

European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) 2023 set to tackle pressing challenges faced by health systems

- From 26 – 29 September, the hybrid **European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG)**, guided by the theme “*Health systems in crisis – countering shockwaves and fatigue*”, will explore how crises can help catalyse the development of new approaches to health system challenges.
- The EHFG 2023 is co-organised with the Austrian Federal Ministry for Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection and in collaboration with the European Commission and, for the first time, the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe.
- The [Austrian Health Forum Gastein](#) will take place as a pre-event to the EHFG 2023 from 25 – 26 September. The programme seeks to tackle pertinent healthcare challenges, exploring broader European health policies, strategies, and initiatives while focusing on the Austrian context.
- The [Women in Global Health Austria Chapter](#) will officially launch on 26 September, in the framework of the EHFG 2023. The initiative aims to create a community of engaged people across Austria to jointly work towards achieving gender equality in global health leadership.

Media accreditation is now open – Contact the press office at press@ehfg.org or +43 664 5438 701 for your registration code.

For general enquiries, please contact info@ehfg.org.

11 July 2023, Bad Hofgastein, Austria – With the theme “Health systems in crisis – countering shockwaves and fatigue”, the 26th [European Health Forum Gastein](#) (EHFG) will bring together speakers from across the spectrum of government, the European Commission, the World Health Organization, academia, industry, and civil society for its hybrid conference taking place in the picturesque Gastein Valley from **26 – 29 September 2023**.

Facing significant challenges pre-COVID-19, the pandemic and the ensuing permacrisis have only exacerbated the situation, stretching health systems, and in particular the health and social care workforce, to their limits. While there is a permeable sense of fatigue caused by a feeling that sometimes the challenges we are facing are beyond our control and power to influence, shockwaves and crises can help catalyse the development of new approaches to age-old problems. To truly address the health system crisis, co-create healthier societies, and ride out the current shockwaves, stakeholders in health must prevent the cornerstones of our systems from crumbling, and fashion long-term sustainable solutions that support health and well-being, in partnership with actors in other sectors that support health and well-being.

Setting the scene for this year's conference, the first EHFG 2023 plenary will reflect on why the case for building more resilient health systems has never been more urgent. Building on this discussion, the second plenary will take a deep dive into the challenge of human resources for health and care. Key issues to be explored include a changing labour market: different expectations of work, an ageing workforce and mobility and migration leading to acute shortages and uneven distribution of healthcare professionals, and medical deserts in some areas. Finally, coming together in the closing plenary, prominent actors will consider the measures needed to ensure the ongoing sustainability and safeguarding of people-centred social security and welfare systems. Discussions will include the main asks for health from the next European constituency.

Key speakers at the EHFG 2023 include (in alphabetical order):

- **Andrea Ammon**, Director, European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
- **Andrea Brandolini**, Director General for Economics, Statistics and Research, Bank of Italy
- **Chris Fearne**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Health, Malta
- **Sandra Gallina**, Director-General, European Commission Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety
- **Hans Henri P. Kluge**, Regional Director for Europe, World Health Organization
- **Stella Kyriakides**, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety
- **Johannes Rauch**, Federal Minister of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection, Austria
- **Frank Vandenbroucke**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Social Affairs and Public Health, Belgium

“The unprecedented crisis facing health systems in Europe has exhausted our health workers and eroded people’s trust in their government and health authorities,” said WHO Regional Director for Europe, Hans Henri P. Kluge. “This year’s European Health Forum Gastein will be a unique opportunity for us to join forces across sectors, and as WHO/Europe we will look forward to working with all partners to find new solutions to address these challenges.”

Find further information about this year’s EHFG sessions and speakers on the newly released [programme](#).

#EHFG2023

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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 26 years, the EHFG has established itself as an indispensable institution in the scope of European health policy. With its annual conference and other events and projects, it has made a decisive contribution to the development of guidelines and above all the cross-border exchange of experience, information, and cooperation. Leading European experts traditionally participate in the annual conference held in the Gastein Valley in the Austrian Alps in late September.