

PRESS RELEASE

The 2020 European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) opens its virtual doors to inspire solution-oriented discussions on the future of health in Europe

- Kicking off today through Friday (30 September – 2 October), the first-ever digital edition of the European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) 2020 offers three action-packed days with over 20 workshops, 3 plenary discussions, 2 press conferences and various networking opportunities.
- Over 25 high-level representatives from governments, the European Union, the World Health Organization, industry and civil society, are set to take the virtual stage to discuss how to rebuild a healthier, stronger and more democratic Europe, after the coronavirus pandemic wreaked havoc across the continent and the world.

30 September 2020, Bad Hofgastein, Austria – Kicking off its 23rd edition, this year's unique digital [European Health Forum Gastein \(EHFG\) 2020](#) explores new partnership models for a strong recovery of Europe's health systems, societies and economies, in the wake of the greatest global health crisis of modern times. Under the theme of "*Dancing with elephants – New partnerships for health, democracy, business*", the event has one of the most noteworthy high-level speaker line-ups in the Forum's history, with government representatives from Austria, Belgium, Lithuania, Germany, Malta, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, and Sweden. They are joined by the WHO's Regional Director for Europe, Hans Kluge, incoming Acting Director General, DG SANTE, EU Commission Sandra Gallina, the Director of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, Andrea Ammon, and many more. The complete high-level speaker line-up can be found [here](#).

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the fault lines in our current healthcare systems and political decision-making, emphasizing the urgent need for increased intersectoral, cross-border collaboration. Rebuilding economies and transforming healthcare as we know it while tackling persistent issues, such as inequitable access to medicines, a rising burden of chronic diseases, and the looming threat of antimicrobial resistance, are among the central EHFG 2020 topics.

Dorli Kahr-Gottlieb, Secretary General of the EHFG, is looking forward to three exciting conference days: "A digital EHFG can of course not replace the unique conference setting in Bad Hofgastein, but this year's "Gastein Forum" is in a sense more accessible and will still offer many workshops, interactive plenary sessions, and tailored networking opportunities. I'm looking forward to witnessing solutions being born and discussed, discarded or taken forward for a sustainable path out of this crisis. At the EHFG 2020, there is truly the potential to lay the groundwork for transforming healthcare systems and health policy-making in the long-term."

The full programme, outlining the different sessions, speakers and conference details, is available [here](#).

For any questions, please contact the press office at press@ehfg.org or +32 2 321 90 16.

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 healthcare, 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 participate in the annual conference held in the Gastein Valley in the Austrian Alps for three days in late September/ early October, which in 2020 will be replaced by a digital format due to the current situation surrounding COVID-19.