

## POLICY MAPPING ON EHEALTH POLICIES AND INITIATIVES (INCLUDING ON CANCER CARE) IN **SLOVENIA**

This Country Factsheet was prepared for the eCAN Joint Action. It is prefilled with publicly available information and was sent for review to country experts on eHealth and cancer care. The Country Factsheet serves as the basis for the preparation of an overview of eCAN relevant policies and initiatives in all EU and EEA countries.

**eCAN is a Joint Action (JA) of 16 partners in EU-Member States on ‘Strengthening eHealth including telemedicine and remote monitoring for health care systems for cancer prevention and care’.** eCAN aims to bring the benefits of eHealth to all citizens and patients across EU-Member States (MS) focusing on cancer prevention and care. There is a need to harmonize telemedicine regulations and to explore the efficacy of teleconsultation programs and telemonitoring in the cancer field.

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The country factsheet includes chapters on:

- 1 definition
- 2 governance
- 3 strategies/policies
- 4 legislation
- 5 cancer specific eHealth solutions

Any questions? – Please get in touch via [ecan@goeg.at](mailto:ecan@goeg.at).

# POLICY MAPPING ON EHEALTH POLICIES AND INITIATIVES (INCLUDING ON CANCER CARE) IN SLOVENIA

## 1 DEFINITIONS

Table 1 : Deviations in the use of international definitions for eHealth terms - Slovenia

Term	Definition	Deviation
eHealth	The WHO defines eHealth as « the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) for health ». It also says that « eHealth is the transfer of health resources and healthcare by electronic means. » <sup>1</sup>	No deviation from definition. <sup>2</sup>
mHealth	« Mobile health (mHealth) is defined by the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Observatory for eHealth as « medical and public health practice supported by mobile devices, such as mobile phones, patient monitoring devices, personal digital assistants (PDAs), and other wireless devices ». <sup>3</sup>	No deviation from definition.
dHealth	The EU defines digital health (dHealth) and care as referring to « tools and services that use information and communication technologies (ICTs) to improve prevention, diagnosis, treatment, monitoring and management of health-related issues and to monitor and manage lifestyle-habits that impact health ». <sup>4</sup> The WHO defines digital health as « the field of knowledge and practice associated with the development and use of digital technologies to improve health. Digital health expands the concept of eHealth to include digital consumers, with a wider range of smart-devices and connected equipment. It also encompasses other uses of digital technologies for health such as the Internet of things, artificial intelligence, big data and robotics. » <sup>5</sup>	No deviation from definition.
telehealth	The WHO defines telehealth broader than telemedicine « as it includes computer-assisted telecommunications to support management, surveillance, literature and access to medical knowledge. » <sup>6</sup>	No deviation from definition.
telemedicine	The EU Commission defines telemedicine as follows (EU Commission definition, COM(2008)689) : « Telemedicine is the provision of health care services, using ICT, in situations where the health professional and the patient (or two health professionals) are not in the same location. It involves the secure transmission of medical data and information, through text, sound, images or other forms needed for the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and follow-up of patients. » <sup>7</sup>	No deviation from definition.

<sup>1</sup> [6. eHealth, Factsheet for European Parliament \(who.int\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MZ/DOKUMENTI/O-MINISTRSTVU/Slovenija-E-zdravje-za-bolj-zdravo-druzbo-v2.pdf> (p106)

<sup>3</sup> World Health Organization *Frequently asked questions on Global Task Force on digital health for TB and its work.* [2017-02-27]. <http://www.who.int/tb/areas-of-work/digital-health/faq/en/> *webcite*. In *mHealth Assessment: Conceptualization of a Global Framework - PMC (nih.gov)*

<sup>4</sup> [Events - Smart4Health](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Digital health EURO \(who.int\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Telehealth – DigitalHealthEurope](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Telemedicine – DigitalHealthEurope](#)

Term	Definition	Deviation
teleconsultation	PAHO describes teleconsultation (also sometimes referred to as remote consultation or telehealth), as « interactions that happen between a clinician and a patient for the purpose of providing diagnostic or therapeutic advice through electronic means. » <sup>8</sup>	No deviation from definition.
health app	Essén et al. 2022 define health apps as « a computer program or software application (designed to run on a mobile device) “intended to be used specifically for managing, maintaining, or improving the health of individual persons, or the delivery of care” (ISO <a href="https://www.iso.org/standard/78182.html">https://www.iso.org/standard/78182.html</a> (2021), p 5). »	No deviation from definition.

### Further information:

- The Central Registry of Patient Data (CRPD) is the national platform for storage and exchange of Electronic Health Records.
- Electronic Health Record (EHR) is defined as digital document/data record aimed to support provision of healthcare service. For the definition also refer to the proposal of the regulation of European Health Data Space.
- zVEM is a patient portal and mobile application available to all citizens of Slovenia.<sup>9</sup>

## 2 GOVERNANCE

Table 2 : Overview on eHealth governance - Slovenia

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
Is there a Ministry or State Secretariat explicitly in charge of eHealth/dHealth? If so, which Ministry ?	Yes	The Ministry of Health (Ministrstvo za zdravje) is in charge. <sup>10</sup> The National institute of Public Health (Nacionalni inštitut za javno zdravje, NIJZ) is authorized by Healthcare Databases Act to develop and maintain the national eHealth system (see below).
Does the Ministry who oversees health care also have a specific Department or Unit in charge of eHealth/dHealth?	Yes	The Directorate for Digitization in Healthcare (Direktorat za digitalizacijo v zdravstvu) is in charge. <sup>11</sup>
Is there a national eHealth governance board?	No	According to national regulations (Healthcare Databases Act), the National Institute of Public Health (NIJZ) is responsible for development and maintenance of the national eHealth system.
Is there a public eHealth agency such as Elga GmbH in Austria or ANS in France? At which level (national, regional)? Which functions does this agency cover?	Yes	The National Institute of Public Health (NIJZ) acts as public eHealth agency. It covers public health, national healthcare databases and management of the national eHealth system. <sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www3.paho.org/ish/images/docs/covid-19-teleconsultations-en.pdf?ua=1>

<sup>9</sup> <https://zvem.ezdrav.si/gost>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.si/drzavni-organi/ministrstva/ministrstvo-za-zdravje/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.si/drzavni-organi/ministrstva/ministrstvo-za-zdravje/o-ministrstvu/direktorat-za-razvoj-zdravstvenega-sistema/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.gov.si/zbirke/projekti-in-programi/ezdravje/> and <https://ezdrav.si/>

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
<p>Are dHealth / eHealth tools in the outpatient sector publicly paid or covered in your benefits package (e.g. by sickness fund or national health service). If yes, please describe how.</p>	Yes	<p>The usage of the national eHealth system is covered within the universal coverage. Slovenia has a state health insurance service for the entire population (ZZZS – Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia). National eHealth system is available for the entire population irrespective of the insurance.</p> <p>The zVEM portal<sup>13</sup> allows users, i.e., patients to access their Patient Summaries and other healthcare documentation from the Central Register of Patient Data, eAppointments, eReferrals or ePrescription.</p> <p>eHealth services are available to all public and private healthcare providers and to all patients irrespective of insurance or payments.</p>
<p>Are dHealth / eHealth tools in the inpatient sector automatically covered in your benefits package or do you need to pay extra (e.g. for telehealth consultations or telereha) compared to standard treatments?</p>	Yes	<p>There is no national telehealth infrastructure. Only telephone consultations are commonly used in inpatient sector.</p>
<p>Are there any comprehensive cancer centres focussing on eHealth or telehealth treatments? If yes, which ones and for which specific fields?</p>	No	<p>There are no specific centres focused on eHealth or telehealth treatments of cancer. National eHealth system is beneficial to support cancer treatments by supporting exchange of EHR and informing patients via access to EHR (patient portal and mobile application zVEM).</p> <p>In addition, the Central Registry of Patient Data is connected to the Cancer Registry<sup>14</sup> enabling authorised controllers of the Cancer Registry to access EHR of the registered patients, facilitating collection of data to be recorded. Accordingly, the national eHealth system helps to improve integrity and quality of data in the Cancer Registry.</p>

<sup>13</sup> <https://zvem.ezdrav.si/en>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.onko-i.si/rrs>

### 3 STRATEGIES/POLICIES

Table 3 : Overview on strategies and policies for eHealth and cancer care - Slovenia

Question	Answer	Comments/Expérience
Is there a national eHealth strategy?	Yes	The 'Slovenia - e-health for a healthier society (REFORM/SC2021/061) Strategy of November 2022' is the national eHealth strategy and 'is implemented within the framework of the Support Program structural reforms (SRSP) of the European Commission. The project is intended the development of the e-Health Strategy and the investment plan, which will outline the goals and e-health development priorities in Slovenia for the period 2022-2027. <sup>15</sup>
If yes, which stakeholder groups have been included in drafting the national eHealth strategy?	Several	Healthcare providers, policy makers and payers were included in the process.
Are there regional eHealth strategies? If so, can you indicate whether in all regions or only some? Can you provide some (exemplary) documents ?	No	No further information available.
If yes, which stakeholder groups have been included in drafting such regional strategy/ies?	N/A	No further information available.
Are there strategy/ies explicitly referring to / including eHealth cancer care?	No	No further information available.
If not, are there discussions ongoing to develop a national eHealth strategy?	No	A general digital health strategy is in place, not specific for cancer.
Is there a National Cancer Plan? And does it refer to eHealth?	Yes	The National Cancer Plan <sup>16</sup> refers only to the introduction of an e-order form for cytopathology laboratories, patho-histology laboratories and cancer registry information system.
In the light of the EU „Beating Cancer Plan” – are there any recent plans to update or modify existing plans? If yes, what is the timeline?	N/A	No further information available.
Are there any indicators in eHealth policy or national programmes on cancer care measuring the progress of the use of eHealth in cancer care?	No	No further information available.
Are there any other cancer care specific eHealth initiatives, f.e. by other stakeholders than policy makers / public authorities?	No	No further information available.

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MZ/DOKUMENTI/O-MINISTRSTVU/Slovenija-E-zdravje-za-bolj-zdravo-druzbo-v2.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.gov.si/assets/ministrstva/MZ/DOKUMENTI/DJZ-Preventiva-in-skrb-za-zdravje/nenalezljive-bolezni/DPOR-2022-2026/Drzavni-program-obvladovanja-raka-2022-2026.pdf>

## 4 LEGISLATION

Table 4 : Overview on eHealth and cancer legislation - Slovenia

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
How would you evaluate the current state of legislation of eHealth in your country in general?	N/A	No further information available.
Is there legislation on how to use telemedicine in general?	Yes, in general	A comprehensive legal framework has not been adopted yet. Telemedicine is regulated generally in line with the regulations for the provision of health services in Slovenia by the Slovenian Health Services Act, Articles 1(3) and 3(3). However, a potential problem for the provision of telehealth services is Article 20 of the Slovenian Patient Right's Act which stipulates that it is a patient's right to have a doctor give an explanation whilst in direct contact with the patient. Telepharmacy is subject to the regulations set forth in Articles 4(1) (XVIII) and 6(1) (VI) of Slovenian Pharmacy Practice Act. Moreover, Article 19(2) (XVI) of the Slovenian Rules sets out the conditions for providing pharmacy practice. And there is a law about data collection in the field of healthcare. <sup>17</sup>
Is there legislation explicitly referring to cancer prevention?	No	Only Health Care and Health Insurance. <sup>18</sup>
Is there legislation explicitly referring to / including eHealth cancer care?	No	No further information available.
If yes, which of these legislation(s) do you consider most important in the context of eHealth and cancer care? And why?	N/A	No further information available.
If no, are there any particular reasons or barriers to the fact that there is no or only limited cancer specific eHealth legislation (i.e., discussions still ongoing, conflicting opinions or other).	N/A	No further information available.
What could be improved or would need to be done to improve these legislations for eHealth in cancer care in your country?	N/A	No further information available.

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO1419#>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.pisrs.si/Pis.web/pregledPredpisa?id=ZAKO213>

## 5 CANCER SPECIFIC EHEALTH SOLUTIONS

Table 5 : Overview on cancer specific eHealth solutions in use – Slovenia

Note: No information available.

Area of application/ type of solutions	Login Websites	Apps	Webinars	Multi-disciplinary teleconferences (HCP-HPC)	Teleconsultation (HCP-patient)	Telemonitoring via devices	Other, please specify
<b>Ecosystem</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Prevention of Cancer</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Treatment of Cancer</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>'Living with cancer'</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Rehabilitation from Cancer</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Palliative Cancer Care</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 6 : Number of eHealth solutions available and in use – Slovenia

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
How many eHealth solutions (in the sense of medical devices and thus 'authority approved/certified') solutions are existing currently in your country in the context of cancer care/treatment?	N/A	No further information available
Is there a website or other information on solutions that are recommended to the public for use (e.g. a selection of health apps that are recommended to cancer patients or in general)?	No	No further information available
Can you give an estimation on how the split between private and public apps are available? Give an estimate percentage of public solutions.	N/A	No further information available
How can providers and patients assess if the apps are reliable? Is there a certification or quality approval procedure in place? If yes, which kind of procedure?	N/A	No further information available
How many Health Care Providers use such solutions? Which sector uses rather which types of solutions?	N/A	No further information available