

Headline news from across Europe brought to you by the
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Brussels - 11th July, 2014

Italian presidency of the Council of the EU: Priorities on health

On 1 July 2014, the Italian Presidency of the Council of the UE began. Italy will hold the role from July to December 2014. Health priorities under Italy's Presidency include:

- Promotion of healthy lifestyles and prevention, within the conceptual framework of the "3rd health EU Programme", also taking into account gender differences, with a special view to the prevention of respiratory diseases and cancer;
- Promotion of public discussion on patient safety and care-related infections;
- Reviewing the Regulations on medical devices and the Directive on the transparency of measures regulating the prices of medicinal products for human use and their inclusion within the scope of public health insurance systems;
- Progress on the HIV/AIDS prevention through vaccines but also through the adoption of Council conclusions and also through antimicrobial resistance;
- Facilitating the sharing of experiences among experts from the Southern countries.

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Health spending starts to rise but remains weak in Europe, says OECD

Health spending has started to rise again after stagnating or even falling in many OECD countries during the crisis. But the pace of growth remains well below pre-crisis rates, especially in Europe, according to OECD Statistics 2014. In Europe, health spending continued to fall in 2012 in Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain, as well as in the Czech Republic and Hungary. By contrast, outside Europe, Chile and Mexico saw strong growth in health spending in 2012, at 6.5% and 8.5% respectively, largely due to further efforts towards universal coverage and access to healthcare. In the United States, health spending grew by 2.1% in 2012, above the OECD average but similar to growth rates in 2010 and 2011.

Overall health spending accounted for 9.3% of GDP on average across OECD countries in 2012, little changed from 9.2% in 2011, but up from 8.6% before the

crisis. While spending on hospital and outpatient care grew in many countries in 2012, almost two-thirds of OECD countries have experienced real falls in pharmaceutical spending since 2009. Reductions have been driven by price cuts, often through negotiations with manufacturers, and a growing share of the generic market. This share has increased due to patent expirations for a number of high-volume and high-cost brand name drugs, and policies to promote the use of cheaper generic drugs.

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Eight small countries in Europe join forces to improve health

Eight European countries with populations of under 1 million have committed themselves to cooperating on a new project to improve their citizens' health and well-being, and implement the European policy framework, Health 2020. Health ministers and other high-level officials from the countries participating in the project – Andorra, Cyprus, Iceland, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro and San Marino – will meet for the first time in San Marino on 3–4 July 2014, to put their plans into action. The meeting took place in San Marino on 3–4 July 2014, organized by the WHO Regional Office for Europe – will launch the project. Its aim was to foster cooperation and exchange among participating countries, and to ensure that their national health strategies and plans are aligned with Health 2020.

For more information click [here](#)

Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations launches a strategy aiming to raise levels of nutrition through a people-centered approach

Nutritional problems caused by an inadequate diet can be of many sorts, and when they affect a generation of youngsters, they can lower their learning capacities, thus compromising their futures, perpetuating a generational cycle of poverty and malnutrition, with severe consequences on both individuals and nations. While young children are the most vulnerable to malnutrition, the right to adequate food is universal and good nutrition is essential for all. Problems of malnutrition –under-nutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and obesity – exist in all countries and cut across socio-economic classes.

Emerging challenges, such as climate change, environmental sustainability and rapid technological shifts, are transforming the food system and raising questions about how to feed a growing world population in sustainable ways.

The FAO strategy which seeks to improve diets and raise levels of nutrition through a people-centered approach commits to:

- Support and facilitate dialogue across Nations and sectors, for a common agenda on nutrition, agriculture, sustainable food systems and healthy diets, in particular through the upcoming joint FAO/WHO Second International Conference on Nutrition- ICN2;
- Research on and release of evidence, data and guidelines on food-based nutrition including food composition, dietary assessment, human requirements and food based indicators;
- Develop countries' capacities to evaluate and monitor nutrition situations, analyze options, and Implement agricultural programmes and policies that impact positively on nutrition;
- Provide tools, guidance and support for the scaling up of proper nutrition education and consumer awareness at national and local levels.

For more information click [here](#)

Contact Us

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