



## Good practice

# SHAPES: Smart & Healthy Ageing through People Engaging in Supportive Systems

**Working Group:** Health

**Member States and other countries:** Belgium, Cyprus, Czechia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom

**Thematic areas:** Digital and Physical Connectivity, Quality of Life and Equal Access to Services

## Basic project details

**Lead organisation:**

Assisting Living and Learning (ALL) Institute, Maynooth University - Ireland

**Partner organisations:** 35 partner organisations ([see under useful sources below](#))

**Project duration:** November 2019 - December 2023



## Overview and objectives

The SHAPES project aimed to create the first European open ecosystem for the large-scale deployment of digital technologies that support healthy and independent living for older individuals, improving their quality of life. It integrated smart digital technologies to collect and analyse health, environmental, and lifestyle information, providing personalised solutions while ensuring data protection and trust. Engaging over 2 000 older individuals in 15 pilot sites across 10 EU Member States, SHAPES collaborated with key stakeholders to enhance health, independence, and care system sustainability. Its multidisciplinary approach spanned 7 themes, validating cost-effective, scalable innovations for in-home and external support. SHAPES also developed business models and policy recommendations to expand the market for active and healthy ageing solutions across Europe. The project's main goal was to facilitate long-term healthy and active ageing and the maintenance of a high-quality standard

of life by integrating smart digital technologies. The project enhanced efficiency in health and care delivery across Europe, improving the quality of life for older individuals and their caregivers. SHAPES engaged over 2 000 older individuals in pilot sites to validate cost-efficient innovations. It also developed value-based business models and recommendations for the widespread adoption of digital health solutions.

## Context

The project addressed the challenges of an ageing population, including the increased risk of chronic health conditions, reduced quality of life, and social isolation. It aimed to provide solutions that enabled older individuals to remain active, healthy, and independent in their own homes.

## Target groups

The target groups of the SHAPES project were older individuals in Europe, healthcare providers and caregivers, researchers and developers in digital health technologies.

## Actions

The project involved several types of actions, including developing a project handbook and quality plan, designing a Digital Ethnography Methodology, and establishing trends in health and care delivery in Europe. The project also focused on developing the SHAPES Platform architecture, matching digital solutions to pilot themes, and creating an evaluation methodology. Additionally, the project involved building the SHAPES Ecosystem, launching open calls for innovative collaborators, and establishing a dissemination plan to enhance project visibility.

### Financial allocation

**Total budget:** EUR 21 000 000

**EU co-funding:** Yes

**Sources of funding:** Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme



### Working Group Insights

“Smart & Healthy Ageing through People Engaging in Supportive Systems (SHAPES) SHAPES’ development of digital solutions for healthy ageing and independent living shows particular relevance for depopulating, peripheral, and lagging regions. SHAPES’ emphasis on scalable and cost-effective innovations, combined with innovative business models for widespread adoption, offers the potential for improving service accessibility and quality in these areas, thus contributing to both quality of life and equal access to services.

SHAPES contributed to attracting, developing, and retaining talent in regions by fostering an innovative ecosystem around digital health and ageing. By enhancing regional capabilities in health and social care through the integration of digital technologies, SHAPES makes these areas more attractive for skilled

professionals. The project offered opportunities for contributing to smart solutions addressing population ageing, thereby stimulating professional development and creating a vibrant environment that encourages talent retention within these regions”.

**ANDRZEJ KLIMCZUK**

PhD, Assistant Professor at SGH Warsaw School of Economics

## Results

The SHAPES project has achieved several important results, including the creation of a Digital Ethnography Methodology and the establishment of trends in health and care delivery in Europe. Additionally, the project has developed the initial architecture for the SHAPES Platform, matched digital solutions to pilot themes, and created an evaluation methodology. The project has also built the SHAPES Ecosystem and launched open calls for collaborators.

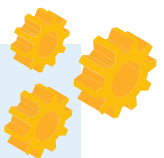


## Success factors

Success factors for the SHAPES project included in-depth knowledge of the healthcare sector and its dynamics, effective communication with a wide ecosystem of healthcare actors, and the adoption of a co-creation approach for developing key deliverables. Intense project and stakeholder management, strong involvement from leading institutions, and the existence of an active network of regions managed by ProMIS (Programma Mattone Internazionale Salute) also contributed significantly.

## Implementation challenges

Key challenges encountered included ensuring data protection, consistent quality across multiple pilot sites, and scalability of innovations. When encountering challenges in scaling digital health solutions across different healthcare settings, the initiative focused on standardising its platform architecture to facilitate wider adoption.



## The conclusion of our expert Andrzej Klimczuk, PhD, Assistant Professor at SGH Warsaw School of Economics

“SHAPES is transforming healthy ageing with smart, scalable digital solutions—empowering older individuals to live independently while enhancing regional health and social care systems to attract and retain talent”.

## Useful sources

**Official website:** <https://shapes2020.eu/>

**Partner organisations:** <https://shapes2020.eu/partners/>

<https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/857159/reporting>

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/good-practices/shapes-digital-services-for-active-and-healthy-ageing#resources-needed>

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/horizon-results-platform/65280>

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