policies.
- (6) Develop guidelines on integrating equity considerations into public health innovation policies and strategies.
- (7) Develop indicators and methodologies for assessing and monitoring the effectiveness of public health innovation policies across the Region.

Key tools

14. Essential tools for integrated innovation policy for public health:
 - EU AI Act (High-risk AI standards) [website];
 - European Health Data Space Regulation (EHDS) [website];
 - Toolbox for policy coherence in access to medicines and local pharmaceutical production;
 - Implementing Health in All Policies: a pilot toolkit;
 - The wellbeing economy playbook: tools and methods for designing policies for a wellbeing economy;

- The Danish Government: strategy for life science towards 2030;
- Policy coherence as a driver of health equity;
- A framework for science, technology and innovation policy reviews: harnessing innovation for sustainable development; and
- WHO guideline on country pharmaceutical pricing policies, second edition.

STRATEGIC AREA 2: GOVERNANCE AND FINANCING FOR INNOVATION

Background

15. Effective governance and sustainable financing for public health innovation require a whole-of-government and cross-sectoral approach, coordinating not only the health sector but also the education, industry, finance, and science and technology sectors to design, implement and evaluate innovation policies. Governance within the health sector requires collaboration between public health agencies, academia, industry, civil society and patient groups to foster needs-driven health innovation. Sustainable financing models, such as Sweden's dedicated innovation funds,²² demonstrate the value of aligning public and private interests to drive both health and economic outcomes, enabling countries to scale innovative solutions for challenges like chronic disease, digital transformation and workforce development.

Strategic objective

16. Create robust mechanisms for coordinating public health innovation efforts across sectors, ensuring public trust, transparent decision-making, ethical oversight and efficient use of resources to address priority public health challenges in the Region.

Actions for Member States and WHO/Europe

17. The following lists outline actions that Member States and WHO/Europe can take in working towards the strategic objective for governance and financing for innovation.

Actions for Member States

- (1) Establish or strengthen national health innovation governance bodies with clear mandates, accountability frameworks and sustainable financing mechanisms.
- (2) Develop clear governance structures for prioritizing and funding public health innovation initiatives aligned with national public health priorities.
- (3) Integrate innovation costs into national health budgets to ensure sustained financial support for health innovation initiatives that deliver measurable health outcomes.
- (4) Establish ethical frameworks and oversight mechanisms for public health innovation, particularly in areas such as AI and genomics.
- (5) Develop mechanisms for rapid mobilization and allocation of funds during health emergencies to support innovative solutions.

²² [The Government wants to promote more innovative and knowledge-based public health initiatives](#). Stockholm: the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Regeringskansliet; 2023 (accessed 2 September 2025).

- (6) Create fast-track approval processes for high-potential innovations addressing urgent public health needs, while maintaining robust safeguards for patient safety.
- (7) Establish mechanisms for sharing health data and research findings to support collaborative innovation, while ensuring privacy and security, aligning with relevant international and regional frameworks – including, where applicable, the EHDS Regulation (EU) 2025/327 and similar processes adopted by Member States.

Actions for WHO/Europe

- (1) Provide guidance on best practices for health innovation governance and financing models.
- (2) Facilitate knowledge sharing and capacity-building on innovation governance and financing across Member States.
- (3) Provide guidance on sustainable financing models for health innovation, including public–private partnerships.
- (4) Develop guidelines on integrating health innovation governance into existing public health structures and processes.
- (5) Develop tools and methodologies for assessing the return on investment of public health innovations to inform resource allocation decisions.
- (6) Provide technical support in establishing regulatory sandboxes for testing innovative health solutions.
- (7) Develop frameworks for responsible data sharing and use in health innovation across the Region.

Key tools

18. Essential tools for governance and financing for innovation:
 - Agency for Health Innovation (AIS), G_NIUS [website];
 - Ethics and governance of artificial intelligence for health: Guidance on large multi-modal models;
 - Ethics and governance of artificial intelligence for health: WHO guidance;
 - Governing health innovation for the common good;
 - Guidance for human genome data collection, access, use and sharing;
 - Health Impact Investment Platform (HIIP) [website];
 - Innovative financing mechanisms for health: mapping and recommendations;
 - Innovative funding models for high-cost non-communicable diseases (NCDs): a global study of new solutions disrupting healthcare financing; and
 - The role of sandboxes in promoting flexibility and innovation in the digital age.

STRATEGIC AREA 3: COUNTRY CAPACITIES FOR HEALTH INNOVATION

Background

19. The ability of Member States to identify, adopt and scale health innovations is crucial in addressing their specific public health priorities. However, many countries face challenges in building the necessary skills, infrastructure and ecosystems to fully leverage innovative approaches. Strengthening national capacities for health innovation is essential to ensuring that cutting-edge solutions can be effectively implemented and tailored to local contexts. Building this capacity requires targeted investment in workforce development, including training and upskilling health professionals, fostering leadership in innovation, and establishing or strengthening innovation institutions or centres of excellence.

Strategic objective

20. Enhance the ability of Member States to identify, adopt and scale health innovations that address their specific public health priorities, with a focus on building sustainable innovation ecosystems and workforce capabilities. This objective includes supporting countries to design and deliver training programmes in innovation leadership and management, to attract and retain new talent and to develop mechanisms for ongoing professional development.

Actions for Member States and WHO/Europe

21. The following lists outline actions that Member States and WHO/Europe can take in working towards the strategic objective for country capacities for health innovation.

Actions for Member States

- (1) Conduct national health innovation capacity assessments.
- (2) Invest in workforce development programmes focused on health innovation skills, including innovation leadership and management.
- (3) Establish and resource cross-functional teams within the ministry of health to lead and coordinate innovation initiatives, working in close collaboration with other relevant ministries.
- (4) Strengthen national health research and development infrastructure, focusing on priority public health challenges.
- (5) Implement programmes to improve digital literacy among the public.
- (6) Create mechanisms for continual learning and adaptation in health innovation, including through pilot projects and rapid evaluation cycles.
- (7) Establish procurement mechanisms that will allow the procuring of early-stage health innovations based on evidence-informed decisions.

Actions for WHO/Europe

- (1) Develop tools for assessing national health innovation capacities.
- (2) Support the development of training programmes on innovation management for health professionals including policy-makers.
- (3) Support the establishment of a national health innovation cluster by designing terms of reference, a mandate, a structure and operational modalities.
- (4) Support the development of national health research strategies that align with public health priorities, ensuring that research agendas are responsive to local health needs.
- (5) Facilitate knowledge exchange on successful capacity-building initiatives across Member States.
- (6) Support the development of monitoring and evaluation frameworks for health innovation capacity-building efforts.
- (7) Facilitate capacity-building for procurement of health innovation.

Key tools

22. Essential tools for country capacities for health innovation:
 - Assessment of national capacity for research for health – Timor Leste;
 - Barriers and facilitators to utilizing digital health technologies by healthcare professionals;
 - Global call to action for health innovation scale-up by the public sector;
 - Global Innovation Index 2024: unlocking the promise of social entrepreneurship;
 - Guidance for best practices for clinical trials;
 - Procure4Health: capacity building catalogue guideline; and
 - Digital health assessment toolkit guide.

STRATEGIC AREA 4: INNOVATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE IMPACT

Background

23. Many promising innovations are emerging, but not all lead to sustainable improvements in public health outcomes. To ensure meaningful change, efforts must be guided by clearly identified public health needs – using frameworks like NEED²³ – to prioritize unmet needs, with equity as a core criterion. At the same time, sustainable innovation must consider both environmental and financial dimensions, ensuring that new solutions minimize ecological impact and are economically viable for health systems in the long term.

Strategic objective

24. Identify, develop and scale the innovations with the greatest potential for improving public health outcomes in an equitable and sustainable manner across the Region, setting priorities based on unmet needs and using mechanisms like horizon scanning to anticipate and address gaps in innovation.

²³ [High-level Conference. Health-related needs as drivers for healthcare policy and innovation](#). Brussels: NEED consortium; 2024 (accessed 2 September 2025).

Actions for Member States and WHO/Europe

25. The following lists outline actions that Member States and WHO/Europe can take in working towards the strategic objective for innovations for sustainable impact.

Actions for Member States

- (1) Implement horizon-scanning mechanisms to identify emerging innovations and assess their potential impact to support early adoption.
- (2) Systematically identify and prioritize unmet public health needs using standardized and evidence-based frameworks.
- (3) Develop criteria for assessing the public health impact, equity and sustainability of innovations.
- (4) Create fast-track pathways for testing and implementing high-potential innovations that are grounded in strong safety standards and do not compromise essential review processes.
- (5) Establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the long-term impact of adopted innovations on public health outcomes and health equity.
- (6) Establish platforms for sharing real-world evidence on the impact of health innovations to inform decision-making and implementation.

Actions for WHO/Europe

- (1) Support training on foresight and horizon-scanning methodologies.
- (2) Provide technical support and guidance to Member States on applying needs assessment frameworks.
- (3) Provide guidance on methodologies for assessing innovation impact, equity and sustainability in public health contexts.
- (4) Share best practices on implementing the testing of innovations and technologies in a controlled environment, for instance regulatory sandboxes.
- (5) Develop frameworks and tools for evaluating the scalability and transferability of successful health innovations across different contexts.
- (6) Develop standards and protocols for collecting and sharing real-world evidence on health innovation impacts.
- (7) Create repositories of innovative projects and experiences from Member States in public health that can serve as a reference for them.

Key tools

26. Essential tools and frameworks for identifying, developing and scaling innovations for sustainable impact:

- Foresight approaches in global public health: a practical guide for WHO staff;
- Global guidance framework for the responsible use of the life sciences: mitigating biorisks and governing dual-use research;

- Health Innovation Impact Checklist: a tool to improve the development and reporting of impact models for global health innovations;
- Identification of health-related needs: the needs examination, evaluation and dissemination (NEED) assessment framework;
- Monitoring and evaluating digital health interventions: a practical guide to conducting research and assessment;
- Social innovation in health: monitoring and evaluation framework;
- Towards a healthcare innovation scaling framework—the voice of the innovator; and
- 2023 emerging technologies and scientific innovations: a global public health perspective.

STRATEGIC AREA 5: COLLABORATIVE PLATFORMS FOR HEALTH INNOVATION

Background

27. Collaborative platforms are central to accelerating innovation and knowledge exchange in public health. The strategy calls for the creation and strengthening of regional and national platforms where public health agencies, innovation hubs, academia, industry, civil society and patient groups can share expertise, co-develop solutions, and address ethical, technological and implementation challenges together. The strategy commits to learning from these platforms and to utilizing available innovations and innovation research to build further collaborations. These platforms should be designed to foster open dialogue, mutual learning and the pooling of resources, drawing inspiration from initiatives like Denmark's Lighthouse Life Science partnership.²⁴

Strategic objective

28. Foster partnerships and knowledge exchange to accelerate health innovation across the Region, leveraging the collective expertise and resources of diverse stakeholders to address priority public health challenges.

Actions for Member States and WHO/Europe

29. The following lists outline actions that Member States and WHO/Europe can take in working towards the strategic objective for collaborative platforms for health innovation.

Actions for Member States

- (1) Participate actively in regional and global health innovation networks, contributing to and benefiting from shared knowledge and resources.
- (2) Establish national platforms for collaboration between health ministries, public health agencies, academia, industry and civil society organizations on health innovation.
- (3) Implement open innovation initiatives to crowd-source solutions to pressing health challenges.
- (4) Establish partnerships with impact investors and philanthropic organizations to support the scaling of promising health innovations.

²⁴ [Learnings of the Danish Lighthouse Life Science. Practical insights from a multi stakeholder collaboration.](#) Copenhagen: Lighthouse Life Science; 2025 (accessed 2 September 2025).

- (5) Implement programmes to enhance collaboration between urban and rural areas in health innovation, ensuring equitable access to innovation resources.
- (6) Develop platforms for citizen engagement or social participation in health innovation processes, fostering co-creation and community ownership of solutions.

Actions for WHO/Europe

- (1) Establish a WHO regional innovation coordination hub for the Region to facilitate knowledge exchange and collaboration within the innovation ecosystem.
- (2) Facilitate the formation of national innovation partnerships and consortia addressing specific public health challenges.
- (3) Organize regular regional health innovation forums and showcases to highlight promising innovations and foster cross-border collaborations.
- (4) Develop guidance on public–private partnerships for health innovation.
- (5) Support initiatives to bridge the urban–rural divide in health innovation, promoting inclusive development.
- (6) Provide guidance on best practices for social engagement and participatory approaches in health innovation.
- (7) Provide guidance on ethical, profitable and competitive frameworks to establish collaborations between Member States and the private sector, universities and other knowledge entities.

Key tools

30. Essential tools and frameworks for collaborative platforms for health innovation:
 - The European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing [website];
 - Global Initiative on Digital Health: coordinated support for country-led digital health transformation;
 - Strategic Partners' Initiative for Data and Digital Health: progress report and working group proposals;
 - Towards sustainable public-private strategic partnerships in life science: recommendations from the partnership evaluation of Lighthouse Life Science – healthy weight; and
 - The Novel Medicines Platform [website].

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

31. The strategy aims to harness cutting-edge approaches while building on lessons learned from recent public health challenges and successful innovation initiatives across the Region.

32. Core and essential tools, frameworks and methodologies will be developed to support the implementation of the strategy and its strategic areas at country level, such as:

- a WHO guideline on health innovation policy coherence and an innovation impact assessment toolkit;
- a best practice guide for health innovation ecosystems and an ethical framework for health innovation governance;
- a health innovation capacity needs assessment tool and tailored training modules on innovation leadership, management and implementation;
- a methodology for assessing innovation impact, horizon scanning and foresight, and a database of priority needs for innovation in health care; and
- a regional innovation coordination hub that fosters collaboration among a network of innovation institutions and research and development centres of excellence, and a digital platform for sharing best practices in health innovation.

33. To complement this strategy, the *Innovation agenda for public health in the WHO European Region 2025–2030*²⁵ was developed under the leadership and expertise of the Technical Advisory Group on Building an Innovation Ecosystem for Public Health.²⁶ The innovation agenda was designed as an actionable blueprint providing detailed resources and practical tools for implementing recommended actions, ensuring that efforts are evidence-based and consensus-driven. It will be regularly updated as new tools and methodologies emerge, informed by ongoing monitoring and evaluation of strategy implementation.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

34. The implementation of the strategy will be monitored through a dedicated process aligned with existing WHO reporting mechanisms. Key performance indicators will be developed for each strategic area, focusing on both the progress of innovation initiatives and their impact on public health outcomes. Particular attention will be paid to evaluating the impact of AI, digital technologies and social networks in addressing key health priorities, including mental health. The monitoring process will also systematically document how cross-sectoral collaboration and policy coherence contribute to the inclusivity, effectiveness and sustainability of innovations deployed. Member States will be encouraged to report annually on their progress using a standardized reporting template. This approach leverages existing monitoring tools and is designed to avoid additional administrative burden for Member States.

35. The collective implementation of the strategy will be evaluated and presented to the WHO Regional Committee for Europe by the strategy's secretariat through the following mechanisms:

- a midterm report will be presented at the 77th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (RC77) in 2027, providing an assessment of progress across all strategic areas and identifying any necessary adjustments to the strategy; and
- a final report will be presented in 2030, evaluating the overall impact of the strategy and providing recommendations for future innovation strategies in the Region.

²⁵ [Innovation agenda for public health in the WHO European Region 2025–2030](#). Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2025 (accessed 2 September 2025).

²⁶ [Technical Advisory Group on Building an Innovation Ecosystem for Public Health \(TAG-BIEFPH\) in the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe](#). Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2024 (accessed 2 September 2025).

36. Additionally, routinely collected monitoring and evaluation data will be used to update the strategy implementation support guide, ensuring its continued relevance and effectiveness in supporting Member States. WHO/Europe will also maintain a dynamic database of health innovation case studies and best practices, which will be regularly updated to reflect implementation experiences across the Region.

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