

## PRESS RELEASE

### Rise like a phoenix – European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) 2021 to discuss renewed multilateralism, health competences and citizen engagement at the core of a resilient Europe

- For its second digital edition, the European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) 2021 will explore opportunities for renewed approaches to multilateralism, subsidiarity, and a new social contract under the main theme “Rise like a phoenix – Health at the heart of a resilient future for Europe”.
- The 2021 edition offers an updated format, featuring three virtual plenaries with an exciting line-up of cross-sectoral and multinational high-level speakers, including European health ministers from Austria, Latvia, and Slovenia, and international organisations’ leaders such as **Hans Kluge**, Regional Director for the World Health Organization’s (WHO) Regional Office for Europe.
- Thanks to a more ambitious format and empowered by interactive tools, the EHFG 2021 will provide participants with a unique opportunity to actively engage through plenaries, workshops, and networking spaces.

You can register for the online EHFG 2021 [here](#).

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**28 July 2021, Bad Hofgastein, Austria** – The European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) 2021 edition, “Rise like a phoenix – Health at the heart of a resilient future for Europe” sets itself the clear objective to call for more solidarity, equity, and transformation in health, within Europe and on the global stage. With its renewed ambition for enhanced stakeholder collaboration and policy-shaping, the EHFG 2021 edition will feature a series of online sessions over five days and run from **27<sup>th</sup> September to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021**.

While Europe is now progressing well with the roll-out of its COVID-19 vaccination strategy, a large part of the world is still grappling with the challenges of access to vaccines and therapeutics. The EHFG 2021 will bring together stakeholders to discuss how Europe and the rest of the world can rise from this crisis as more resilient, smarter, and more equitable societies.

The first plenary will reflect on ways for Europe to better cooperate on the international stage and strengthen true multilateralism, to better prepare for future crises. The second plenary will provide an integral part of the Conference on the Future of Europe. As such, it will offer a unique opportunity for civil society actors and citizens at large, to co-develop a shared vision on health and solidarity in Europe. The third plenary will explore what a renewed social contract could look like, with more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable policies.

The EHFG 2021 will also feature a variety of thematic sessions, which will be grouped under four tracks: transforming tomorrow (1), complex systems (2), joining forces for health (3), and levelling up together (4). Sessions in the first track will consider approaches with transformative potential in areas like health systems resilience, cancer care, data governance, rare diseases, and digital health. The second track will discuss future visions for the healthcare workforce, healthcare financing, healthy economies, the climate crisis, and more. The third track will envision a healthier and more resilient Europe in solidarity with the rest of the world and dive into new models of collaboration.

Finally, the last track will consider how to empower communities, improve communication between experts, decision-makers and citizens, and make marginalised voices heard to lead the way to a more equitable tomorrow. Overall, the above-mentioned tracks will aim to highlight challenges pertaining to the management of “poly-pandemics”, comprising multi-faceted crises which contain environmental, economic, democratic challenges, and the widening divide between rich and poor.

Key speakers at the EHFG 2021 include:

- Health ministers from **Austria, Latvia, and Slovenia**
- **Hans Kluge**, Regional Director for Europe, World Health Organization
- **Andrea Ammon**, Director, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
- **Jeremy Farrar**, Director, Wellcome Trust
- **Ilona Kickbusch**, Founding Director and Chair of the Global Health Centre of the Graduate Institute for International and Development Studies Geneva
- **Mario Monti**, Chair, Pan-European Commission on Health and Sustainable Development
- **Obiageli Ezekwesili**, Senior Economic Advisor, Africa Economic Development Policy Initiative
- **Christina Pagel**, Professor of Operational Research, University College London

Welcoming the 2021 edition of the EHFG, Clemens Martin Auer, EHFG President said: *“As we aim to build forward stronger and smarter, we cannot forget the values of solidarity at the core of the European project. Multilateralism must work and deliver on crucial topics, such as safeguarding global production capacities for vaccines and shared stockpiling for much needed medical products. If we don’t resolve the underlying issues preventing us from exercising true global solidarity, we might never go beyond moral declarations, and therefore risk missing the goal of leaving no one behind. The crisis has provided us with a unique opportunity to lead the way to a new paradigm which places true multilateralism, tailored subsidiarity, and a renewed social contract at the core of more resilient and equitable societies”.*

Since its creation in 1998, and now more than ever since the last 2 years, the EHFG has risen to the challenge of adapting its format to attract and give a voice to a diverse audience of cross-sectoral and multinational stakeholders. This year again, the EHFG 2021 edition will offer a unique platform to shape health policy making on both European and global stages.

#### About European Health Forum Gastein

The European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) was founded in 1998 as a European health policy conference. It aims to provide a platform for all stakeholders from the fields of public health and beyond. Over the past decade, the EHFG has established itself as an indispensable institution in the scope of European health policy. It has made a decisive contribution to the development of guidelines and above all the cross-border exchange of experience, information, and cooperation. Leading experts traditionally participate in the annual conference held in the Gastein Valley in the Austrian Alps in late September/early October. Since 2020 and due to COVID-19, the conference is being held in a fully virtual format and has been extended from three to five days in its 2021 edition.