

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

January 2021

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ABOUT US

Allied for Startups DTx started in 2019 with the aim of enhancing the policy environment and reducing barriers for startups in the European healthcare ecosystem. Since then, we have been building a network of startup entrepreneurs and collaborating with health care stakeholders to:

- Ensure that EU policies benefit startups in healthcare
- Create opportunities for entrepreneurs to engage with policymakers
- Connect stakeholders, discuss challenges and facilitate cooperation
- Lead policy dialogues around digital health policies
- Promote research and opinion on digital health

Our members are innovative digital health startups who are not only scaling solutions that contribute to the digital transformation but are also interested in being a part of conversations shaping the future of healthcare.

Our first annual report provides an overview of our activities and engagements of the year.

STARTUP CHAMPIONS



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND OUTPUTS

INSTITUTIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Contributing to the policy dialogue



We have become a member of the European Commission's [eHealth Stakeholder Group](#) and have been actively participating in it.



We have contributed to consultations like the European Health Data Space.



We share feedback from our members when we bilaterally engage with the European Commission and Members of the European Parliament

REPORTS

Discussing key challenges and sharing recommendations for empowering innovation



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Bringing digital health startups, policy makers and other stakeholders together



COMMUNICATIONS

Informing and raising awareness

20

[Newsletters](#)

16

[Articles](#)

7

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[APCO podcast](#)

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TELEMEDICINE IN EUROPE

CHALLENGE

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused a sharp increase in demand for online consultations. Venture capital funding for telemedicine has more than tripled in Q1 2020. However, outdated regulatory frameworks obstruct telemedicine accessibility and startups' potential to scale.

ACTIONS

- We interviewed telemedicine startup founders to identify the impact of COVID-19 on their business, and the barriers the telemedicine sector is facing.
- Published a report [Telemedicine in Europe: Opportunities and Challenges](#), which lays down 6 recommendations for policy makers to support telemedicine's uptake.
- Produced a series of short videos, [Conversations with Telemedicine Startup Entrepreneurs](#), to share their impressive stories and perspectives on policy.

FINDINGS

- The pandemic advanced the adoption of telemedicine services by at least 5 years. However, the private sector is adopting telemedicine at a much faster pace than the public sector.
- Founders' recommendations focus on establishing clear frameworks for delivering and reimbursing teleconsultations, standardisations of eHealth services, enabling e-Prescriptions and exchange of EHR across Europe.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS

1.

Legal clarity - A clear, permanent legal framework encourages doctors to adopt telemedicine solutions

2.

Reimbursement mechanisms - Reimbursements by statutory health insurances should be on par with in-person visits.

3.

E-prescriptions - Every patient needs to have a secure and interoperable online medical file

4.

Electronic health records - Accessible, interoperable and portable electronic health records unlock the flow of medical data

5.

Incentives for doctors - Supporting doctors accelerates the adoption of telemedicine

6.

Support for startups - Startups need support to continue developing top notch solutions

CONVERSATIONS WITH STARTUP ENTREPRENEURS



"Telemedicine has confirmed its place and interest. The challenge now is to maintain and continue its development in good conditions for patients and for doctors."

Dr. Elias Dagher, Founder of Consulib

COVID-19 & STARTUPS

CHALLENGE

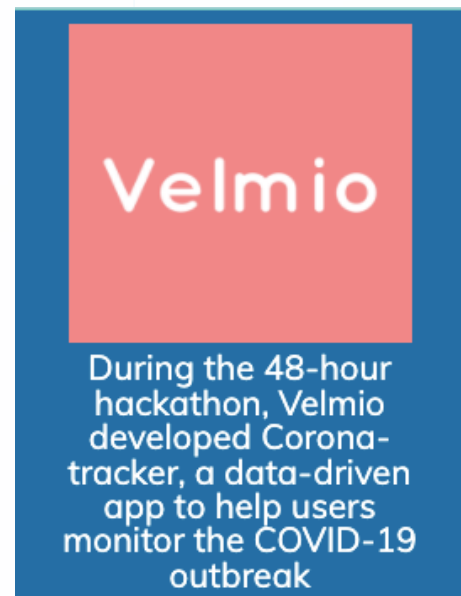
The COVID-19 pandemic had unprecedented economic and social implications. In the first months of the health crisis, 20% of startups pivoted to tackle the pandemic, including digital health startups who helped save lives. It is vital to include them in the post-COVID recovery plans.

ACTIONS

- We engaged digital health startups to collect their feedback on the impact of COVID-19 and shared their contributions.
- Published [COVID-19 & digital health startups: an overview](#), showcasing our members who quickly adopted their solutions to address the pandemic.
- The AFS COVID-19 Working Group published [Startups' Recommendations for the post-COVID-19 recovery](#), a handbook that provides recommendations in the fields of investment, talent and policy.

HIGHLIGHTS

- In response to [AFS requests](#), the European Commission adopted an extension of the State Aid Temporary Framework to enable support for startups in the EU.
- The Next Generation EU recovery instrument and the EU4Health programme outlines digital transition as one of the key priorities. We encourage policy makers to tap into the potential of startups by investing and creating a hospitable policy environment.



"Europe should rethink its positioning. We have everything that is needed: research, innovation and well-trained professionals. But startups need the right support because, without us, the future we have been thinking of and working on is going to disappear."

Xavier Palomer, Founder of Psious

BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN STARTUPS AND POLICYMAKERS

CHALLENGE

Digital health startups have the potential to be key contributors to the digitalisation of healthcare. However, they have limited resources to navigate complex regulation. It is essential to engage in dialogue and build partnerships with all stakeholders in healthcare to build consensus and reduce barriers.

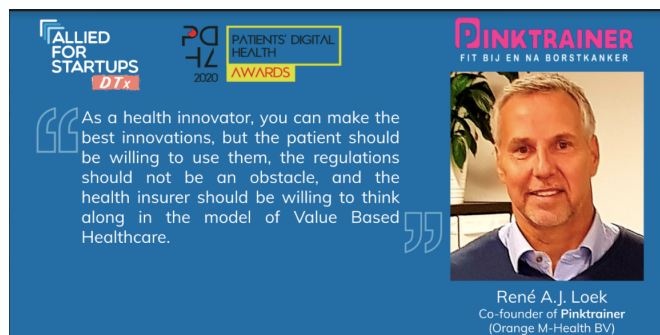
ACTIONS

- We partnered with the [Patients' Digital Health Awards](#), an initiative that fosters connections between startups and Patient Associations, and brings spotlight to digital health entrepreneurs. The first European edition attracted innovators from 13 countries.
- We hosted a webinar [“Digital health innovation & startups during COVID-19 and beyond”](#) with MEP Brando Benifei, bringing together the award-winning innovators, policy makers and patient associations for a discussion about key challenges the digital health sector is facing.



FINDINGS

- Startups' needs include improving access to health data and developing a European framework for reimbursement of digital health solutions.
- For startups, patient engagement throughout the product development process is crucial to success. For us, building bridges with all actors in the ecosystem strengthens advocacy impact.



"Digital health has enormous potential but the chances of success for startups depend on the capability of the EU and the Member States to enable their solutions to thrive".

Brando Benifei, Member of the European Parliament

PERSPECTIVES FOR 2021

As the digitisation of healthcare is accelerating at an unprecedented speed, digital health policy has become a top priority in policy-making in the European Union and across the world. Digital health startups play an important role in transforming our health care systems, improving patient outcomes and enhancing clinical decision-making.

Improving health data access and exchange, regulating AI, increasing the uptake of digital tools, and cross-border interoperability of healthcare systems are key goals of digital health agendas and conversations that will shape the regulatory landscape for digital health innovation years to come.

Digital health funding broke a record this year with \$14.8 billion in global venture capital investment in 2020, and the market is expected to grow exponentially in the coming years. Member State policies also play a vital part in creating a favourable investment environment. For example, the new Digital Healthcare Act, adopted in Germany this year, enabled reimbursements for digital health apps by statutory insurances and prescriptions of digital products to patients. Developing a more coordinated EU approach would help scale such best practices across Europe.

At Allied for Startups, we will scale-up our advocacy, outreach and stakeholder engagement activities to bring the voice of digital health startups to policy-making. Our growing membership and the seat at the Commission's eHealth Stakeholder Group empowers us to set ambitious goals for 2021.



"Let's foster innovations and fresh thinking in med tech and digital health industry with clear pathways for regulatory clearances. Good practices, clear guidance and transparency in all decision making, that is what we need right now!"

Anna-Maria Henell
CEO and Founder of Disior



"We expect more clarity on a regulatory framework for implementing AI within digital health to accelerate novel use-cases for DTx solutions."

Kumara Prasad Palanivel
Co-Founder of PatchAI

Ecosystem partners



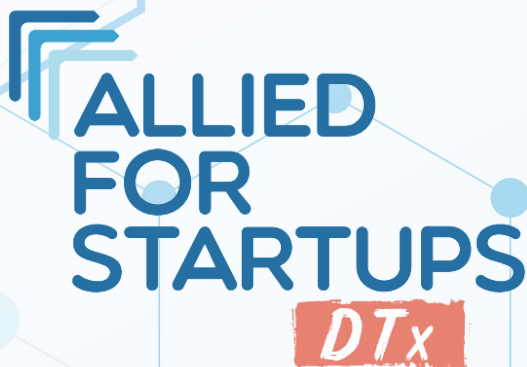
Swiss
Healthcare
Startups



Initiatives we support



EUROPEAN
AI POLICY
CONFERENCE



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