

[Press release – EU4Health: MEPs reach deal with Council on 2021-2027 EU health programme](#)



On Monday evening, Parliament negotiators agreed on a deal with member states to significantly step up the EU's action in the health sector through a dedicated 5.1 billion EUR "[EU4Health Programme](#)" as part of the [EU's recently agreed long-term budget](#).

The new programme will support actions in areas where the EU's contribution will clearly be valuable, invest in health promotion and disease prevention measures and prepare European health systems to face future health threats.

Addressing cross-border health threats

Supporting member states in developing quality healthcare standards at national level will be one of the programme's specific objectives. By making health systems more resilient, EU4Health will prepare the EU more thoroughly for major cross-border health threats. This should enable the EU to face not only future epidemics, but also long-term challenges such as an ageing population and health inequalities.

The new European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority will be created to support a better EU-level response to cross-border health threats. It will also be eligible for funding through EU4Health.

As a well-informed public is vital in preventing and responding to diseases, the programme also supports communication activities to promote disease prevention and a healthy lifestyle and to counter misinformation.

Better availability of affordable medicines and medical devices

The COVID-19 crisis has highlighted many weaknesses in national health systems including their dependence on non-EU countries to supply medicines, medical devices as well as personal protective equipment. The programme will therefore support actions, which foster the production, procurement and management of such crisis-relevant products in the EU in order to make them more available and affordable. Actions to develop medicinal products and medical devices that are less harmful for the environment are also eligible.

Up to 20 % of the total budget shall be reserved for health promotion and disease prevention by addressing health risks such as the harmful use of alcohol and tobacco. Digitalising healthcare, including by supporting the creation of a European health data space, is also part of the deal.

Supporting actions to promote access to quality healthcare, including access to sexual and reproductive healthcare and the EU's fight against cancer is also a priority. In addition, it will be possible to support global health initiatives e.g. actions proposed by the WHO.

Quote

After the deal, Parliament's rapporteur [Cristian-Silviu Buşoi](#) (EPP, RO) said: "The COVID-19 crisis has exposed the need for well-defined and adequately-financed health instruments. We also need to boost innovation and invest more in health in general. It was crucial to increase funding for the EU4Health Programme from €1.7 billion to €5.1 billion in order to be able to deal with future pandemics and health threats, and to make our health systems more resilient. I am also happy that this deal will contribute to the establishment of a reserve of health crisis relevant products, such as essential medicines, vaccines and medical devices."

Next steps

The provisional deal still needs to be approved by Parliament as a whole as well as Council.

Background

The Commission has put forward a new stand-alone [EU4Health Programme](#) for 2021-2027 as part of the Recovery Plan. The Health Programme was previously under the initial EU long-term budget 2021-2027 as one element of the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+).