

## 1 Public health

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- European Commission, European Observatory and OECD: 28 country health profiles
- EXPH: publication of three opinions
- European Commission: final conference of the VulnerABLE project
- European Commission: report on primary care
- Establishment of a network of experts to support the planning and forecasting of health workforce needs
- European Commission: study on the impact of the EU action plan on organ donation and transplantation
- European Commission: report on patients' rights in the European Union
- European Commission: publication of the presentations of the Cross-border Healthcare Expert Group
- European Commission: online platform 'Boosting EU Border regions'
- WHO Europa and ECDC: low uptake of seasonal influenza vaccination in Europe is a risk
- Position paper on providing community-based mental health services
- European Reference Networks: criteria set for associated national centres and coordination hubs
- Parliamentary question: sale of patients' data by Belgian hospitals to an American multinational
- Eurostat: health and well-being per country

## 2 Health care services in the internal market

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- HPCB: National experiences with the IMI system and alert mechanism for the exchange of data on healthcare professionals
- European Parliament: vote in the Internal Market Committee on the proportionality test directive
- Parliamentary question: recognition of qualifications to practise the profession of physiotherapy

## 3 Medicines and medical devices

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- European Commission: proposal for reinforced cooperation between Member States in the field of health technology assessment (HTA)
- Council: relocation of the European Medicines Agency
- Recommendations on enhancing the transparency of the scientific advice given by the EMA to pharmaceutical manufacturers
- EUnetHTA: An analysis of HTA and reimbursement procedures in partner countries
- EMA: development of a common data model to support decision-making by regulatory bodies

- EMA and EUnetHTA: joint work plan for 2017-2020
- European Commission: public consultation on supplementary protection certificates (SPCs) and patent research exemptions
- European Parliament: briefing note on personalised medicine
- European Commission: Brexit and the EU rules on substances of human origin
- Council: debate on pharmaceutical policy in the EU
- Council: lack of drug availability in Greece

#### **4 e-Health**

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- Implementation of the European emergency number 112
- OECD: use of data from electronic health records for national health information and research
- European Commission: start of cross-border digital prescription and exchange of patient data
- Council conclusions: Health in the digital society - making progress in data-driven innovation in the field of health
- Council: agreement on the setting up of a digital single gateway for information, procedures and services

#### **5 Social policy**

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- Council: agreement on the setting up of a digital single gateway for information, procedures and services
- Council: conclusions on enhancing community-based support and care for independent living
- Brexit: the British government wishes to extend the rights acquired by EU citizens in the UK to EEA citizens also
- European Commission: peer review on the reform of the German long-term care system
- European Commission: European social security number
- European Commission: consultation of the social partners on access to social protection for people in new forms of employment
- European Parliament: study on the coordination of social security systems in the EU

#### **6 Economic policy**

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- European Commission: publication of the annual growth survey
- European Commission: publication of the draft joint employment report
- European Commission: European Semester winter package
- European Commission: roadmap for deepening Europe's economic and monetary union
- European Commission: priorities set for the structural reform support programme in 2018
- European Commission: communication on new budgetary instruments for a stable euro area
- HLTF: report on investment in social infrastructure in Europe
- European Commission: The 2018 ageing report: underlying assumptions and projection methodologies
- European Commission: background report on the ESM stability support programme for Greece

- European Commission: supplemental memorandum of understanding with Greece
- European Commission: post-programme surveillance report for Portugal
- European Commission: post-programme surveillance report for Cyprus

## **7** Court of Justice of the European Union

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- Judgment: Slovak Republic v Achmea BV
- Judgment: the public financing of the Slovak compulsory health insurance does constitute state aid
- Judgment: agreement between Roche and Novartis to reduce the use of Avastin in ophthalmology constitutes a restriction of competition
- Judgment: standby-time is working time
- Judgment: software which can use patient-specific data is a medical device
- Judgment: granting of access to documents by the European Medicines Agency (EMA)
- Judgment: remuneration of specialist medicine training
- Judgment: supplementary protection certificate for medicines
- Judgment: conditions linked to a bursary for specialist medical training in another Member State
- Judgment: VAT on medicines provided at a discount to health insurers supplying persons it insures
- Opinion of the Advocate General: qualifications required by those entrusted with assessing the safety of cosmetic products
- EFTA Surveillance Authority: particular benefits for health and child welfare services do not constitute state aid

## **8** Competition

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- UK: NHS overcharged by millions for a thyroid drug
- France: fine imposed for obstacles to generic medicines
- Germany: merger between Fresenius Kabi and Fenwal approved
- European Commission: An overview of subsidy disclosure practices in EU Member States
- European Commission: merger between Essilor and Luxottica cleared
- France: broad-ranging sector-specific inquiry on the functioning of competition in the medicinal products and chemical pathology sector
- European Commission: investigation into the proposed merger of Praxair and Linde

## **9** Infringement proceedings

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- Belgium, France and Germany: transposition of the EU legislation on the recognition of professional qualifications
- European Commission: infringement procedure against Roche closed without penalty
- Spain: restrictions on imports of homeopathic medicines

## 10 Publications

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- European Observatory: How to make sense of health system efficiency comparisons?
- Book chapter: Regulation of health care: an obstacle to cross-border trade in services?
- Book: free movement of patients in the EU
- Article: Merger control in the hospital sector: focus on the international decision-making practice
- Eurofound: Care homes for older Europeans: public, private and not-for-profit providers
- Article: The role of the patients' rights in cross-border healthcare directive in shaping national health systems
- Report on the state of mental health services in Europe
- Eurostat: article on healthcare personnel
- Eurostat: use of professional homecare services in the EU
- EPC: policy note on digital health

## 11 Miscellaneous

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- EIB: loan to support research into treatments for rare and chronic diseases
- EIB: financing to a German pharmaceutical company specialised in drug delivery systems
- EIB: loan for cancer research
- EIB: financing for investments in diagnostics solutions for infectious diseases
- WHO: financial protection for healthcare in the Czech Republic, Estonia and Latvia
- Brexit and the future for Ireland
- WHO: Global Dementia Observatory

## 1 Public health

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### **European Commission, European Observatory and OECD: 28 country health profiles**

These country profiles assess the strengths and challenges in the health systems in each EU country. A companion report draws cross-cutting conclusions and discusses common policy priorities. The analyses are developed by the European Commission in cooperation with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies.

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### **EXPH: publication of three opinions**

The independent Expert Panel on Effective Ways of Investing in Health (EXPH), has adopted three opinions on: access to healthcare, innovative payment models for high-cost innovative medicines and assessing the performance of primary care.

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### **European Commission: final conference of the VulnerABLE project**

The VulnerABLE project investigated how the health of those in isolated and vulnerable situations can be improved. The final report and other documents are available online.

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**European Commission: report on primary care**

The EU Expert Group on Health Systems Performance Assessment (HSPA) published its report 'A new drive for primary care in Europe: rethinking the assessment tools and methodologies', to help policy makers and health practitioners to set objectives and measure progress towards improving primary care services.

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**Establishment of a network of experts to support the planning and forecasting of health workforce needs**

Following the completion of the joint action on Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting, the Commission is providing support, under its health programme, to a network of experts in this field.

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**European Commission: study on the impact of the EU action plan on organ donation and transplantation**

This study on the implementation and impact of the EU action plan on organ donation and transplantation (2009-2015) in the EU Member States was produced by Nivel. The report shows a sharp increase in the number of organ donations and transplants in the EU in recent years.

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**European Commission: report on patients' rights in the European Union**

The Commission published the final report of the study mapping patients' rights in the European Union.

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**European Commission: publication of the presentations of the Cross-border Healthcare Expert Group**

The Commission has made the presentations given at the meetings of the Cross-border Healthcare Expert Group available online.

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**European Commission: online platform 'Boosting EU Border regions'**

This online professional network was launched by the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy. It provides a platform to discuss specific issues facing border regions and to present possible solutions. Health is one of the nine sectors included in the network.

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**WHO Europa and ECDC: low uptake of seasonal influenza vaccination in Europe is a risk**

In a joint statement, the European regional office of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) warn that the low uptake of the seasonal influenza vaccination in Europe may jeopardise the capacity to protect people in the next pandemic.

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**Position paper on providing community-based mental health services**

A scientific document on the provision of community-based mental health services, prepared by scientific experts in the field, was reviewed by governmental experts. The position paper incorporating their comments was then presented at the 3rd Annual EU Compass Forum for Mental Health and Well-being.

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**European Reference Networks: criteria set for associated national centres and coordination hubs**

The Board of Member States adopted a statement on the definition and minimum recommended criteria for Associated National Centres and Coordination Hubs designated by Member States and their link to European Reference Networks.

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**Parliamentary question: sale of patients' data by Belgian hospitals to an American multinational**

MEP Claude Rolin submitted a parliamentary question concerning the sale of confidential patient data by Belgian hospitals to the American medical data processing multinational Quintiles IMS. In its answer, the Commission expresses the view that hospitals must not share patients' medical data with private companies, except in strictly regulated cases, where legislation explicitly permits this.

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**Eurostat: health and well-being per country**

Eurostat has put a user-friendly tool online to help users compare the health and well-being performances of countries. It includes indicators on life expectancy, self-perceived health, death rates, etc, but also indicators on access to healthcare.

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## **2 Health care services in the internal market**

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**HPCB: National experiences with the IMI system and alert mechanism for the exchange of data on healthcare professionals**

The Healthcare Professionals Crossing Borders (HPCB) network published some examples of the positive impact of the alert mechanism on the safety of patients in the European Union (see p. 2-3).

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**European Parliament: vote in the Internal Market Committee on the proportionality test directive**

On 4 December 2017, the European Parliament's Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) adopted its report on the proportionality test directive. The amendments seeking to exclude health professions from the scope of the directive were rejected. The report does, however, contain a number of provisions which recognise the special status of health professions. Discussions between the Council and the Parliament on the draft are now taking place.

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**Parliamentary question: recognition of qualifications to practise the profession of physiotherapy**

Six Italian students obtained a physiotherapy degree from a Hungarian university following a course they took in a private university in Switzerland. The European Commission provides clarification on whether these students are entitled to practise the profession of physiotherapy in Italy.

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### 3 Medicines and medical devices

#### **European Commission: proposal for reinforced cooperation between Member States in the field of health technology assessment (HTA)**

The Commission presented its proposal for a regulation on reinforced cooperation between the Member States to assess health technology. This cooperation, which will be mandatory, will replace the voluntary cooperation based on the directive on cross-border healthcare (2011/24/EU) and the joint actions on health technology assessment carried out in the EUnetHTA.

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#### **Council: relocation of the European Medicines Agency**

On 20 November, EU-27 ministers voted on the relocation of the 2 UK-based EU agencies. As a result of this vote, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) will move to Amsterdam in the Netherlands.

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#### **Recommendations on enhancing the transparency of the scientific advice given by the EMA to pharmaceutical manufacturers**

The EMA gives scientific advice (SA) to pharmaceutical manufacturers on the appropriate tests and studies required in the development of a medicine. A number of healthcare stakeholders, including the Belgian HTA agency (KCE) and the institute for health insurance (NIHDI), have made recommendations as to how this provision of SA can be made more transparent.

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#### **EUnetHTA: An analysis of HTA and reimbursement procedures in partner countries**

This study analyses existing HTA and reimbursement procedures in EUnetHTA partner countries.

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#### **EMA: development of a common data model to support decision-making by regulatory bodies**

The EMA organised a meeting to define a common data model in Europe to support decision-making by regulatory bodies. A common data model could help harmonise healthcare data across multiple data sets.

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#### **EMA and EUnetHTA: joint work plan for 2017-2020**

This joint work plan includes initiatives in the following areas:

- (1) early dialogue / scientific advice to medicines developers on regulatory and HTA requirements;
- (2) information exchange on the outcome of the regulatory assessment of an authorised medicine with a view to producing relative effectiveness assessments (REAs);
- (3) post-authorisation data generation.

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#### **European Commission: public consultation on supplementary protection certificates (SPCs) and patent research exemptions**

SPCs are a unique intellectual property right that constitute an extension (of up to 5 years) to the term of a patent right (of 20 years). SPCs apply to innovative pharmaceutical

products. With this consultation the Commission is seeking the views of stakeholders on the SPC and patent research exemption of SPCs.

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#### **European Parliament: briefing note on personalised medicine**

Personalised Medicine refers to the grouping of patients based on risk of disease, or response to therapy, using advanced diagnostic tests or techniques. The briefing gives an account of the initiatives taken in the EU to foster the advancement of this approach in daily practice.

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#### **European Commission: Brexit and the EU rules on substances of human origin**

Notice to organisations subject to the EU legislation on substances of human origin (blood, tissues, and cells and organs), concerning the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union.

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#### **Council: debate on pharmaceutical policy in the EU**

The Council held an exchange of views on pharmaceutical policy in the EU, with a view to strengthening the balance in pharmaceutical systems, as highlighted in the 2016 Council conclusions.

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#### **Council: lack of drug availability in Greece**

The Greek health minister informed his EU counterparts in Council on the recent clash between his government and ROCHE, a Swiss multinational, over the latter's decision to take a cancer drug off the market. The reason behind this decision was a measure recently introduced by Athens as part of the bailout deal with its international donors, which obliges the pharmaceutical industry to apply a 25% reduction to new on-patent medicines.

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## **4 e-Health**

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#### **Implementation of the European emergency number 112**

The annual report from the Communication Committee (COCOM) provides an overview of the state of play on the implementation of the 112 European emergency number.

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#### **OECD: use of data from electronic health records for national health information and research**

This study reports on the development and use of data from electronic health records in twenty-eight countries for research, statistics and other purposes that serve the public interest.

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#### **European Commission: start of cross-border digital prescription and exchange of patient data**

In 2018, twelve EU Member States will start exchanging patient data on a regular basis. Sweden, Finland, Portugal, Croatia and Estonia will share electronic prescriptions. In 2019 five more countries are scheduled to join the network.

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**Council conclusions: Health in the digital society - making progress in data-driven innovation in the field of health**

These conclusions emphasise the potential of digital technologies and advanced data analysis to help to empower citizens, develop better targeted, more integrated and safer healthcare, and to ensure a more efficient use of healthcare devices.

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**Council: agreement on the setting up of a digital single gateway for information, procedures and services**

The Council has adopted its position on the setting up of a single digital gateway offering online information, procedures and assistance to citizens and companies (COM/2017/0769 final). Fourteen administrative procedures have to be made available online to all - both national and cross-border users - including procedures for the recognition of academic qualifications and the obtaining of a European health insurance card.

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## 5 Social policy

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**Council: long-term care is included in the regulations on the coordination of social security systems**

The Council has reached a partial general approach on the revision of regulations 883/2004 and 987/2009 on the coordination of social security systems. This partial agreement covers the main chapters on long-term care and family benefits. A separate category has been created for long-term care benefits, as well as a definition of the same.

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**Council: conclusions on enhancing community-based support and care for independent living**

The conclusions emphasise the importance of actions at various levels to improve community-based support and care.

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**Brexit: the British government wishes to extend the rights acquired by EU citizens in the UK to EEA citizens also**

The British government announced that it wishes to extend the special rights reserved for EU citizens post-Brexit to citizens from the European Economic Area (EEA) currently living in the United Kingdom. These include rights to healthcare and the recognition of professional qualifications. The measures still need to be approved by the EU-27 following the Brexit discussions.

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**European Commission: peer review on the reform of the German long-term care system**

In this peer review, German stakeholders presented an overview of their latest reforms and good practices to other Member States, while these presented their responses to similar challenges.

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**European Commission: European social security number**

The Commission intends to create a European social security number (ESSN). This

initiative is part of EU efforts to facilitate the free movement of workers and citizens and the traceability of their rights. The ESSN should ensure efficient information-exchange between institutions, facilitating administrative procedures for citizens.

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#### **European Commission: consultation of the social partners on access to social protection for people in new forms of employment**

Workers in new forms of employment are often excluded from access to social security, including healthcare. The Commission launched the second phase of the consultation of the social partners on a possible initiative to address the issue of access to social protection for people in all forms of employment.

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#### **European Parliament: study on the coordination of social security systems in the EU**

This study analyses the developments in the field of coordination of social security systems in the EU and assesses the possible effects of the European Commission's amendment proposal.

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## **6 Economic policy**

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#### **European Commission: publication of the annual growth survey**

The 2018 European semester cycle for economic, budgetary and social policy coordination began with the publication of the 2018 annual growth survey. This survey calls on Member States to continue with reforms to their healthcare systems, to make these more cost-effective, to guarantee their fiscal sustainability and to ensure affordable and high-quality access.

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#### **European Commission: publication of the draft joint employment report**

The draft joint employment report was published together with the 2018 annual growth survey. It contains extensive discussions of developments in EU countries concerning access to healthcare.

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#### **European Commission: European Semester winter package**

The European Commission presented its yearly analysis of the economic and social situation in the Member States, including progress in implementing the country-specific recommendations and an assessment of possible imbalances. Several country reports refer to a need for health sector reforms.

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#### **European Commission: roadmap for deepening Europe's economic and monetary union**

The roadmap contains specific steps for the coming 18 months. As well as the roadmap, the package contains four other initiatives:

- A proposal to establish a European Monetary Fund (EMF), which would take over and add to the tasks of the European Stability Mechanism (ESM). In past years, the ESM has supported Member States in financial difficulties, helping them to regain or maintain access to sovereign bond markets;
- A proposal to integrate the substance of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and

Governance into the Union legal framework;

- A communication on new budgetary instruments for a stable euro area (see below);
- A communication setting out the possible functions of a European Minister of Economy and Finance.

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### **European Commission: priorities set for the structural reform support programme in 2018**

The structural reform support programme (SRSP) offers interested Member States support in implementing their reforms. One of the priorities of the 2018 work programme is healthcare reforms.

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### **European Commission: communication on new budgetary instruments for a stable euro area**

This communication forms part of the roadmap for deepening Europe's economic and monetary union. One of the instruments described is the Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP) to assist Member States. The Commission is proposing to double the resources available to the SRSP and to use some of the resources of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) to do so.

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### **HLTF: report on investment in social infrastructure in Europe**

The mission given to the high-level task force on investing in social infrastructure in Europe (HLTF) was to raise political attention to the crucial role of social infrastructure and related services, aiming to enhance public and private investments in this sector. The report looks at investments in social infrastructure such as healthcare, education and affordable housing. It was a joint publication with the European Long-Term Investors Association (ELTI).

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### **European Commission: The 2018 ageing report: underlying assumptions and projection methodologies**

This report describes the underlying assumptions and projection methodologies used to estimate the long-term economic and budgetary impact of an ageing population. Healthcare is one of the five sectors examined in the report.

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### **European Commission: background report on the ESM stability support programme for Greece**

This report contains background analysis on the August 2015 ESM stability support programme for Greece, and on the implementation of the programme up to the conclusion of the second review in July 2017. Healthcare reforms are assessed in the report.

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### **European Commission: supplemental memorandum of understanding with Greece**

One section of this report concerns commitments to further reforms in healthcare (p. 15 and following).

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### **European Commission: post-programme surveillance report for Portugal**

This report evaluates the implementation of the reforms to be carried out by Portugal in relation to the economic assistance which it received from the EU and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It contains an assessment of the reforms in the healthcare system.

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## European Commission: post-programme surveillance report for Cyprus

This report evaluates the implementation of the reforms to be carried out by Cyprus in relation to the economic assistance it received from the EU and the IMF. It contains an assessment of the reforms in the healthcare system.

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## 7 Court of Justice of the European Union

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### Judgment: Slovak Republic v Achmea BV

In 1991 the former Czechoslovakia and the Netherlands had concluded an agreement on encouragement and reciprocal protection of investments (the 'BIT'). Following liberalisation of the sickness insurance market in Slovakia, the Dutch insurance group Achmea began, from 2004, to offer private sickness insurance services. However, in 2006, Slovakia prohibited the distribution of profits generated by private sickness insurance companies. In 2012, based on the BIT, the Slovak Republic was ordered to pay Achmea damages of around € 22.1 million due to this prohibition. In its judgment in case C-284/16, the Court finds that the arbitration clause contained in the BIT has an adverse effect upon the autonomy of EU law and is therefore incompatible with it.

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### Judgment: the public financing of the Slovak compulsory health insurance does constitute state aid

Within the Slovak compulsory health insurance system there is no competition in terms of the items covered or the level of contributions. There is, however, intense competition because individuals can freely choose their health insurance provider, and the insurance companies compete in terms of quality and services offered. In case T-216/15 the Court finds that the activity of providing compulsory health insurance in Slovakia is therefore economic in nature.

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### Judgment: agreement between Roche and Novartis to reduce the use of Avastin in ophthalmology constitutes a restriction of competition

Lucentis is authorised for the treatment of eye diseases. Avastin, while authorised only for the treatment of tumorous diseases, is also often used to treat eye diseases because its price is lower than that of Lucentis. In case C-179/16, the Court ruled that the agreement between the pharmaceutical groups Roche and Novartis, designed to reduce the use of Avastin in ophthalmology and increase the use of Lucentis, constitutes an unjustified restriction of competition.

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### Judgment: standby-time is working time

Standby-time of a worker at home who is obliged to remain physically present at a place determined by the employer and to respond to calls from his employer within a short period of time must be considered as 'working time'. The Court found in case C-518/15 that these sorts of obligations very significantly restrict a worker's opportunities for other activities.

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### Judgment: software which can use patient-specific data is a medical device

The Court found in case C--329/16 that software which includes a function making it possible to use a patient's personal data for the purposes, inter alia, of detecting

contraindications, drug interactions and excessive doses is, in respect of that function, a medical device, even if that software does not act directly in or on the human body.

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#### **Judgment: granting of access to documents by the European Medicines Agency (EMA)**

In case T-235/15, the Court dismisses the action for annulment brought by Pari Pharma GmbH against the EMA decision to grant access to the assessment report on specific medicines.

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#### **Judgment: remuneration of specialist medicine training**

The judgment relates to the transposition of directive 75/363/EEC of 1975 concerning activities of doctors, a forerunner of directive 2005/36/EC on professional qualifications. In its judgment on the joined cases C--616/16 and C--617/16, the Court finds that, according to directive 75/363/EEC, appropriate remuneration must be paid for any specialist medical training begun in 1982 and continued up to 1990.

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#### **Judgment: supplementary protection certificate for medicines**

In its judgment in case C--567/16, the Court finds that no supplementary protection certificate may be obtained on the basis of an end of procedure notice issued by the reference Member State in accordance with the Community Code for medicinal products (2001/83/EC) before the expiry of the basic patent. Such a notice is not equivalent to a marketing authorisation.

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#### **Judgment: conditions linked to a bursary for specialist medical training in another Member State**

The Court finds in case C-419/16 that Member States may, when providing a study bursary to fund specialist medical training in another Member State, attach a condition stating that the recipient doctor must practice his or her profession in the first Member State for five of the first ten years following completion of the specialisation.

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#### **Judgment: VAT on medicines provided at a discount to health insurers supplying persons it insures**

In case C-462/16, the Court finds that a discount granted, under national law, by a pharmaceutical company to a private health insurance company, results in a reduction of the VAT levied to the benefit of the pharmaceutical company.

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#### **Opinion of the Advocate General: qualifications required by those entrusted with assessing the safety of cosmetic products**

In the opinion of the Advocate General, regulation 1223/2009 on cosmetic products allows a Member State to determine which courses are regarded as 'equivalent' to courses in pharmacy, toxicology or medicine, as long as it is guaranteed that persons entrusted with assessing the safety of cosmetic products have successfully completed training which is essentially equivalent to one of the three aforementioned courses.

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#### **EFTA Surveillance Authority: particular benefits for health and child welfare services do not constitute state aid**

The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Surveillance Authority ruled that non-profit organisations providing health and child welfare services (NPOs), and KLP offering pension services to NPOs, do not carry out economic activities. Certain measures benefiting these

NPOs do not therefore constitute state aid within the meaning of the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement.

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## 8 Competition

### **UK: NHS overcharged by millions for a thyroid drug**

CMA, the United Kingdom (UK)'s competition authority, found that Concordia abused its dominant position to charge the NHS millions too much for an essential thyroid drug.

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### **France: fine imposed for obstacles to generic medicines**

The French competition authority is imposing a fine of € 25 million on the Janssen-Cilag laboratory and its parent company Johnson & Johnson for delaying and then restricting the development of generic versions of Durogesic, its original branded drug.

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### **Germany: merger between Fresenius Kabi and Fenwal approved**

The Bundeskartellamt cleared the merger between Fresenius Kabi and Fenwal. The merger affects the market for blood transfusion technology and the manufacture of products used in blood collection, filtration and processing.

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### **European Commission: An overview of subsidy disclosure practices in EU Member States**

This report, drawn up by EY on the basis of a mandate from the European Commission, gives a broad overview of subsidy disclosure practices in EU Member States between 2010 and 2014. Healthcare financing mechanisms in the EU are one of the areas addressed.

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### **European Commission: merger between Essilor and Luxottica cleared**

The Commission has approved under the EU Merger Regulation the proposed merger between Essilor and Luxottica, two leaders in the optical industry.

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### **France: broad-ranging sector-specific inquiry on the functioning of competition in the medicinal products and chemical pathology sector**

The French competition authority is launching a major sectoral inquiry into the functioning of competition in the medicinal products and chemical pathology sector. It will look in particular at the distribution of pharmaceuticals, their price regulation mechanism as well as the business development opportunities open to pharmacists.

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### **European Commission: investigation into the proposed merger of Praxair and Linde**

Praxair and Linde are two of the four largest companies active worldwide across the whole supply chains of industrial, medical and special gases. The European Commission has opened an in-depth investigation to assess the proposed merger between Praxair and Linde. The Commission is concerned that the merger may reduce competition in the supply of several crucial gases such as oxygen and helium.

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## 9 Infringement proceedings

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### **Belgium, France and Germany: transposition of the EU legislation on the recognition of professional qualifications**

The Commission decided to refer Belgium, France and Germany to the Court of Justice of the European Union for failure to notify the complete transposition of EU legislation on the recognition of professional qualifications (Directive 2013/55/EU). The revised directive should have been transposed into national law by 18 January 2016.

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### **European Commission: infringement procedure against Roche closed without penalty**

The Commission decided to close the infringement procedure against Roche Registration Ltd and its parent company Roche Holding AG. This procedure concerned the failure to meet certain obligations related to marketing authorisations for pharmaceuticals.

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### **Spain: restrictions on imports of homeopathic medicines**

The European Commission is calling upon Spain to remove restrictions on parallel imports of homeopathic medicines. Current practices make it impossible for homeopathic medicines legally traded in other EU countries to be placed on the Spanish market.

DOC [EN/NL/FR](#) HTML

## 10 Publications

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### **European Observatory: How to make sense of health system efficiency comparisons?**

The policy brief 'How to make sense of health system efficiency comparisons?', produced by the European Observatory on health systems and policies, proposes an analytical framework for understanding and interpreting the most common healthcare efficiency indicators.

DOC [EN](#) HTML

### **Book chapter: Regulation of health care: an obstacle to cross-border trade in services?**

This chapter on "Healthcare regulation: an obstacle to cross-border trade in services? On the muffled application of the EU Single Market Strategy and CETA" analyzes the impact of the EU internal market and the international trade agreements on health care regulations.

DOC [EN](#) - [FR](#) PDF

### **Book: Free movement of patients in the EU**

This book investigates the complex problems faced by European patients wishing to obtain healthcare abroad. It sheds light on the legal and non-legal obstacles to cross-border patient mobility.

DOC [EN](#) HTML

• **Article: Merger control in the hospital sector: focus on the international decision-making practice**

In light of the French competition authority's recent conditional clearance decision in the hospital care sector, this article examines the merger control experiences of other countries in this sector.

DOC [EN](#) HTML

• **Eurofound: Care homes for older Europeans: public, private and not-for-profit providers**

The report 'Care homes for older Europeans: Public, private and not-for-profit providers' investigates public and private sector care facilities for older people, looking at how they differ in the services they provide, in terms of the quality, accessibility and efficiency of these services.

DOC [EN](#) HTML

• **Article: The role of the patients' rights in cross-border healthcare directive in shaping national health systems**

This article, 'The role of the 2011 patients' rights in cross-border health care directive in shaping seven national health systems: Looking beyond patient mobility', published in Health Policy, examined the effects of this directive on health systems in seven EU Member States.

DOC [EN](#) HTML

• **Report on the state of mental health services in Europe**

Mental Health Europe (MHE) and the University of Kent-Tizard Centre have launched their report 'Mapping and Understanding Exclusion in Europe', a study which looks at the state of mental health services in Europe (35+ countries) and provides exclusive data and testimonies on this subject.

DOC [EN](#) HTML

• **Eurostat: article on healthcare personnel**

This article presents an overview of European Union (EU) statistics on dentists, pharmacists and physiotherapists. It provides information on specialist healthcare personnel as well as data pertaining to dentistry and pharmacy graduates. It is one of a set of statistical articles concerning healthcare resources in the EU.

DOC [EN](#) HTML

• **Eurostat: use of professional homecare services in the EU**

According to Eurostat, 20% of households in the EU with people needing help due to long-term health problems used professional homecare services in 2016. More than 80% of households in ten Member States had difficulty covering the costs of professional homecare.

DOC [EN](#) HTML

• **EPC: policy note on digital health**

This policy note - 'Digital health: How can the EU help make the most out of it?' - was published by the European Policy Centre (EPC). It discusses the benefits of and obstacles to the deployment of digital solutions in health and calls for the EU to develop a comprehensive approach that takes into account data protection, security, and the development of ICT infrastructure.

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## 11 Miscellaneous

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### **EIB: loan to support research into treatments for rare and chronic diseases**

The European Investment Bank (EIB) and Grifols signed an € 85 million loan to support the company's research, development and innovation (RDI) initiatives, focused on investigating new indications for plasma-derived protein therapies to treat rare and chronic diseases. The agreement is backed by the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI).

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### **EIB: financing to a German pharmaceutical company specialised in drug delivery systems**

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is providing financing of € 25 million to AMW GmbH (AMW), a German pharmaceutical company specialised in the development and production of innovative drug delivery systems. The financing is backed by the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI).

DOC [EN](#) HTML

### **EIB: loan for cancer research**

The EIB is providing a loan of € 40 million to Indivumed GmbH, a physician-led, global oncology company with headquarters in Germany. The new funding will allow Indivumed to continue its development of a global database providing cancer researchers with access to data from cancer patients, as well as investing in the latest technology to better understand complex cancer data.

DOC [EN](#) HTML

### **EIB: financing for investments in diagnostics solutions for infectious diseases**

Biocartis Group NV, an innovative molecular diagnostics company, has obtained an up to € 24 million debt financing facility from the European Investment Bank. It can be used to finance further investments in infectious diseases diagnostics solutions.

DOC [EN](#) HTML

### **WHO: financial protection for healthcare in the Czech Republic, Estonia and Latvia**

A new analysis from the World Health Organisation (WHO)/Europe compares the financial protection for healthcare in the Czech Republic, Estonia and Latvia. It concludes that households in these broadly similar countries experience markedly different levels of financial hardship when using health services.

DOC [EN](#) HTML

### **Brexit and the future for Ireland**

The Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement has published a report investigating the impact of Brexit in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The report assesses the possible consequences of Brexit on healthcare in the broadest sense and on the field of cross-border healthcare (see p. 173 and following).

DOC [EN](#) PDF

### **WHO: Global Dementia Observatory**

The WHO has launched the Global Dementia Observatory, a web-based platform to monitor progress in the provision of services to people with dementia and those who care for them, both within individual countries and worldwide.

DOC [EN](#) HTML

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