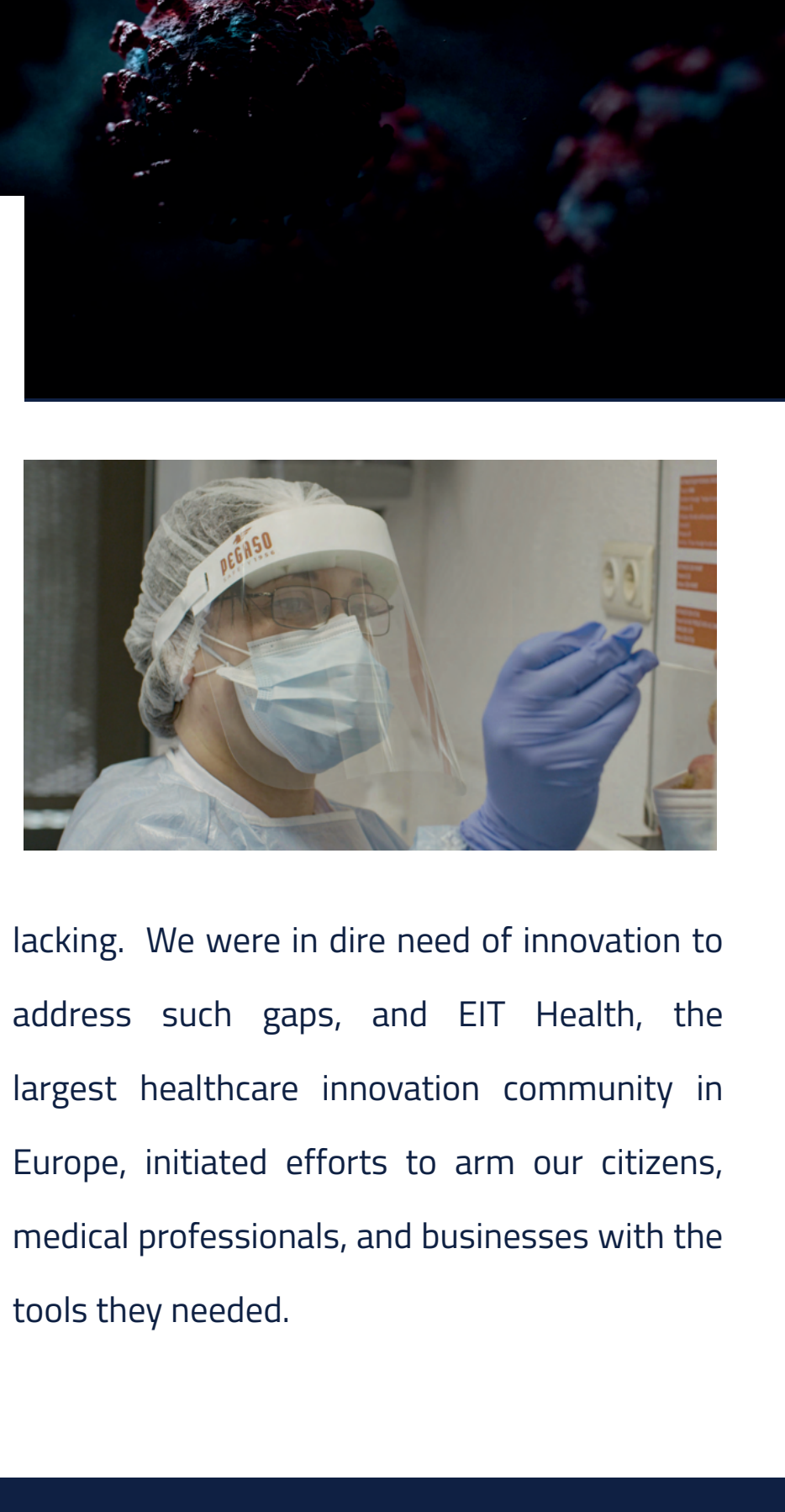


ARMED WITH INNOVATION: THE FIGHT TO BEAT THE PANDEMIC

Collaboration and co-creation
in times of crisis.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic hit Europe with unexpected speed and force. As the virus spread, the impact on citizens, hospitals and businesses was significant. The gaps in our ability to fight back were quickly evident, having never faced a crisis on this scale in our lifetime – data, diagnostics, personal protective equipment (PPE), and medical equipment, were all



lacking. We were in dire need of innovation to address such gaps, and EIT Health, the largest healthcare innovation community in Europe, initiated efforts to arm our citizens, medical professionals, and businesses with the tools they needed.



Addressing the gaps

Working directly with healthcare services, we focused our attention towards the areas where innovation could have a significant impact:

- Data platforms to help understand the patterns of the virus and the disease, and support hospital capacity planning.
- Platforms to monitor and manage patients with COVID-19 and chronic conditions from the safety of their homes.
- Education for healthcare workforces on addressing the crisis with new tools.
- Diagnostics and prognostics to diagnose and treat the disease.
- Provision of vital equipment and PPE.

We worked within our community to initiate and support the development of new products and services in these areas. With a budget of 13.4 million euros, development began in spring 2020.

VirusShield

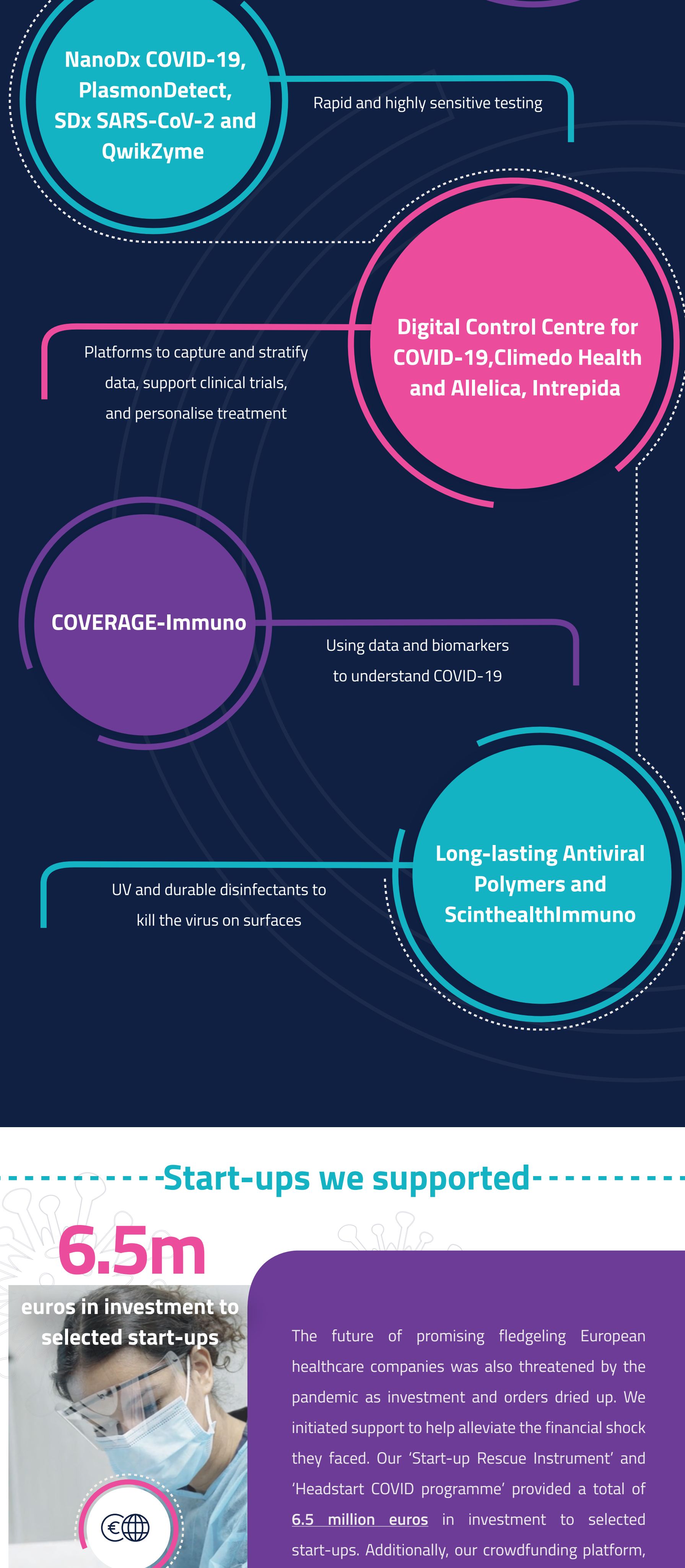
In line with the huge demand for PPE, the availability of masks sparked concern early in the pandemic – they were hard to produce at scale, usually disposable (which was detrimental to the environment) and could contribute to spreading the virus if not handled safely. We launched VirusShield to provide a self-disinfecting, re-usable, globally available mask in a matter of months. In 2020 alone, 10 million masks sold in countries all over the world.

Digital Control Centre for COVID-19

We launched a project to implement a data and AI solution into hospitals across Spain, Belgium, and the Netherlands that could help to understand how COVID-19 affects people differently and why. It taught us that there were different characteristics of the disease leading to differing severities, and therefore different treatments were needed. Using this insight, personalised treatment could be provided to patients which reduced deaths from COVID-19 by 50%.*

*Reference: García-Vidal, C., Moreno-García, E., Hernández-Meneses, M., Puerta-Alcáide, P., Chumbita, M., García-Poutón, N., Linares, L., Rico, V., Cardozo, C., Martínez, J.A., García, F., Mensa, J., Castro, P., Nicolás, J.M., Muñoz, J., Vidal, D. and Soriano, A. (2020). Personalized therapy approach for hospitalized patients with COVID-19. Clinical Infectious Diseases.

EIT Health COVID initiatives



Start-ups we supported

6.5m
euros in investment to
selected start-ups



The future of promising fledgeling European healthcare companies was also threatened by the pandemic as investment and orders dried up. We initiated support to help alleviate the financial shock they faced. Our 'Start-up Rescue Instrument' and 'Headstart COVID programme' provided a total of **6.5 million euros** in investment to selected start-ups. Additionally, our crowdfunding platform, aescuvest, offered short-term financing campaigns for start-ups and research organisations working on solutions to combat COVID-19.

Hemotune

When the pandemic hit, Hemotune's future in the development of revolutionary technology for the treatment of the life-threatening infection, Sepsis, was uncertain. As investors became more cautious, their ability to finish the feasibility testing needed for their prototype development was delayed. We provided **500,000 euros** of investment to Hemotune to help them continue their vital work.



Connecting People



In the early days of the pandemic, it was clear that connectivity was paramount. Vital knowledge, skills and solutions needed to be quickly shared with those in need, across borders. In response, we launched an open platform where those working in healthcare could connect and share knowledge and resources. At its peak, the platform was seeing **3,500 visitors per day**.

Servicio Madrileño de Salud (SERMAS)

Madrid was one of the most affected regions in Europe during the pandemic and was immediately faced with issues such as bed and equipment shortages. There was a shortage of life-saving ventilators to meet the demand in cases of severe disease. The Making Connections platform connected the Madrid Health Service to a lung specialist in France who was able to share emergency protocols for use of ventilators.

3,5K
visitors per day

"I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our partners and wider network, who have worked shoulder-to-shoulder with us to positively impact the lives of patients and citizens across Europe as well as further afield. Finally, I would like to extend heart-felt gratitude to all healthcare professionals, to whom we are forever indebted"

Jan-Philipp Beck, CEO, EIT Health

