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Financial & Economic Crisis and Austerity Measures - Impacts on Health Care Systems, the Health Workforce and Patients

(Brussels, 25 November 2013)

The paper describes the impact of the financial and economic crisis, as well as austerity measures on the health care systems, the health workforce and patients.

There is currently sufficient evidence for the negative and in some countries partly devastating effects of austerity policies on the financing and provision of services of general interest essential to promote the proper functioning of our economies and the cohesion of our societies, including on health and social services. The financial strain on MS in general and on health and social services in particular also “triggered” policy measures that are likely to have a negative effect on the health and well being of patients and the employment conditions of health workers.

The article deals with the following types of measures:

- Measures on access and coverage including eligibility and entitlement conditions
- Measures concerning the material scope and not-pricing-related rationing
- Reductions of payments and reimbursement of costs to providers of healthcare
- Impacts on health workers and the health workforce in general
- Impacts on patients and the health of (selected groups) of the population in the EU and makes some preliminary conclusions.

In the article we draw on evidence analysed and presented by researchers, i.e. published by the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies and in the journal “The Lancet”, but also by various stakeholders of the health sector such as hospital associations, providers of health and social services, professional organisations and – last but not least – trade unions, including EPSU’s affiliates.



Article Impact Crisis & Austerity Measures Health Systems & Workforce & Patients

The article builds on a speech EPSU's Secretary General, Carola Fischbach-Pyttel, delivered at the [4th EPHA Annual Conference on 5 September 2013 in Brussels](#) in the Panel "A new economic European order and new future for health and health systems".

The text has been slightly revised and updated for a contribution Mathias Maucher made in the context of the [seminar "Financial crisis, austerity, and health in Europe" jointly organized by the European Trade Union Institute \(ETUI\) and the Observatoire Social Européen \(OSE\) on 27 September 2013 in Brussels](#).

N.B.: A second article, building on the present article and broadening the perspective to incorporate a critical assessment of the European Economic Governance as well as an examination of the Country-specific Recommendations (CSR) on health and social services is being prepared and will soon be uploaded to this page, too.



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