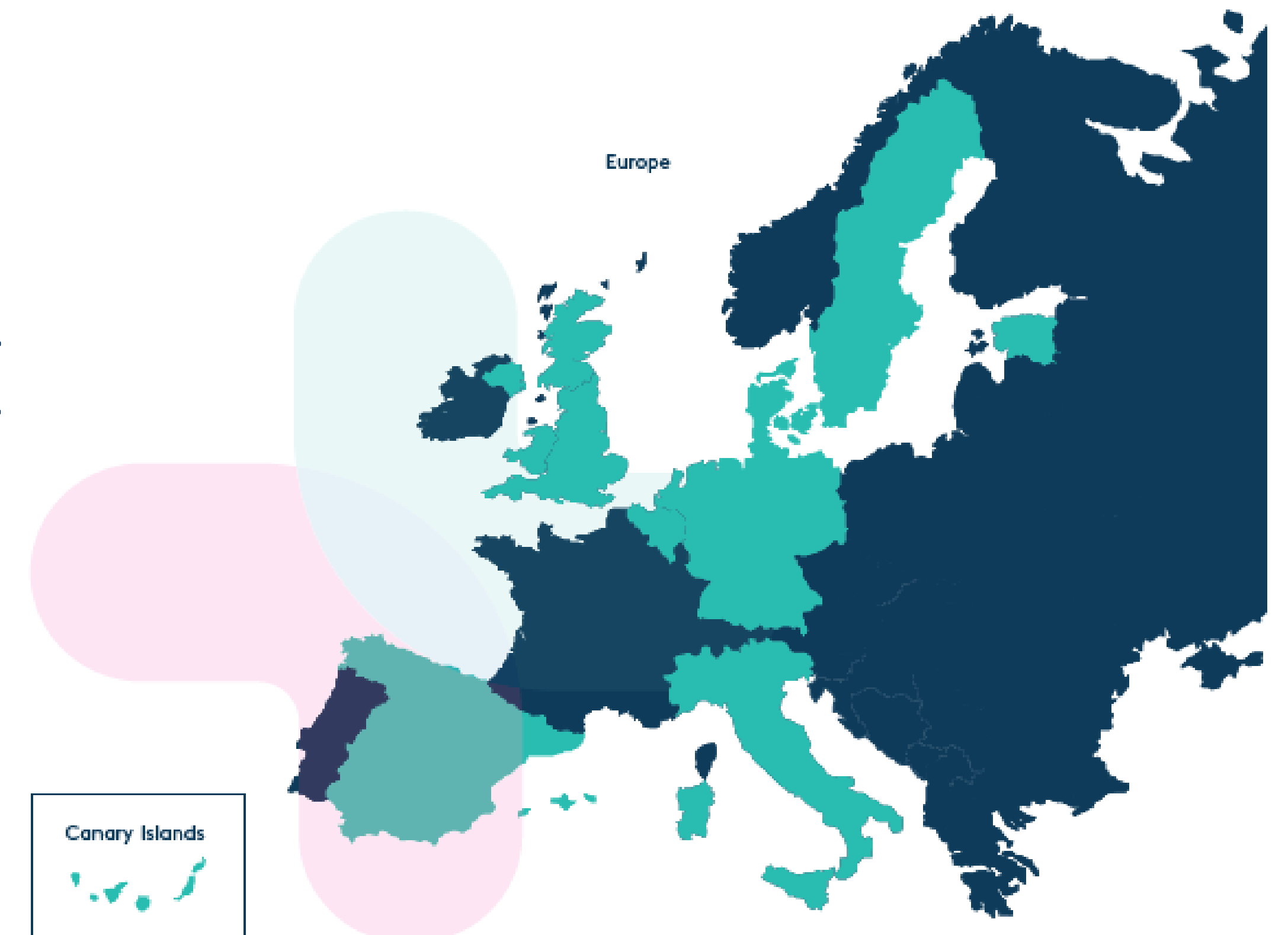


Improving Digital Health Literacy in Europe

Stephan Van den Broucke¹, on behalf of the IC-Health project consortium²

Citizens' digital health literacy is an essential element for successful eHealth deployment. However, citizens often do not have the necessary skills to find, understand, and appraise online health information and to apply their knowledge to make health related decisions. Digitally health literate citizens can play a more active role in the self-management of their health, resulting in improved prevention, adherence to a healthier lifestyle and better health outcomes.

The IC-Health project funded by the European Commission in the Horizon 2020 program aims to provide support for the improvement of digital health literacy (DHL) in Europe. To that effect, it has developed 35 open access online courses (MOOCs) for different population cohorts, including **children, adolescents, pregnant and lactating women, elderly** and **people affected by type 1 and type 2 diabetes**.

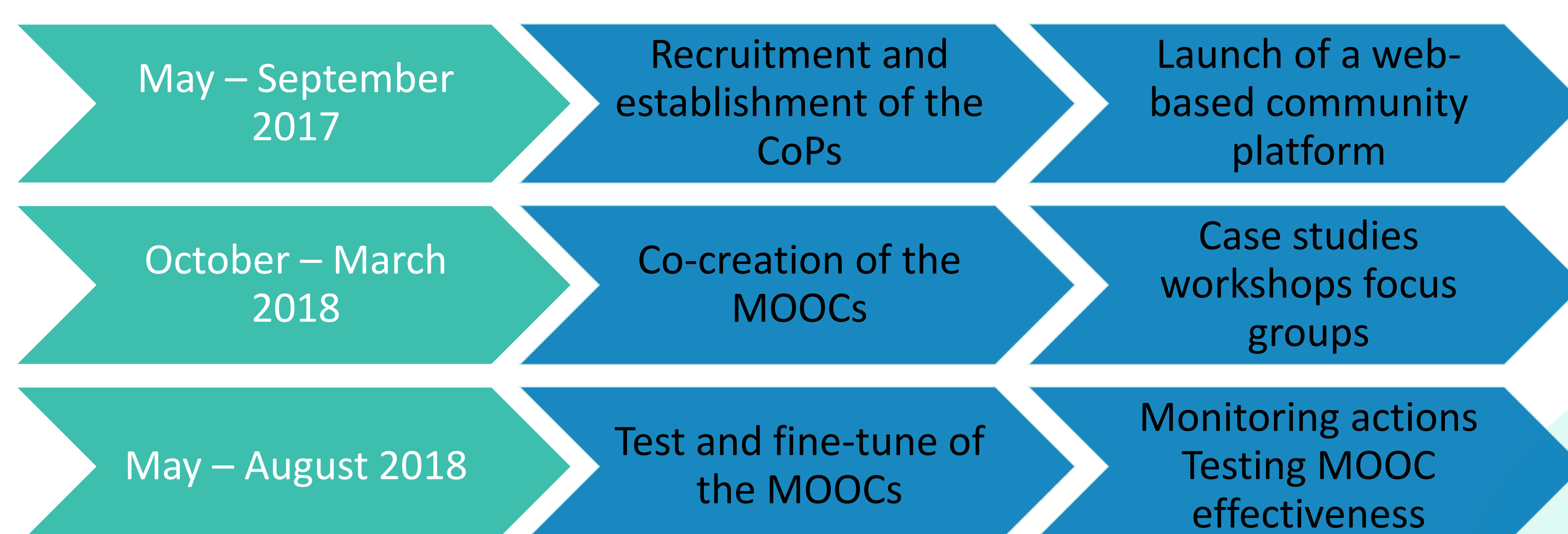


Our Objectives

MOOCs Co-Creation
The MOOCs are free web-based distance learning courses. No prior knowledge need; Free and easy access.

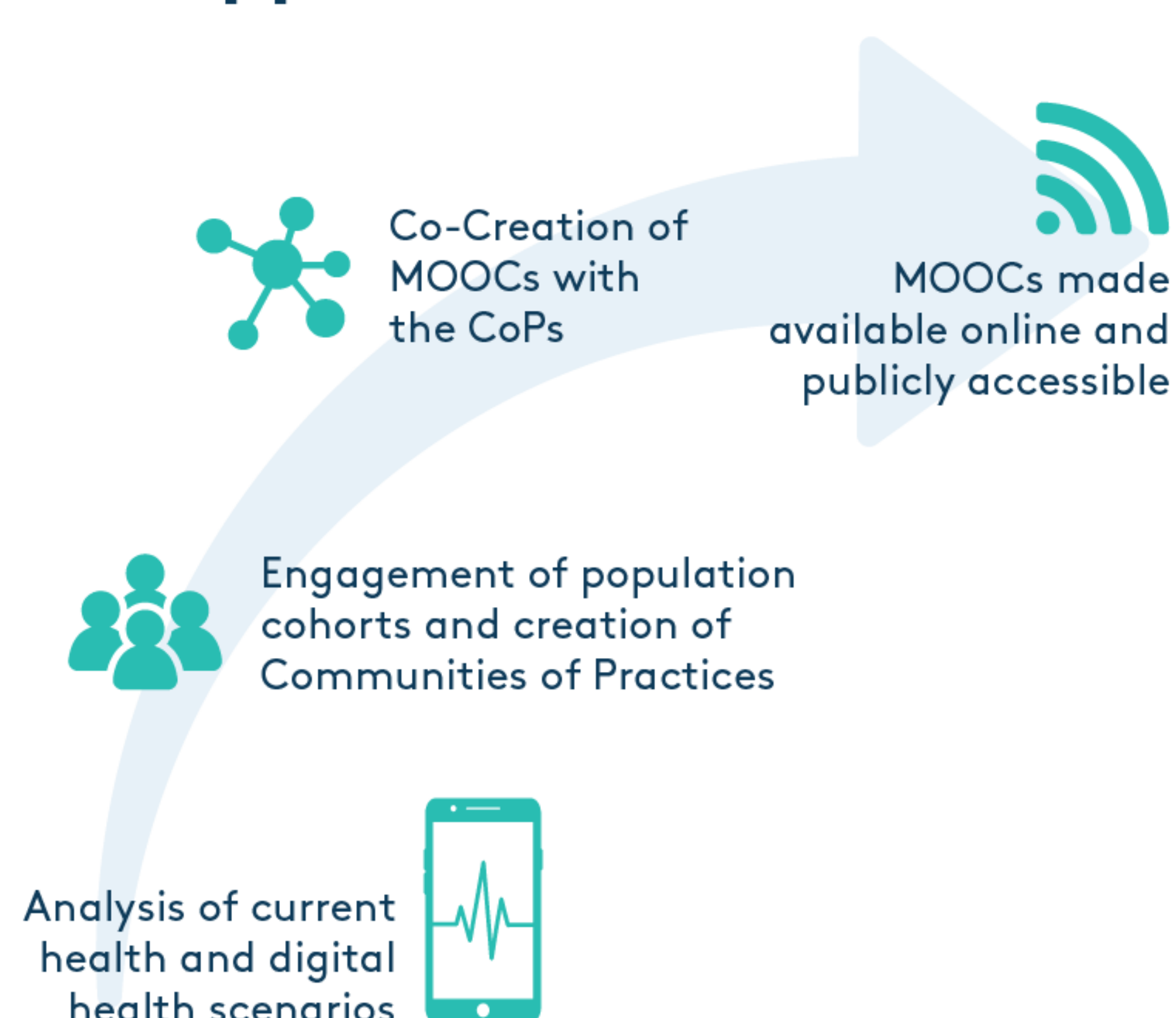


The identified population cohorts, along with health professionals and academics, were organized in **Communities of Practice (CoP)** and involved directly in the co-creation of the MOOC content and structure. Once the courses were designed, they were tested by members of the CoP and by other users. MOOC use and impact were monitored to assess their uptake and usability, and evaluated to ensure their sustainability beyond the duration of the project.



The results emerging from a literature review and from a profiling of the target groups revealed that there is still a need to better define the concept of DHL, and to develop more robust measures of DHL covering the different facets and aspects of the construct. On the other hand, there has been an increase in the use of digital health information for all age groups, and the importance of the Internet to look for health-related information is increasing. In this sense, there is **a need to support and improve actions to increase the opportunities created by digital health tools** and to **empower citizens to use this information by enhancing their skills to use ICT for health-related purposes**.

Our Approach



One of the barriers for the deployment of eHealth solutions is the lack of awareness and confidence in eHealth tools. IC-Health seeks to overcome this constraint by **improving the capacity of the target groups to use the Internet as means to access, understand and appraise digital health information and services**. The co-creation approach that was used enabled 780 people from the selected target groups to be directly involved in the process of co-creation and testing the online courses.

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