



July 2025

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International & European Institutions



World report on social determinants of health equity

WHO

A landmark report on global health equity sheds a light on the causes and impacts of health equity, while also going in-depth on how they can be addressed. Stark inequities exist between and within countries, caused by a wide range of intersecting factors. Based on the social determinants of health, this report gives a comprehensive overview, significantly helping our understanding on how to achieve health equity.

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Tackling inequalities in people's access to healthcare

European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

Across Europe, disparities in access to healthcare are increasing, according to the European Economic and Social Committee. To address this issue, they have adopted an own-initiative opinion focusing on a number of key recommendations. It includes 12 considerations on a wide range of topics, including on the cost-of-living crisis, support for low-income groups, and the importance of EU initiative slike the EU4Health programme or European Care Strategy.

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World Health Day 2025: Reaffirming the commitment to Social Rights and Health Equity

Council of Europe

On the occasion of World Health Day, the Council of Europe and its European Committee of Social Rights calls specific attention to health as a fundamental right, especially for marginalised and vulnerable groups. This is particularly important when approach health in the wider ecosystem of social justice.

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83% of people live within a 15-minute drive of a hospital

Eurostat

Eurostat has released new data on the proximity to hospitals for Europeans. Though 4 out of 5 Europeans live within a 15-minute drive, there are regions particularly in Greece and Romania where there are large access issues. This helps inform a European level overview on where extra efforts are needed to ensure everyone is able to access healthcare.

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Council of Europe must recognise the right to a healthy environment, UN experts urge

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

With climate change, biodiversity loss, and toxic pollution, we face not only a planetary crisis, but one of inequity as well. Recognising the right to a healthy environment touches upon both these issues, but governments insufficiently do this. OHCHR makes reference to UN resolutions signed on this by Council of Europe States, reiterating the need for the recognition of this right.

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Social protection has a strong impact on the reduction of inequalities

International Labour Organization (ILO)

In 2024, a report on universal social protection was released by ILO, driving a discussion on income protection as a way to combat inequities. In a recent panel, they showed the cross-sectoral effects of social protection with a discussion including health experts, researchers and finance specialists. WHO speakers expanded on the impact of economic inequity with a focus on reduced life expectancy, higher infant mortality and mental health.

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Research Developments

THE LANCET

Achieving gender justice for global health equity: the Lancet Commission on gender and global health

The Lancet

With recent global developments, the discussion on gender equality in health is very relevant. The Lancet is contributing to this to ensure that the discussion on health equity and gender equity in health remains focused. Discussing history, data, the workplace, but also weaponisation of the issue of gender, it gives a broad overview of gender considerations in the journey to Universal Health Coverage.

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Vulnerable populations need protection in an age of impunity

The BMJ

It is no secret that the wide range of global challenges mean that the most marginalised and vulnerable face a disproportionate burden. With support for humanitarian work waning, illustrated by large budget cuts, means that the global health community plays a pivotal role. Centring marginalised voices, holding governments accountable, driving scientific breakthroughs, all require decisive action amongst a world where human rights and principles are increasingly under threat.

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Travel-time accessibility and adaptive spatial planning solutions for the healthcare system

Nature

Rural access to healthcare is often mentioned, as it is a key example of territorial health inequities. Researchers from Spain have explored how exactly these inequities form, using the region of Galicia as a case study. Looking at the gradual closing of regional health facilities and have found a model that helps inform how hospital access can be informed without fully removing the ability for people in rural areas to access healthcare.

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Indoor air pollution inequalities among children and adolescents in Germany

Nature

There is little research done on the effects of socio-environmental determinants on mental health. The social and physical surrounding both can have large effects on development on mental disorders. Researchers from Germany have used large-language models to model these effects, allowing for a new way of doing mental health research.

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Health literacy among individuals with type 2 diabetes in France: greater social inequalities among women; the Entred 3 study

BMC Public Health

The link between health literacy and social inequities is very pronounced, especially when analysed from the perspective of certain health conditions. Researchers from France surveyed persons with type 2 diabetes and found inequities in health literacy, with women often at lower health literacy than men, and the lowest health literacy observed with women born in North Africa.

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The intersection of socioeconomic deprivation and antimicrobial resistance: refocusing on a key determinant

The Lancet

Antimicrobial resistance, as one of the largest public health threats, also clearly shows the workings of the social determinants of health. This research from the UK shows that socioeconomic deprivation is linked to higher antibiotic resistance, meaning that address AMR effectively requires a health equity approach as well.

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Dialogic Scientific Gatherings: Promoting Inclusive Health Participation and Communication Among Non-Academic Roma Women

Frontiers

Researchers from Barcelona conducted community-led health discussions with non-academic Roma women to explore empowerment of this often overlooked population. Discussions ranging from diet and childhood obesity, to cancer and mental wellbeing show a wide interest and allowed for an inclusive approach to challenge stereotypes and foster well-informed health decisions.

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In the Media



The EU must show leadership and stand up for science, health and women's rights

The Parliament

Three MEPs from the Women's Health Interest Group in the European Parliament write about the clear need for increased attention to and funding for women's health topics. Women, as half of the population, spend 25% more time of their life in poor health than men. Not only is this a massive injustice, it is a large missed opportunity. Closing the gap benefits 4 billion women and could boost the global economy by \$1 trillion. Europe could lead the way, particularly through funding research and innovation.

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New health rules “discriminate against immigrants”

The Portugal News

Changes to Portugal's National Health Service risk creating additional health access barriers for immigrants in particular. Humans Before Borders is now publicly criticising these rules, pointing to issues such as access prevention for people without a residence permit, directly contradicting the right to health.

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THE PORTUGAL
News

‘The field of human ancestry is rife with racism’: pioneering project to build cancer database in Africa

The Guardian

There is a constant need for cancer research to ensure we can work towards solutions to reduce the massive cancer burden. However, when looking at Africa in comparison to Europe, very little research is done despite it also being a massive cause of death there. Yemaachi Biotech in Ghana is now working to create a cancer database - called the African Cancer Atlas - to address this significant gap.

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The paradox of women's well-being: Why they report higher happiness despite worse mental health

El País

Gender equality in health is a multi-faceted topic. When it comes to the gender health gap, this is well-illustrated by the fact that, despite worse mental health, women often

report higher happiness. This article explores this paradox based on a research article, explaining why this self-perception exists and how it should be approached when working towards closing the women's health gap.

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Other News



Event Report: Combatting Ethnic Disparities in Healthcare – A Case Study of Prostate and Breast Cancer

EPHA

There are many intersecting factors that may limit access to core services. Our health depends both on our access to healthcare and access to other services. In a new report, PICUM sheds light on the situation of people who are navigating both disability and irregular migration status in Europe. In this way, they become part of a conversation in which they are too often overlooked.

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Improving reach and access to health promotion and preventive services for vulnerable children and adolescents: Experiences from five European countries

European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies

The earlier health promotion and prevention is provided the better. Children stand the most to gain, but are at the same time often not reached by such efforts, especially when they are from disadvantaged backgrounds. This report calls to the importance of prevention and promotion, providing core recommendations on their cross-sectoral design, data collection needs and intervention design, to ensure these activities are as inclusive as possible.

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Coercive sterilisation: Prague court sets precedent by overturning Health Ministry's rejection of compensation

European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC)

One of the gravest health injustices in Europe is the history of sterilisation of Roma women. In one of such cases, the Prague municipal court has overturned the rejection of the Czech Health Ministry's rejection of paying a Roma woman who was sterilised without informed consent. A vote is expected soon in the Czech lower house on a the compensation law in question.

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LGBTI racialised people and the right to health: how to use CERD general recommendation No. 37

ILGA World

The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) sets a strong precedent against discrimination of any form when it comes to health, but recommendations do not automatically translate to action. ILGA world provides a guide on how these recommendations can be implemented to address inequities faced by LGBTI People.

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Vaccine hesitancy is about much more than misinformation

STAT News

During the COVID-19 pandemic, vaccine hesitancy as an issue became very clear. Though misinformation was identified as a large cause, there are more deeply rooted factors that influence these decisions. A researcher from the US explains how, in the US, a lot of decisions around vaccination also find their root in socio-economic contexts, underlining the importance of the social determinants

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