

Edition 08 | Q8 (June – August 2026)

ChatMED closed its second project year and entered the final one. The summer's theme was the question the project has been circling since the beginning: what has to exist around a good model for it to reach a patient. The answer took three forms this quarter — a governance framework published as a preprint, a spin-off bilateral project born out of the consortium, and a national initiative presented to the President. Alongside them came an international best paper award, a new journal article and a poster at DeLTA 2026 in Porto.

Institutional Readiness: From Regulation to Practice

June – July 2026 | Governance Research | WP Capacity Building

A short-term scientific exchange by the Head of the FCSE Legal Department at the Jožef Stefan Institute turned into a structured benchmarking exercise: data protection and retention, cybersecurity governance, AI Act preparedness, EHDS readiness, international project management and audit preparation were compared side by side between the two institutions.

The finding.

The gap is not regulatory awareness. It is institutional operationalisation — converting legal obligations into defined roles, reusable templates, documented procedures, registers, technical safeguards and auditable workflows. Many parts of the European digital rulebook are still operationally immature even inside EU Member States.

The output: a six-layer Institutional Accountability Architecture.

Published as a preprint, "Institutional Operationalisation of the Converging EU Digital Rulebook for Trustworthy AI-in-Health Research" treats GDPR, NIS2, the AI Act and the EHDS as one connected governance environment built on artefact reuse: a Data Management Plan serving both GDPR accountability and EHDS secondary use, a cybersecurity control serving both NIS2 and GDPR Article 32, an AI-system register serving AI Act documentation and audit readiness. The layers run from regulatory governance and data governance through cybersecurity and algorithmic governance to health-data interoperability and audit-ready project management, anchored in ISO/IEC 42001, 27001, 27701 and 23894.

doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20812892

Why it matters for Widening countries.

A research institution that cannot demonstrate alignment with European data protection, cybersecurity and AI governance expectations may struggle to join leading consortia and cross-border data initiatives — the institutional face of the Brussels Effect. Because the frameworks are still being operationalised everywhere, institutions in candidate countries can build integrated governance from the start rather than repairing legacy procedures later. For AI-in-health research, governance capacity is research capacity.

TopX: The Consortium Spawns a New Project

5 June 2026 | North Macedonia – Austria Bilateral Cooperation

TopX — Comparative Study of Explainable AI Techniques with a Focus on Topological Data Analysis — has been selected among the 14 joint scientific–research projects between North Macedonia and Austria financed by the Ministry of Education and Science, with implementation running for two years from 1 July 2026.

The project is a direct continuation of the collaboration built through ChatMED and is led by Prof. Dr. Kostadin Mishev and Prof. Dr. Franz Wotawa. It carries forward the topological line of work our consortium opened in the winter, treating explainability not as a technical add-on but as a requirement for scientific validity, regulatory preparedness and real-world adoption.

Research Excellence & Publication Success

July – August 2026 | Peer-Reviewed Leadership

Best Student Paper Award, DeLTA 2026 (Porto, 16–17 July).

"Evaluating SAM3 and MedGemma for Brain Tumor MRI: Zero-Shot Segmentation, Linear Probing, and Multimodal Diagnosis," by Tamara Kostova, Ivan Kitanovski, Monika Simjanoska Misheva and Kostadin Mishev, was awarded at the 7th International Conference on Deep Learning Theory and Applications. The work tests what emerging foundation and multimodal models can and cannot do in neuroimaging — and it is a recognition of young researchers working at the intersection of AI, medical imaging and clinical decision support.

Poster at DeLTA 2026: choosing a RAG architecture.

"A Decision Pipeline for RAG Architecture Selection in Medical Education: Empirical Analysis and Cost–Performance Guidelines" offers a practical framework for selecting a retrieval-augmented generation architecture against cost and performance constraints rather than by default.

Journal article in Future Internet (2 August).

"Multi-Agent Readiness Scoring Methodology in Bioinformatics Domain," by Blagojche Gjorgjioski, Djansel Bukovec, Ivana Vichentijevikj, Ivan Kitanovski, Kostadin Mishev and Monika Simjanoska Misheva, addresses a question that precedes deployment: how ready a given large language model actually is to operate as an agent in a multi-agent bioinformatics workflow.

Tech Diplomacy: From ChatMED to NEO

June – August 2026 | Research, Policy and Digital Sovereignty

Following the Women in Tech® Macedonia recognition in May, the coordinator was nominated by President Gordana Siljanovska-Davkova to represent North Macedonia in the inaugural cohort of the Tech Diplomacy Global Executive Program. The cohort opened in Paris on 29 June 2026 with 20 participants from 16 countries, and runs as a six-month programme through December, combining executive education with national capstone projects.

NEO — the National Evidence Observatory.

The capstone that emerged was presented to the President in August. NEO starts from a problem ChatMED has made visible: adoption depends on an entire ecosystem of institutions, regulation, data, infrastructure, professionals, trust, funding and coordination. It aims to identify, connect and mobilise knowledge and technological capacity originating from North Macedonia but dispersed across universities, research groups, European projects, companies and professionals working abroad, so that when the country faces a strategic priority it can first ask what it already has. The President encouraged the initiative's further development.

Looking Ahead to the Final Year

September 2026 – August 2027 | Year 3

Training Session at TU Graz, 30 November 2026.

Understanding the Economic Aspects of AI Solutions — the next scheduled training in the consortium's capacity-building series.

Special Issue submissions close 20 November 2026.

"Machine Learning and Computational Methods for Smart Healthcare Applications" in Future Internet (MDPI) remains open to the community.

NeuroOrch evaluation.

Following the Sokobanja demonstration, the prototype moves into pilot evaluation and full expert review, with modules for bioinformatics, biochemical data, neuroimaging and EEG in preparation.

Q8 Progress at a Glance

Governance framework: six-layer Institutional Accountability Architecture published as a preprint, covering GDPR, NIS2, the AI Act and the EHDS as one system.

Ecosystem growth: TopX bilateral project with Austria selected for funding, running two years from 1 July 2026.

International recognition: Best Student Paper Award at DeLTA 2026 in Porto, plus a second contribution presented as a poster.

Scientific output: new article in Future Internet on multi-agent readiness scoring for bioinformatics LLMs.

National reach: NEO — the National Evidence Observatory — presented to the President of North Macedonia and encouraged for further development.

A Message from the Project Coordinator

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Two years in, the clearest lesson of ChatMED is that trustworthy AI does not start with the algorithm. It starts with the institution that designs, governs and takes responsibility for it. Our final year is about making that institutional capacity as durable as the science — so that what this project built keeps working after the grant ends.

— Dr. Monika Simjanoska Misheva, Project Coordinator

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