

Readers' guide

HHealth at a Glance: Europe 2018 presents key data and analysis of health and health systems in the 28 EU member states, 5 candidate countries and 3 European Free Trade Association countries.

The publication is divided in two parts. Part I contains two thematic chapters focussing on important, but often neglected, public health and health care issues. The first chapter assesses the health and economic burden of mental health problems across EU countries, making the case for greater efforts to promote better mental health at all ages. The second chapter looks at wasteful spending in health systems, focussing in particular on hospitals and pharmaceuticals, and reviewing possible strategies to reduce waste to promote a better allocation of resources.

Part II includes six chapters providing an overview of key indicators of health and health systems, based to a large extent on the European Core Health Indicators (ECHI) shortlist (https://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/echi/list_en). The structure of the last three chapters is based on the 2014 Commission Communication on effective, accessible and resilient health systems (https://ec.europa.eu/health/sites/health/files/healthcare/docs/com2014_215_final_en.pdf). New indicators have been included in this edition to reflect different aspects of the effectiveness, accessibility and resilience of health systems.

The data presented in this publication come mostly from official national statistics, and have been collected in many cases through the administration of joint questionnaires by the OECD, Eurostat and WHO. The data have been validated by the three organisations to ensure that they meet high standards of data quality and comparability. Some data also come from European surveys co-ordinated by Eurostat, notably the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions Survey (EU-SILC) and the second wave of the European Health Interview Survey (EHIS), as well as from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC), and other sources.

Presentation of indicators and calculation of EU averages

With the exception of the first two thematic chapters, all indicators in the rest of the publication are presented over two pages. The first page provides a brief commentary highlighting the key findings conveyed by the data, defines the indicator and signals any significant data comparability limitation. On the facing page is a set of figures. These typically show current levels of the indicator and, where possible, trends over time. For those countries that have a relatively small population (less than 1 million), three-year averages are often calculated to minimise random errors due to small numbers.

The average in the figures includes only EU member states and is generally calculated as a *population-weighted average* of all the EU member states presented (up to 28 if there is full data coverage). In some cases, the average is calculated based on the unweighted

average of EU countries, notably when there is missing data for several countries or when the data owners have already calculated and reported unweighted EU averages.

Population figures

The population figures used to calculate rates per capita and the population-weighted EU averages come from the Eurostat demographics database. The data were extracted in early June 2018 and relate to mid-year estimates (calculated as the average between the beginning and end of the year). Population estimates are subject to revision, so they may differ from the latest population figures released by Eurostat or national statistical offices.

Data limitations

Limitations in data comparability are indicated both in the text (in the box related to “Definition and comparability”) as well as in footnotes underneath the charts.

Data sources

Readers interested in using the data presented in this publication for further analysis and research are encouraged to consult the full documentation of definitions, sources and methods contained in *OECD Health Statistics* for all OECD member countries, including 23 EU member states and four additional countries (Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey). This information is available in OECD.Stat (<http://stats.oecd.org/index.aspx?DataSetCode=HEALTH>). For the nine other countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Malta, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia), readers are invited to consult the Eurostat database for more information on sources and methods: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database>.

Readers interested in an interactive presentation of the European Core Health Indicators (ECHI) can consult DG SANTE's ECHI data tool at http://ec.europa.eu/health/indicators/indicators/index_en.htm.

Readers interested in indicators that quantify the burden of cancer in Europe can also visit the JRC's European Cancer Information System (ECIS): <https://ecis.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>.



From:
Health at a Glance: Europe 2018
State of Health in the EU Cycle

Access the complete publication at:
https://doi.org/10.1787/health_glance_eur-2018-en

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD/European Union (2018), "Readers' guide", in *Health at a Glance: Europe 2018: State of Health in the EU Cycle*, OECD Publishing, Paris/European Union, Brussels.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1787/health_glance_eur-2018-3-en

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