

# POLICY MAPPING ON eHEALTH POLICIES AND INITIATIVES (INCLUDING ON CANCER CARE) IN **LATVIA**

This Country Factsheet was first prepared for the eCAN Joint Action and updated for the eCAN+ Joint Action. It is pre-filled 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.

The Joint Action '**Enhancing digital capabilities of cancer centres in Europe to improve prevention and care**' (eCAN Plus) aims to bring the benefits of digital health to all citizens, patients and health care professionals to improve cancer prevention and care across Europe. The rising use of telemedicine and innovative legal framework of European Health Data Space offer opportunity to better address population health needs. Built on the experience of the eCAN JA, this project contributes to integrating digital tools and improving health data use for the benefit of cancer patients. The JA foresees to bring lasting impact to different targeted audiences. The project's expected outputs pave the way for a wider rollout of **eHealth in oncology** but also supports decision-makers by providing recommendations and guidelines.

This country factsheet was originally **pre-filled in 2023/2024** with publicly available information by

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The country factsheet includes chapters on:

- 1 definitions**
- 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 LATVIA

## 1 DEFINITIONS

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

Term	Definition	Deviation
eHealth	The WHO defines eHealth as « cost-effective and secure use of information and communications technologies in support of health and health-related fields, including health-care services, health surveillance, health literature, and health education, knowledge and research ». <sup>1</sup>	The term “eHealth” as defined by WHO is not widely used in Latvia; in this context the term “digital health” is used. However, the name of the national digital health system and patient portal is E-veselība (E-health).
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>2</sup>	Not a commonly used term in Latvia.
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>3</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>4</sup>	No deviation from the EU definition, the recently approved Digital Health Strategy till 2029 <sup>5</sup> defines digital health as following: tools and services that use ICT to improve prevention, diagnosis, treatment, monitoring and health and lifestyle management. Digital health has the potential to introduce innovations, improve the quality and access to healthcare and implement preventive measures, as well as increase the overall efficiency of the health sector. The definition for digital health is also included in the draft law ‘Amendments to the Medical Treatment Law’ <sup>6</sup> as digital health - tools and services that use information and communication technologies to improve prevention, diagnosis, treatment, monitoring and management in the field of health.
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>7</sup>	Not a commonly used term in Latvia.

<sup>1</sup> [WHO EMRO - eHealth](#)

<sup>2</sup> [mHealth Assessment: Conceptualization of a Global Framework - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#), [mHealth](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Events - Smart4Health](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Digital health EURO \(who.int\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> Digital Health Strategy till 2029 (in Latvian): [https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv/legal\\_acts/ca84fcc7-3f49-4ac1-a75a-418b6da1f483](https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv/legal_acts/ca84fcc7-3f49-4ac1-a75a-418b6da1f483)

<sup>6</sup> [25-TA-453](#)

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

Term	Definition	Deviation
telemedicine	The EU Commission defines telemedicine as follows (EU Commission definition, COM(2008)689) : « Telemedicine is the provision of health care services, through the use of 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>8</sup>	No deviation from the EU definition. The Medical Treatment Law <sup>9</sup> sets the following definition of telemedicine: Telemedicine - provision of remote health care service, by using information and communication technologies. It includes safe resending of medical data and information necessary for medical treatment in the form of text, sound, pictures or other. The recently approved Digital Health Strategy till 2029 <sup>10</sup> defines telemedicine as following: the provision of health care services by using ICT in situations where the health care provider (one or more) and the patient (or another health care provider) are in two different locations. It involves the secure transmission of information and medical data exchange through text, sound, image or other forms for prevention, consultations, diagnosis and treatment. Telemedicine has several forms, such as telemonitoring, telemanipulation and teleconsultations between doctor and patient or between two or more health care specialists with the aim of consulting on medical issues.
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>11</sup>	No definition for teleconsultation; understood as remote consultations as one form of telemedicine (see previous 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 definition.

**Further information:**

- No further information identified.

<sup>8</sup> [Telemedicine – DigitalHealthEurope](#)

<sup>9</sup> <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/44108-medical-treatment-law>

<sup>10</sup> Digital Health Strategy till 2029 (in Latvian): [https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv/legal\\_acts/ca84fcc7-3f49-4ac1-a75a-418b6da1f483](https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv/legal_acts/ca84fcc7-3f49-4ac1-a75a-418b6da1f483)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www3.paho.org/ish/images/docs/covid-19-teleconsultations-en.pdf?ua=1>

## 2 GOVERNANCE

Table 2 : Overview on eHealth governance - Latvia

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
Is there a Ministry or State Secretariat explicitly in charge of eHealth/dHealth in place? If so, which Ministry?	Yes	The Ministry of Health has a Deputy Secretary of State for Digitization and Change Management <sup>12</sup> who is responsible for digital health policy issues. <sup>13</sup>
Does the Ministry who oversees health care also have a specific Department or Unit in charge of eHealth/dHealth?	No	The structure of the Ministry of Health does not include a unit dealing with e-health; however there is a Deputy Secretary of State for Digitization and Change Management (see above) <sup>14</sup> , leading expert on digitalization and Information and Communication Technology Project Manager are direct subordinates of it. eHealth/dHealth issues in the Ministry of Health is split among previously mentioned specialists as well the Cross-Sectoral Policy Coordination Division.
Is there a national eHealth governance board in place?	Yes	The Digital Health Council is a consultative institution, the purpose of which is to involve health sector specialists, state and local government institutions, information and communication technology experts and organizations representing patients' interests in the creation and development of an open digital health ecosystem oriented towards patients and other users in order to improve the quality of healthcare, accessibility, cost-effectiveness and convenience for those involved at all levels of healthcare. <sup>15</sup>
Is there a public eHealth agency in place? At which level (national, regional)? Which functions does this agency cover?	No	In 2025 SIA "Latvijas Digitālās veselības centrs" was established and overtook the functions of the implementation of digital health policy from National Health Service. SIA "Latvijas Digitālās veselības centrs" ensures the implementation of the digital health policy. Within the framework of the implementation of the digital health policy, SIA "Latvijas Digitālās veselības centrs" performs the following tasks: 1) develops the health information system and electronic services in accordance with the digital health policy, sector priorities and user needs in order to ensure the availability of patient health data electronically; 2) determines the requirements to ensure high-quality data exchange between the health information system and patient data processing information systems; 3) develops, organises and coordinates the data exchange between the health information system and other state information systems in the health sector, as well as develops cross-border data exchange through the national e-health contact point; 4) provides advisory support on issues of patient health data processing in the health information system to users of the health information system and their representative associations and foundations, state administration institutions and other institutions that process, including creating and using health data, electronic processing of patient health data in the field; 5) manages national-level digital solutions in the health sector, developing and maintaining an up-to-date target architecture for the health sector domain;
If no, are there any other public institutions working in the field of eHealth?	Yes	

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.vm.gov.lv/lv/veselibas-ministrijas-vadiba>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.eveseliba.gov.lv/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.vm.gov.lv/lv/veselibas-ministrijas-strukturshema>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.vm.gov.lv/lv/digitalas-veselibas-padome>

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
		<p>6) ensures the maintenance and development of the information and communication technology infrastructure of the national information systems in the health sector, concluding contracts with system administrators;</p> <p>7) provides proposals on the priorities and objectives of the development of the health information system and the national information systems in the health sector and develops action plans for the development, management and maintenance of these national information systems;</p> <p>8) attracts investments to promote the digitization of patient health data and the development of digital services.</p>
<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>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The eHealth portal is publicly funded, therefore there is no extra cost for the patient. Remote consultations are included in the list of publicly funded procedures.</p> <p>On the eHealth portal<sup>16</sup>, residents can currently:</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>	<p>Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• view information about family doctor;</li> <li>• indicate contact information and contact person for communication;</li> <li>• determine the access of other E-health users to their medical information;</li> <li>• access the health data of their children or wards;</li> <li>• view and print e-prescriptions , e-disability sheets, etc. issued to a patient or dependents;</li> <li>• access e-referrals, Cancer Card (contains data necessary for population cancer register);</li> <li>• view data on vaccination. Since 2024 all health care institutions are obliged to register all vaccination data electronically and provide them in the national eHealth portal;</li> <li>• access visual diagnostic examination results and reports (partially);</li> <li>• access laboratory examination results (partially). Since 2024 all health care institutions are obliged to provide laboratory results in the national eHealth portal,</li> <li>• access hospital discharge reports (starting 2025, hospitals that provide state funded health care are obliged to submit patient discharge reports to e-health system)</li> <li>• apply for the European Health Insurance Card;</li> <li>• manage permits for the use of organs and tissues for transplantation, use of the body after death, dissection.</li> </ul> <p>Regarding telehealth consultation there are no extra costs for telehealth consultations.</p>
<p>Are there any comprehensive cancer centres focussing on eHealth or telehealth treatments? If yes, which ones and for which specific fields?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Currently, there is no accredited cancer center in Latvia, but the leading medical institution in the field of oncology is SIA “Rīgas Austrumu klīniskā universitātes slimnīca” (Riga East University Hospital, hereinafter – RAKUS), which in 2021, in cooperation with the Organisation of European Cancer Institutes (hereinafter – OECI), initiated the accreditation process. On January 11, 2022, an agreement on the accreditation of RAKUS (“Accreditation and Designation Programme Agreement”) was concluded between OECI and RAKUS. Latvian Cancer Centre is structure in RAKUS that aims to ensure a unified management and methodological guidance of the field of oncology treatment and care in Latvia, as well as the creation</p>

<sup>16</sup> <https://eveselib.gov.lv/>

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
		of a cooperation network between hospitals specializing in the treatment and care of oncological patients. Its task is to promote a unified approach to cancer diagnostics, treatment and patient support throughout the country. <sup>17</sup>

### Further information:

- No further information identified.

## 3 STRATEGIES/POLICIES

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

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
Is there a national eHealth strategy in place?	Yes	Digital Health Strategy till 2029 <sup>18</sup> was approved on 15.08.2023.
If yes, which stakeholder groups have been included in drafting the national eHealth strategy?	Yes	Pharmacy Association; Association “Resource Center for People with Mental Disorders “ZELDA””; Digital Health Association; HIV Patient Association; Association of Disabled People and Their Friends “Apeiron”; Latvian Association of Pharmacy Owners; Latvian Medical Association; Latvian Organization for Cooperation of People with Special Needs SUSTENTO; Latvian Pharmaceutical Association; Latvian General Practitioner Association; Latvian Young Doctors Association; Latvian Rural Family Physicians Association; Latvian Association of Large Hospitals; Latvian Nurses Association; Latvian Network of Patient Organizations; Latvian Association of Local Governments; Latvian Pensioners Federation; Latvian Rare Disease Alliance; Latvian Hospital Association; Latvian Association of Universities; Latvian Parents Organization “Moms and Dads”; Latvian Dental Association; Oncoalliance; Health Care Employers Association, Children’s Clinical University Hospital, Ministry of Economics, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Welfare, Office of the President of Latvia, University of Latvia, National Health Service, World Health Organization, Cross-Sectoral Coordination Center, Riga City Council, Riga Stradins University, Riga Technical University, Center for Disease Prevention and Control, Health Inspectorate, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development.
Are there regional eHealth strategies? If so, can you indicate whether in all regions or only some? Can you provide some (exemplary) documents ?	No	Latvia has not identified a need to develop different strategies for regions.
If yes, which stakeholder groups have been included in drafting such regional strategy/ies?	N/A	Latvia has no regional digital health strategies.
Are there strategy/ies explicitly referring to / including eHealth cancer care?	Yes	There is no strategy particularly dedicated to eHealth cancer care, however Digital Health Strategy till 2029 <sup>19</sup> includes two tasks related to digitalisation of cancer care: 1.2.2.1 Develop Oncology Patient Registry; 2.5. Ensure electronic processing of oncology patient

<sup>17</sup> Latvijas Vēža centrs - aSlimnīca

<sup>18</sup> Digital Health Strategy till 2029 (in Latvian): [https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv/legal\\_acts/ca84fcc7-3f49-4ac1-a75a-418b6da1f483](https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv/legal_acts/ca84fcc7-3f49-4ac1-a75a-418b6da1f483)

<sup>19</sup> Digital Health Strategy till 2029 (in Latvian): [https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv/legal\\_acts/ca84fcc7-3f49-4ac1-a75a-418b6da1f483](https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv/legal_acts/ca84fcc7-3f49-4ac1-a75a-418b6da1f483)

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
		treatment data in a structured format and data exchange between clinical university hospitals. The health care services improvement plan in the field of oncology 2025-2027 includes following action " Digitalization and IT solutions in healthcare " that includes following measures - Digitize medical documents in the field of oncology, such as epicrisis, prescriptions, treatment side effects, pathologist descriptions, etc., using structured data fields; Develop a unified electronic form for a multidisciplinary team's conclusion on a patient with an oncological disease and create an oncology patient data exchange platform for clinical university hospitals.
If not, are there discussions ongoing to develop a national eHealth strategy?	No	No such plans now, since Digital Health Strategy till 2029 <sup>20</sup> was approved only recently.
Is there a National Cancer Plan in place?	Yes	The health care services improvement plan in the field of oncology 2025-2027 includes following action " Digitalization and IT solutions in healthcare " that includes following measures - Digitize medical documents in the field of oncology, such as discharge - epicrisis, prescriptions, treatment side effects, pathologist descriptions, etc., using structured data fields; Develop a unified electronic form for a multidisciplinary team's conclusion on a patient with an oncological disease and create an oncology patient data exchange platform for clinical university hospitals. It also has action - Ensuring the availability of screening data in the e-health system.
If yes, does the National Cancer Plan refer to eHealth?	Yes	
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?	No	The Health Care Services Improvement Plan in the Field of Oncology for 2025–2027 has been developed taking into account the European Union's strategic objectives in the field of oncology and directly linking national action lines with the objectives and recommendations of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan.
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 such indicators.
Are there any other cancer care specific eHealth initiatives, f.e. by other stakeholders than policy makers / public authorities?	N/A	The Ministry of Health does not collect such information.

### Further information:

- No further information identified.

## 4 LEGISLATION

Table 4 : Overview on eHealth and cancer legislation - Latvia

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
Is there a general legal framework covering eHealth related topics in your country?	Yes	The Medical Treatment Law states that health care is the complex of measures implemented by health care service providers, including telemedicine and activities with medicinal products and medical devices for ensuring, maintaining and renewal of a patient's health. Remote consultations are included in the list of state-funded procedures.
Is there specific legislation on the use of telemedicine?	Yes	

<sup>20</sup> Digital Health Strategy till 2029 (in Latvian): [https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv/legal\\_acts/ca84fcc7-3f49-4ac1-a75a-418b6da1f483](https://tapportals.mk.gov.lv/legal_acts/ca84fcc7-3f49-4ac1-a75a-418b6da1f483)

Question	Answer	Comments/Experience
Is there specific legislation explicitly referring to cancer prevention?	No	Regulation of Cabinet of Ministers Nr. 555 (28.08.2018.) “Procedures for the Organisation of and Payment for Health Care Services” <sup>21</sup> determine the measures of state-organized cancer screening.
Is there specific legislation explicitly referring to / including eHealth in cancer care?	No	No specific legislation on eHealth cancer care, however Rules on the unified electronic information system of the health sector (e-health system) <sup>22</sup> stipulate that electronic data is provided by medical institutions, in accordance with Annex 23 of these rules “Cancer patient card”.

### Further information:

- No further information identified.

## 5 CANCER SPECIFIC eHEALTH SOLUTIONS

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

Area of application/ type of solutions	Login Websites	Apps	Webinars	Multi-disciplinary teleconferences (HCP-HPC)	Teleconsultation (HCP-patient)	Telemonitoring via devices
Ecosystem	-	-	-	-	-	-
Prevention of Cancer	-	-	-	-	Yes	-
Treatment of Cancer	-	-	-	Yes	Yes	-
‘Living with cancer’	Yes <a href="https://onkoalianse.lv/">https://onkoalianse.lv/</a> <a href="https://www.dzivibaskoks.lv/">https://www.dzivibaskoks.lv/</a>	-	-	-	Yes	-
Rehabilitation from Cancer	-	-	-	Yes	-	-
Palliative Cancer Care	-	-	-	Yes	Yes	-

### Further information:

- No further information identified.

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

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?	25	A total of 25 medium and high-risk medical devices have been registered in the Latvian Medical Devices Register - linear accelerators, brachytherapy and radiotherapy planning systems, mammography equipment, tumour biopsy and tumour vascular embolization devices, positron emission tomography / computed tomography (PET/CT) systems.
Is there a website or other information on solutions that are recommended to the public for use (e.g. a	No	The Ministry of Health does not have such information.

<sup>21</sup> <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/301399-procedures-for-the-organisation-of-and-payment-for-health-care-services>

<sup>22</sup> <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/264943-noteikumi-par-vienoto-veselibas-nozares-elektronisko-informacijas-sistemu>

selection of health apps that are recommended to cancer patients or in general)?		
Can you give an estimation on how the split between private and public apps are available? Give an estimate percentage of public solutions.	No	The Ministry of Health does not collect such information.
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?	No	There is no certification or quality approval procedure in place.
How many Health Care Providers use such solutions? Which sector uses rather which types of solutions?	N/A	The Ministry of Health does not collect such information.

**Further information:**

- No further information identified.