



PRESS RELEASE

Artificial Intelligence for the autonomy and health of young people with visual impairments: the European VIPSTAR project enters its second year and meets in Rovereto for its 4th Consortium Meeting



Rovereto (Trento), 5 May 2026 – On 11 and 12 May, the city of Rovereto will host the 4th Consortium Meeting of the European project VIPSTAR (Visually Impaired children and adolescents: bridging the gap with Personalized Prevention Strategies, Tools, Approaches, and Resources). Hosted by the University of Trento, the event marks a key moment of discussion for the international consortium, now in its second year of intensive research and development activities.

Funded under the HORIZON EUROPE programme with a budget of €8.1 million (2025–2028), VIPSTAR is coordinated by the University of Brescia and the LIGHT Centre, bringing together 18 partners from 11 different countries.

A holistic and personalised AI-driven approach

The project aims to develop a holistic ecosystem based on Artificial Intelligence (AI) to improve the long-term health, wellbeing, and autonomy of children and adolescents with different degrees of visual impairment (VI). By integrating AI and digital health tools, VIPSTAR seeks to enable young people with visual impairments to lead fuller, healthier, and more independent lives.

The Rovereto meeting will provide an opportunity to review the technological and clinical solutions currently under development, designed to support patients from the earliest days of life through to adulthood. More specifically, the interventions are structured according to age groups:

- **0-3 years old (Early intervention):** Development of a low-burden digital telemedicine platform for intensive home-based (re)habilitation, managed by parents and supervised by specialists through the use of AI-based metrics to assess and personalise progress.
- **3-12 years old (School age):** Implementation of a Serious Games platform designed to strengthen neurocognitive vision, with personalised pathways based on the child's condition and level of engagement.
- **Up to 18 years old (Adolescence):** AI-based modules aimed at improving body image resilience, physical activity, and nutrition, coordinated through a voice assistant (Avatar). Among the innovations is the "Nutrition Coach", an AI-powered food recognition tool capable of providing personalised dietary recommendations.



Co-design, Safety, and European Innovation

To address the current lack of continuous support, VIPSTAR is adopting an innovative methodology: digital tools and intervention strategies are being co-designed directly with young people with visual impairments and their families, including through a dedicated eLearning platform. The scientific validation of these tools will take place through three rigorous clinical studies.

In addition, the project will lay the foundations for VIPSTAR-NET, a transnational surveillance network dedicated to paediatric and adolescent visual impairment, aimed at facilitating research and personalised treatments. Finally, VIPSTAR will constitute the first European “Regulatory Sandbox” experiment for digital health services targeting children and young people with visual impairments, ensuring the ethical and safe use of advanced technologies.

The work carried out during the 4th Consortium Meeting at the University of Trento will allow European partners to align technological developments with clinical protocols, strengthening the synergy needed to address the challenges of the coming years.



The Coordination:

Scientific Coordinator: Prof. Elisa Fazzi until 31/10/2025, Prof. Jessica Galli from 01/11/2025 (UNIBS)
 Technological Coordinator: Dr. Cesare Furlanello (LIGHT)
 Chair of the Scientific Advisory Board: Prof. Lotfi Merabet (Harvard Medical Center)

The Partnership:

University of Brescia (UNIBS)	IT
Lifescience Innovation Good Healthcare Technology s.c.ar.l. (LIGHT)	IT
ASCBS Spedali Civili di Brescia (ASCBS)	IT
KU Leuven (KUL)	BE
Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen (EKUT)	DE



University of Trento (UNITN)	IT
SPINDOX LABS SRL (SPXL)	IT
Comftech s.r.l. (COMFTECH)	IT
University of Limerick (UL)	IE
Centrul Republican de Reabilitare pentru Copii (CRRC)	MD
University of Edinburgh (UOEDIN)	UK
University of Ioannina (UOI)	EL
Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS)	IT
Eodyne Systems SL (EOD)	ES
Visually Impaired Education and Work Support International AISBL (VIN)	BE
Association les Glénans (ALG)	FR
Real Eyes Sport (RES)	IT
Erasmus Medical Center (EMC)	NL

For more information:

Project website: <https://vipstar.eu>

Interview with Prof. Fazzi (Italian, 4 minutes): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cz1FnOx4L9c>

