



Germany's Presidency of the Council of the EU 2020: Here is what the Federal Ministry of Health (BMG) is planning

On 1 July 2020, Germany has assumed the Presidency of the Council of the European Union (EU). The following is an overview of the Federal Ministry of Health's focus areas and events during Germany's Presidency of the Council of the EU in the field of health:

The Federal Ministry of Health's national presidency programme and thematic priorities

The Federal Government's national presidency programme sets out the main projects for the duration of Germany's Council Presidency. The focus areas were decisively influenced by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- overcoming the COVID-19 crisis permanently and securing economic recovery,
- a stronger and more innovative Europe,
- a fair Europe,
- a sustainable Europe,
- a Europe of security and common values,
- a strong Europe in the world.

The motto of Germany's Presidency of the Council of the EU is: Together for Europe's recovery.

The COVID-19 pandemic also essentially determines the focus areas the Federal Ministry of Health has set itself for Germany's Council Presidency. They stand for the guiding principle that the Federal Ministry of Health has chosen for the Council Presidency – **Acting together. Towards European Health Sovereignty:**

- Improving **EU crisis management**, *inter alia* by strengthening the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). The Federal Ministry of Health will put forward the following aspects for discussion: enhancing forecasting power, creating a comparable data base in the EU Member States and developing a digital early warning system.

- Ensuring the **supply of medicinal products**, *inter alia* by agreeing on concrete measures to ensure the quality of active pharmaceutical ingredients, improve transparency regarding manufacturing sites and diversification, as well as through European cooperation in expanding and strengthening active pharmaceutical ingredients manufacturing sites for essential medicinal products.
- Improving **access to and sharing of health data**, *inter alia* by paving the way for a European Health Data Space characterised by transparency and legal certainty. Precisely the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the importance of sharing data to enable informed decision-making. The right framework conditions and corresponding interoperable infrastructures are needed to be able to process health data across the EU safely and in citizens' best interests.
- Strengthening the **EU's role in global health**, among other things with the aim of having it play a more active role in international organisations such as the World Health Organization. To this end, the Federal Ministry of Health will continue the initiative to strengthen the EU's role in global health launched under Finland's Council Presidency.

On 16 July 2020, the Federal Ministry of Health will start by holding the **Informal Meeting of Health Ministers** during which we will join our European partners to talk about the lessons to be learned from the COVID-19 pandemic. Specifically, the Federal Ministry of Health wishes to discuss ways to strengthen the ECDC and guarantee the supply of medicinal products. We will also give an outlook on our digital agenda with its focus on the creation of an EU Health Data Space.

The goals of the Federal Ministry of Health in the field of digital health will also be the subject of our **High-Level Conference "Digital Health 2020 – EU on the Move" on 11 November 2020**. Opting for an innovative conference concept, the Federal Ministry of Health will demonstrate the benefits of big data and AI by following a patient's journey through the different areas of the health care system. The Federal Ministry aims to discuss this experience with the international professional community, other Member States, the European institutions and civil society.

At this year's World Health Summit from 25 to 27 October 2020, the Federal Ministry of Health, together with our trio partners, will present an intermediate assessment of the initiative to strengthen the EU's role in global health.

The **Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO)**, to be held on 2 December 2020 in Brussels, will give the Federal Ministry of Health an opportunity to sum up the results of the Council Presidency in the form of Council conclusions and hand over the baton to Portugal, the country next in line to assume the Council Presidency on 1 January 2021.

The **higher federal authorities** operating within the remit of the Federal Ministry of Health are also closely involved in its programme. The Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices, the Robert Koch Institute and the Paul Ehrlich Institute will be organising several expert events on medicinal products, medical devices and public health.

The Federal Ministry of Health has also given **associations, the self-administration partners and research facilities** in the healthcare sector the opportunity to become involved by holding events of their own that are thematically linked to our focus areas.

All events to be held during the six-month programme can be accessed via the website of the Federal Ministry of Health.

Relevant health projects at EU level

In addition to pursuing the Federal Ministry of Health's own goals and the Presidency's focus areas, it is the responsibility of the Presidency of the Council of the EU to lead discussions in bodies at EU level on current and new legislative and non-legislative EU projects, while observing the interests of all Member States, also vis-à-vis the other EU institutions.

Very important for the German Council Presidency in terms of content is the **European Commission 2020 Work Programme**, which was modified in May following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. **It announces Europe's Beating Cancer Plan and an EU Pharmaceutical Strategy**. Since the Beating Cancer Plan is an important topic during the Council Presidency, the Federal Ministry of Health will play a constructive role in the already initiated development process. In the context of Germany's Council Presidency, the Federal Ministry of Health will assist in drawing up the long-term EU Pharmaceutical Strategy. The Federal Ministry of Health welcomes the German Cancer Research Centre in Heidelberg's events during the Presidency. The topic of a European drug strategy is to be addressed by the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs, the Council of the EU's lead agency for work on drugs.

The Federal Ministry of Health will discuss the new **EU4Health Programme** during the Presidency and aspires to finalise the negotiations in the course of Germany's Presidency. The Federal Ministry of Health will further pursue the discussions on the **Health Technology Assessment (HTA) regulation proposal** in the council working groups with the other Member States.

It remains to be seen whether the EU Commission passes additional health-related projects, which the Federal Ministry of Health would, of course, then also tackle in the course of the Council Presidency.

Trio presidency

The German Council Presidency also marks the start of a new trio presidency. For the second time since 2007, Germany, Portugal and Slovenia form a trio presidency. Together with Portugal and Slovenia, the Federal Ministry of Health wishes to preserve continuity in the Presidency's work in the health sector over the course of these 18 months. In agreement with the trio partners, the Federal Ministry of Health has set itself the goal of continuing to improve the EU's crisis response, strengthening the Union Civil Protection Mechanism and existing pan-European structures such as the ECDC, as well as promoting the digital exchange of health data, while paying utmost respect to data protection. Furthermore, the trio partners will continue the joint initiative to strengthen the EU's role in global health.

Press and public relations

The web platform eu2020.de represents the central communications infrastructure for the entire Federal Government. For the Federal Ministry of Health, the website **www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/eu2020** and the social media channels Twitter, Facebook and Instagram serve as the central places of communication for the German Council Presidency's topics and dates regarding health. Our official hashtag is **#EU2020BMG**.

The Press Office of the Federal Ministry of Health is at your disposal as a central point of contact for all topics relating to the presidency programme during Germany's Council Presidency.

Contact details:

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Important events

(All other events at www.bundesgesundheitsministerium.de/eu2020)

Date	Event title
16 July 2020	Informal Meeting of Health Ministers
3 September 2020	High-level conference on improving cancer care in Europe
14 October 2020	EU National Drug Coordinators Meeting
25 – 27 October 2020	World Health Summit (WHS)
11 November 2020	High-level Conference “Digital Health 2020 – EU on the Move”
12 - 13 November 2020	Meeting of the European eHealth Network
26 November 2020	21 st Century Challenges for the eHealth National Competence Centres in Europe
30 November 2020	The German genome initiative “genomDE”
2 December 2020	Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO)