



Dear colleagues

This edition follows our Board meeting held online on 24 July, when we approved proposed amendments to the Critical Medicines Act, following our statement published in June (see page 7). We also held an exceptional Board meeting on 29 July, resulting in the adoption of a statement expressing deep concern over the humanitarian situation in Gaza (see page 5).

In July, I gave an address at the launch of the [Charter of Rome](#) on investment in health, hosted by the Italian National Federation of the Orders of Surgeons and Dentists (FNOMCeO). I emphasised that European doctors are committed to spreading the message of the importance of adequately financing healthcare systems to European policymaking. In this regard my opening letter in our [summer magazine](#) highlights that health must be incorporated into the EU's current competitiveness agenda.

We welcome you to read all this and more in this month's edition.

Dr Ole Johan Bakke

CPME President



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Board of Directors meeting – 24 July 2025

- ▶ Internal Affairs 3
- ▶ Policies 3

CPME News

- ▶ CPME Statement on humanitarian situation in Gaza 5
- ▶ Summer Magazine: What role for prevention in solving the health workforce crisis? 6
- ▶ European doctors' proposals to improve the Critical Medicines Act 7
- ▶ Health for all: the next EU budget as a driver for clean air for all 7
- ▶ European doctors and veterinarians team up to warn against contact with animals when abroad to prevent rabies 8

Feature

- ▶ European Commission publishes proposal for the EU budget 2028-2034 9

Monitoring

- ▶ Political Outlook 11
- ▶ Professional Practice 12
- ▶ Public Health 13
- ▶ Pharmaceuticals & Healthcare 14
- ▶ Digital Health 15

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – 24 JULY 2025

Internal Affairs

Outline for Amendments to Rules of Procedure

- ▶ The Board discussed potential amendments to the Rules of Procedure, in particular on engagement with non-members, and response to global humanitarian situations.

Policies

HERA engagement

- ▶ The Board approved the engagement with HERA Civil Society Forum for the new mandate 2025–2028.

Amendments to the Critical Medicines Act

- ▶ The Board approved the CPME's proposed amendments.

The Board discussed a formal subsidiarity complaint by the French senate against the European Commission in relation to the proposal's stockpiling provision, and will monitor the decision.

UEMS/UEMO Joint Statement on Recognition of General Practice

- ▶ The Board approved the joint statement.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – 24 JULY 2025

EMA Emergency Task Force engagement

- ▶ The Board approved the application to engage with the EMA Emergency Task Force, and nominated Dr Christiaan Keijzer for the role.

The Board took note that the UK is running a national pandemic preparedness exercise which will take place at all governmental levels and shall take place from September to November.

Charter of Rome on investing in health

- ▶ The CPME President reported on the conference launching the Charter of Rome on investment in health hosted FNOMCeO.

The charter was signed by the national medical associations from Italy, France, Spain, Greece, Germany and Portugal.

Invitation to join advisory board of Human Values Project on Large Language Models

- ▶ The Board decided to nominate Vice President Dr Jacqueline Rossant-Lumbroso to the advisory board of the project.

The Board noted that the project, which is still in proposal phase, aims to create a values map to inform large language models. CPME is invited to nominate an expert to the advisory board.

CPME Statement on humanitarian situation in Gaza

The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) [expresses](#) deep concern about the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza and the desperate levels of starvation experienced by the population.

CPME strongly stresses that the international principle of medical neutrality and human rights must be respected.

European doctors stand in solidarity with all victims of this conflict, with healthcare professionals and the people of Gaza who are suffering a severe and avoidable humanitarian crisis. Their situation must not be worsened by actions that are in conflict with international law and ethics.

CPME calls for:

- The immediate lifting of aid restrictions by the Israeli government and the enabling of safe aid distribution through well-established partnerships such as the UN.
- Adherence to international humanitarian law so that civilians, health facilities and health professionals are not military targets. Doctors and other healthcare professionals must not be prevented from performing their professional duties, and all efforts must be made to restore access to healthcare.
- EU governments to exert diplomatic measures to bring about a permanent ceasefire.

On 9 July, the WMA published a [Resolution](#) on the Protection of Healthcare in Israel and Gaza, and a further [press release](#) on 25 July

Summer Magazine: What role for prevention in solving the health workforce crisis?

Our [summer magazine](#), opens with a letter from our President, Dr Ole Johan Bakke, who outlines that investing in health must be part of Europe's competitive edge. He concludes that investing in health is not a cost, but a long-term investment in the Europe's future, promoting equity, resilience, and shared prosperity.

The two main themes of the magazine are the ongoing health workforce crisis and the need for prevention to ease pressure on the health system. The editorial by CPME Vice President Dr Andreas Botzlar warns that when the health workforce breaks, the system follows. He urges EU institutions and national authorities to seize this moment to move beyond declarations and deliver the concrete, coordinated strategies and investments needed to support Europe's healthcare professionals and ensure high-quality care for all patients.

Two articles focus on alcohol harm at a vital moment. WHO/Europe reports on the recently launched European Health Alliance on Alcohol (EHAA), a coalition of medical, clinical, and health professional organisations determined to tackle the harm caused by alcohol. In addition, the Irish Medical Organisation provides an update on the progress of Ireland's Public Health Bill, which introduces a ground-breaking range of evidence-based measures to reduce alcohol consumption. However, seven years after the Act was passed, the legislation is still not fully implemented, and in July the deadline for compliance has been delayed by the Irish government until 2028. The EHAA published a [letter](#) urging for the timely implementation of the legislation.

Our EU Policy Adviser, Diogo Teixeira Pereira, provides an article explaining why paper medicine package leaflets matter to patients and calling for them to be maintained by pharmaceutical companies in the paper format, and the electronic format should be a complementary tool. Finally, FEMS President Dr Alessandra Spedicato writes about doctors in the digital age: rights, protections and the role of trade unions.

European doctors' proposals to improve the Critical Medicines Act

European doctors [call](#) for the Critical Medicines Act to address security of supply for the benefit of European patients, leaving no one behind.

We urge the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union to improve the proposed Act, including the following amendments:

- Medicines should be available in all Member States to promote equitable access of medicines to all patients in the EU.
- Ensure that any public funding granted to pharmaceutical companies should go hand in hand with strong obligations regarding security of supply, affordability and transparency
- Ensure that doctors, pharmacists and other healthcare professionals have are adequately and permanently represented at the Critical Medicines Coordination Group. Healthcare professionals are key partners in mitigating the negative impact of shortages on patient safety and health.

Read our full proposed amendments [here](#).

Health for all: the next EU budget as a driver for clean air for all

The EU Healthy Air Coalition (EUHAC) of which CPME is a founding member, [sent](#) a letter to European Commission President Von der Leyen regarding the post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).

The letter outlines that, to safeguard the Union's security, equitable prosperity and wellbeing, ending harmful subsidies and providing ambitious and dedicated investments for clean air measures need to be firmly anchored in the next MFF as top priorities.

European doctors and veterinarians team up to warn against contact with animals when abroad to prevent rabies

CPME and the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) have teamed up to remind people to avoid contact with animals when travelling abroad to prevent rabies. The campaign highlights that rabies is a fatal disease and still common in parts of the world. It aims to inform people that rabies is transmitted to humans when an infected animal bites or scratches a person.

Three infographics have been developed to raise awareness of rabies, a fatal disease that is transmitted to humans when an infected animal bites or scratches a person. All three image are available on our [LinkedIn page](#).



FEATURE

European Commission publishes proposal for the EU budget 2028-2034

On 16 July, the European Commission presented its [proposal](#) for the EU's long-term 2028-2034 budget—officially named the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). Valued at nearly €2 trillion, the proposed budget emphasises flexibility, competitiveness, and strategic autonomy, but introduces major structural changes for health funding.

Unlike the 2021–2027 cycle, which included a standalone EU4Health programme, the proposal does not allocate a dedicated line for health. Instead, health is integrated into the broader European Competitiveness Fund (ECF), a €409 billion programme aimed at supporting research, innovation, digitalisation, biotech, and health. Within this, a total of €22.6 billion is earmarked for health and biotech, but precise allocations remain unclear.

Civil society groups and public health advocates have raised concerns that core health priorities—such as disease prevention, mental health, and support for health NGOs—may be diluted within broader industrial objectives. Critics argue that the lack of a dedicated health programme could weaken the EU's capacity to address long-term challenges such as health inequalities, chronic disease, and public health infrastructure.

The proposal does introduce an innovative fiscal tool: the Tobacco Excise Duty Own Resource (TEDOR), expected to generate €11.2 billion annually. Under the Commission's proposal, the EU would collect 15% of each EU country's tobacco tax revenue. The levy would be collected regardless of how high or low national tobacco tax rates are. Importantly, the 15% levy is not linked to the ongoing revision of the Tobacco Taxation Directive (TED), which will soon be negotiated separately (see page 13).

The proposal has received criticisms from national governments, indicating that significant negotiation with the European Parliament and Council may take place before final adoption expected in 2026.

FEATURE

Such critics indicate that significant negotiation with the European Parliament and Council lies ahead, with final adoption expected in 2026.

2025 EU4Health Work Programme cuts funding for health NGOs

The European Commission [published](#) its 2025 work plan for EU4Health, confirming that operating grants for the day to day running of health NGOs have been cut entirely. Funding of civil society organisations will be limited to funding for action grants. Numerous NGOs have reduced staff in recent weeks due to the cuts.

Member states pushed the Commission to commit to restore the grants in 2026 at a meeting of the EU4Health Programme Committee, but the executive declined. The cuts underline a concern for the loss of focus on public health, including in the EU's long-term budget proposal, with increasing focus on competitiveness.

The programme outlines spending plans for a little over €571 million, assigning it to various programs and initiatives. The bulk of the funds (€380 million) will go toward crisis preparedness. The next big allocation is going towards work to strengthen health systems and the health care workforce (€71 million), and over €60 million is going to work on cancer, cardiovascular, and other non-communicable diseases.

Digital health will receive nearly €40 million and health promotion and disease prevention has an allocation of €7.6 million in total.

MONITORING

Political Outlook

Denmark holds the Presidency of the Council of the European Union

On 19 June 2025, Denmark published its [programme](#), with the following priorities for health:

- Work to conclude negotiations with the European Parliament on the pharmaceutical package.
- Initiate and prioritise a review of the Commission's proposal regarding critical medicines.
- Focus on the Commission's strategies for life science and medical countermeasures.
- Advance the sixth revision of the directive on carcinogens, mutagens and reprotoxic substances at work as much as possible.
- Under the auspices of the WHO, conduct negotiations in relation to the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (COP11) and on the Pandemic Convention.

On 17 July, the European Parliament published an [overview](#) of Denmark's priorities in relation to its own agenda, highlighting regulatory simplification, the green transition, digital innovation, and enhanced EU competitiveness and security. Across various committees, the Presidency focuses on advancing key legislative negotiations, such as the common agricultural policy, cohesion policy, and rule of law conditionality in EU fund allocation.

On 16 July, Sophie Løhde, Danish Minister for Interior and Health, addressed the SANT committee meeting, stating that strengthening EU preparedness through better medical countermeasures and improving access to affordable medicines are key priorities.

MEPs raised concerns about medicine affordability, rare diseases, and health workforce shortages, urging more focus on women's health and better coordination of health and military crisis preparedness. They also highlight the importance of tackling antimicrobial resistance and PFAS (also known as forever chemicals), which align with broader environmental and health sustainability goals.

MONITORING

Professional Practice

Report on exchange of views on European Parliament's health workforce report

On 15 July, the European Parliament's EMPL and SANT Committees held a joint exchange of views with the European Commission on the own-initiative (INI) report titled "An EU health workforce crisis plan: sustainability of healthcare systems and employment and working conditions in the healthcare sector." Overall, the parties broadly agree on the urgency of addressing the health workforce crisis but differ in approach. Some MEPs called for stronger EU-level action, including increased funding and legislation, while others emphasised subsidiarity, improving access to healthcare in rural areas and national-level reforms. MEPs on the right stressed national sovereignty. A [report](#) is available on our members' section.

CPME continues to disseminate European doctors' views on the report and is engaging on a hearing expected to take place following the summer recess.

Report on Labour Shortages in Europe

On 27 June, the European Labour Authority published a [report](#) on labour shortages and surpluses in Europe in 2024. The report identifies persistent and severe labour shortages across many occupations in the EU, particularly in healthcare. Critical shortage roles include specialist medical practitioners, nurses, physiotherapists, and healthcare assistants. Twenty-one percent of countries report shortages of specialist medical practitioners, with 43 percent of these shortages classified as high severity. Eighteen percent of countries report shortages of generalist medical practitioners, and 28 percent of these are considered high severity. Countries such as Germany, Finland, and Norway face particularly acute deficits in generalist medical practitioners. The analysis is based on data from EURES and Eurostat and supplemented by stakeholder input.

MONITORING

Public Health

Childhood vaccination rates lag in Europe

On 15 July, the WHO and UNICEF [published](#) new data showing that childhood vaccination coverage in Europe and Central Asia in 2024 remained below pre-pandemic levels. While global vaccination rates have slightly improved, the European Region faces stagnation and outbreaks, with nearly 300,000 pertussis cases and over 125,000 measles cases reported in 2024. Experts warn that 95% vaccination coverage is needed annually in every community to achieve herd immunity, yet more than half of countries fell short of this target.

According to data, between 2019 and 2024, coverage fell slightly across key vaccines: The second dose of MMR dropped from 92% to 91%, and the third doses of DTP and polio from 95% to 93%, and the third hepatitis from 92% to 91%. More data can be accessed [here](#).

European Commission modernises Tobacco Taxation Directive

On 16 July, the European Commission proposed a [revision](#) of the EU's Tobacco Taxation Directive. Key changes include higher minimum tax rates, new taxes on emerging products, and stricter controls on raw tobacco to combat illegal manufacturing. The revised Directive expects to generate €15 billion in additional tax revenue annually, save €6 billion in health-care costs, and reduce tax fraud linked to illicit tobacco trade.

CPME is evaluating the proposal.

MONITORING

Pharmaceuticals & Healthcare

EU stockpiling and medical countermeasures strategies

On 9 July, the European Commission [published](#) two strategies designed to improve this access during crises: an EU stockpiling strategy and a medical countermeasures (MCM) strategy. The EU's comprehensive stockpiling strategy aims to improve crisis preparedness through coordinated national efforts, expanded EU-level reserves, and stronger transport, logistics, and partnerships, while the medical countermeasures strategy focuses on faster development, production. Ensuring access to essential tools such as vaccines and antibiotics is a key part of the EU's wider strategy to strengthen preparedness for future crises.

CPME published a [statement](#) in response to the European Commission's call for evidence on the Strategy to Support Medical Countermeasures Against Public Health Threats. After the publication of the Commission proposal, CPME stresses that the MCM strategy overlooks the health workforce crisis, putting the deployment of preparedness measures at risk. We finally underlined that without decisive measures to strengthen the health workforce; current projections indicate a breakdown in health service sustainability.

CPME is evaluating the next steps on the strategies.

Commission makes paper leaflets for medical devices subject to request

On 25 June, the European Commission [announced](#) a new regulation introducing electronic instructions for medical devices. Instructions on paper will remain available on request. CPME provided [input](#) to the European Commission draft implementing regulation on medical devices – electronic instructions for use. CPME is strongly advocates that paper instructions should be maintained in parallel.

MONITORING

Digital Health

Minimising the risks children and young people face online

On 14 July, the European Commission [presented](#) new [guidelines](#) to protect minors online, as well as a prototype of an age-verification app focusing on privacy, safety, and reducing exposure to harmful content, cyberbullying, and addictive practices. The app that lets users prove they are over 18 without revealing personal details, ensuring strong privacy standards. This app is based on the same technology as the upcoming European Digital Identity Wallets, and it will be further tested with EU countries and platforms to support safer, age-appropriate online experiences.

AI evidence pathway for operationalising trustworthy AI in health

The Joint Research Centre of the European Union published a report entitled AI evidence pathway for operationalising trustworthy AI in health: An ontology unfolding ethical principles into translational and fundamental concepts.

The report concludes that healthcare has a strong potential for using artificial intelligence (AI) due to its rich and varied data, but its adoption is hindered by three main challenges. First, a trust barrier caused by vague ethical principles and inconsistent standards across organisations. Second, a complexity barrier due to healthcare's intricate systems needing cross-disciplinary collaboration, which is limited by low literacy outside specific domains. Third, a technical barrier involving interoperability and infrastructure challenges, worsened by chronic underfunding of health systems.

Commission launches AI tools on platform for researchers and industry

On 24 June, the European Commission [launched](#) new features on its AI-on-Demand platform to support researchers and industry with trustworthy AI tools. This includes an AI marketplace, low-code development tools, and secure solutions for generative AI and large language models.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Sarada Das

Secretary General

Sara Roda

Senior EU Policy Adviser

Markus Kujawa

Senior EU Policy Adviser

Diogo Teixeira Pereira

EU Policy Adviser

Dimitri Eerens

Junior EU Policy Adviser

EDITORS

Calum MacKichan, Ph.D.

Communication Officer

Dr Helena Arsov

EMSA Intern

CONTACT

For feedback, further information, questions or to express an interest to contribute to future editions, please contact:

Calum MacKichan

calum.mackichan@cpme.eu

Rue Guimard 15 1040

Brussels, Belgium

T: +32 2732 72 02

E: secretariat@cpme.eu

www.cpme.eu

FOLLOW US

[X](#) [LINKEDIN](#) [BLUESKY](#) [INSTAGRAM](#) [YOUTUBE](#)