



**HoCare - Delivery of Innovative solutions for Home Care by
strengthening quadruple-helix cooperation in regional innovation chains**

5th Call - Extended Project

Bulgaria's Second Regional Stakeholders' Group Meeting

Friday, 9 September 2022 (hybrid, Varna/Sofia)

Venue: Hotel Boutique Splendid, ul. "Bratya Shkorpil" 30, Varna, Bulgaria

Agenda

13:00-13:15

Welcome and short introduction - HoCare Project extended – the further developments

13:15 -13:30

Brief overview of the current situation in home care and the digital innovations in the sector in Bulgaria

13:30 -13:45

Presentation of HOCARE project partners' achievements and good practices as an answer to the Covid-19 pandemic and related grand societal challenges

13:45 – 14:15

Presentation of Bulgaria GP - ViruSafe – the mobile application, created to assist society and governmental institutions in the fight against COVID-19

14:15 – 14:30

Presentation of report on HOCARE-relevant achievements related to policy instruments in Bulgaria – the new ERDF programme “Competitiveness and innovations for enterprises” 2020-2027 and the improved Bulgarian RIS3 – Innovation strategy for smart specialisation

14:30 - 15:00

Open discussion – Q&A

15:00 – 15:30

Wrap up – Conclusions



PARTICIPANTS

No	Full name	Organization	Position
1	Silvia Stumpf	BAA	Chairwoman
2	Boris Krastev	BAA	HoCare Project Manager
3	Ognian Spasov	BAA	HoCare Project Expert
4	Rosen Draganov	Directorate General "European Funds for Competitiveness" at the Ministry of Economy.	"Programming and contracting of grants" state expert
5	Toni Shopov	Directorate General "European Funds for Competitiveness" at the Ministry of Economy.	"Programming and contracting of grants" state expert
6	Mariana Vasileva	Directorate "International Projects and Electronic Health Care" Ministry of Health	Director at Directorate "International Projects and Electronic Healthcare"
7	Mariana Koleva	Directorate "International Projects and Electronic Health Care" Ministry of Health	Head of Department "Programs and Projects with External Funding"
8	Rozalina Dimova	Technical University - Varna	Vice-rector
9	Todor Dobrev	ICT cluster - Varna	Board member
10	Teodora Borissova	Bulgarian chamber of commerce	Senior expert
11	Lia-Filipa Kirova	BAA	Expert
12	Nadejda Alexieva	BAA	Expert

REPORT

The second meeting with the HoCare stakeholders' group was held in a hybrid form in Varna on September 9th to discuss the achieved amendment of the Innovation strategy for smart specialisation in Bulgaria according to the planned objectives for Bulgaria.

Mrs Silvia Stumpf, Chairwoman of BAA, welcomed the participants and provided a short introduction about the extended HoCare Project's recent developments.

She continued by providing a brief overview of the current situation in home care and the use of ICT in the sector in Bulgaria. She presented the relevant Policy Instruments, the developments in the research and innovation ecosystem on national level, the interactions between main regional actors on the quadruple helix model.

Next Boris Krastev, senior project, presented the main regional projects and innovative research initiatives in the sector of ICT in healthcare in HOCARE partner countries and invited the stakeholders to discuss any possible transfer in the discussion section of the meeting.



Boris Krastev continued with a presentation of the Bulgaria GP named ViruSafe.

ViruSafe is a specialized platform to support the fight against the pandemic.

Virusafe gives users the ability to track their symptoms and health status daily, which in turn gives Ministry of Health a good overview of the spread of the pandemic. Users can also voluntarily share their location to enable institutions to act accordingly, in case of an emergency.

ViruSafe takes data from users, generating a map of hotspots where there are citizens with symptoms of COVID-19.

Each user is able to receive feedback on their health status based on the app's data from their General Practitioner, advice and best practices to follow to protect themselves from infection, as well as news about COVID-19 and access to detailed pandemic information. The idea behind keeping users informed via the application is to (a) make certain the information is solicited by the authorities and (b) that the information can be targeted to certain user groups (different locations, people who reported certain symptoms, etc.)

The application is part of the National System to fight against COVID-19, developed in collaboration of Scalefocus with four other IT companies (Software Group, Information Service, SAS, ESRI). It can be found also at <https://data.egov.bg/> - the state-ran Open data portal that gives access to Bulgarian public data in open and machine-readable format. ViruSafe is an application, which aims to help in solving the equation of how to overcome COVID-19 successfully. This is a private business initiative, and the application has been submitted to Bulgarian government pro bono. The expenditures for its creation are not reported. The project is an example of an effective and timely collaboration between business and government to answer common grand societal challenges.

The application can be used for future pandemics and other humanitarian crises. It is created in a way that enables:

- integration with any platform (Government, private, volunteering, NGO, etc.),
- international use,
- Adding or changing the app languages, terms & conditions and general information without redevelopment,
- GDPR compliance

Next Mrs Silvia Stumpf presented both tackled policy instruments - COMPETITIVENESS AND INNOVATION IN ENTERPRISES 2020-2027 and INNOVATION STRATEGY FOR INTELIGENT SPECIALISATION (RIS3). She presented the work done in relation to the improvement achieved for RIS3 because the funding instruments relevant to the further improvement of home care and the more intensive penetration of innovation in home care are closely linked with and are dependable on the RIS3 thematic areas, their pre-formulated priority directions.

The project for the new RIS3 was presented, the objectives, the thematic areas, the priority sub-areas and their relationship with the development of home care innovations, It was reported by Mrs Silvia Stumpf, as a regular member of the RIS3 improvement official working group, that in relation to the identified needs for innovations in healthcare, it is proposed to add the texts "digital innovations in healthcare" within the thematic area "Informatics and ICT".

In the wrap sessions participants agreed that the COVID-19 crisis revealed serious gaps in Bulgaria, especially in the sector of home care. The need for introducing more digital innovations in home care procedures and services and the opportunities given by more innovative ICT solutions was discussed. Mrs Silvia Stumpf and Business agency team presented the good practices collected by partners and underlined the possibilities and required conditions for transfer in Bulgaria. The



enlargement of the sub-thematic areas related to homecare in RIS3 was discussed and further steps towards amending the conditions for more digital innovations in home care reviewed. The high value of HOCARE project for Bulgarian innovation ecosystem related to home care was pointed out.

