



BUSINESSat**OECD**

Business and Industry Advisory
Committee to the OECD

Stronger Together

For Healthcare's Competitive Future

Priorities Paper
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Executive Summary

Health systems are fundamental to national security, economic productivity, and societal well-being. Resilient healthcare systems are cornerstones for sustainable development. Therefore, investing in health must be viewed as a strategic imperative for global and national security as well as competitiveness. Recognizing health expenditures as investments with long-term societal and economic returns, rather than costs will be critical. This investment mindset also calls for a renewed focus on prevention, as well as efficient and effective disease management across the care continuum. To achieve this, trust and collaboration are essential for harnessing health as an economic catalyst, requiring concerted efforts across governments, the private sector, and civil society.

With the aim of further advancing these discussions at the OECD and other global fora the *Business at OECD* (BIAC) Health Committee launched its Stronger Together campaign during the 5th Annual Health Forum in October 2023. Members from various sectors came together with the aim to recognize health resilience not just as a reactive measure but as a proactive strategy ingrained in our socio-economic and political frameworks.

In 2025, our *Stronger Together Campaign* expanded beyond discussions held annually in Paris, with the aim of integrating global and multisectoral perspectives into its policymaking. Through high-level engagements across four different continents, our Campaign consistently demonstrated that health resilience underpins economic resilience.

Flagship moments, including events alongside the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting (MCM) Consultation in Costa Rica, the B7 Summit in Canada, and the B20 Summit in South Africa, highlighted health as a driver of productivity, labour market stability, supply chain resilience, long-term economic security,

among others. This global engagement culminated in December with the 7th edition of our *Business at OECD* Health Forum in Paris, which convened nearly 200 senior business and OECD leaders.

Across all these engagements, our Campaign demonstrated its ability to convene senior decision-makers, generate evidence-based dialogue as well as advance a strong economic case for health.

This report highlights the key milestones and achievements of the Campaign in 2025, summarizing key messages delivered and underscores the continued engagement of the *Business at OECD* Health Committee leadership and Campaign contributors in driving its progress throughout the year.

Introduction

The year 2025 marked a new chapter for our *Business at OECD Stronger Together Campaign*, during which we elevated health as a central economic priority across regions and policy platforms.

The year began with strong momentum in Latin America. In March, our roundtable in San Jose, Costa Rica, organised back-to-back with the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting (MCM) Consultation, brought together more than 200 participants from government, business, international organisations, among others. This event ensured that perspectives from the region were heard at the highest political level and reinforced the message that health resilience is inseparable from economic resilience. By convening ministers, OECD leadership, and regional partners, the Campaign succeeded in placing Latin American perspective on the global health agenda.

In May, our presence as a strategic partner at the B7 Summit in Ottawa, under the Canadian presidency, marked a significant milestone as *Business at OECD* delivered its first official side event to a B7 Presidency. The health discussion highlighted the critical link between health security and economic security, with business leaders, policymakers, as well as OECD experts, emphasising the need for sustainable investment, integrated preparedness, innovation-driven health systems among others. The event reaffirmed that health must be treated as a strategic asset for stable labour markets, and resilient supply chains for the long-term.

Later in the year, our Campaign carried its message to the G20 context during our side event at the B20 Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa. This discussion placed health at the intersection of trade, governance, finance, and innovation, in a full day *Business at OECD* event, demonstrating how resilience in one domain reinforces stability across the global

economy. By embedding the health agenda within broader multilateral conversations, our Campaign underscored the contribution of the private sector in shaping practical and scalable solutions.

“Our Stronger Together Campaign elevated health as a central economic priority across regions and policy platforms.”

This year-long engagement culminated in December with our 7th *Business at OECD Health Forum* in Paris, convening close to 200 senior business and OECD leaders. Under the theme *“Healthcare’s Competitive Future: From Reactive Systems to Economic Catalysts,”* the Forum consolidated insights gathered across three continents and highlighted a growing societal consensus: investing in health is one of the most powerful levers to strengthen our society.

Across all these momentums, our Stronger Together Campaign demonstrated its capacity to convene high-level stakeholders which generated evidence-based dialogue and drove forward the economic case for health. This progress would not have been possible without the support of our Health Committee leadership, our sponsors, whose partnership continues to strengthen the voice of business in global health discussions throughout the OECD countries and beyond.

As our Campaign looks toward 2026, it does so with stronger foundations and growing international recognition. The accomplishments from 2025 are laying the foundation for more collaborative efforts and greater ambitions for creating more effective, resilient and sustainable health systems around the world.

March: Latin American Health Roundtable

Introduction

Each year, Ministers from the OECD's member countries gather in Paris for the annual Ministerial Council Meeting (MCM), to decide on the OECD's strategic orientation for the coming years. *Business at OECD*, as the institutional business stakeholder is invited to take part in the high-level discussions on the global economy and contribute our private sector recommendations. Ahead of the MCM, the Chair of the Ministerial also hosts a consultation with its partners in the country of chairmanship.

In 2025, as Costa Rica was chairing the MCM, we organized a side-event on health resilience back-to-back with the Consultation, in San José, Costa Rica. Our session gathered a distinguished group of participants, including Costa Rica's Minister of Health, Mary Munive, Minister of Foreign Trade, Manuel Tovar Rivera and OECD's Head of the Health Division, Francesca Colombo, alongside representatives from government, industry, international organisations, among others. Their interventions framed the conversation around the urgent need to strengthen collaboration between the public and private sectors and promote sustainable investment as the basis for a resilient health ecosystem in Latin America. The exchanges provided a powerful platform to elevate the regional perspective and strengthen the case for treating health as an economic imperative across OECD discussions.

This event was made possible through strong collaboration with our local partners, including UCCAEP and the Costa Rican Chamber of Health, whose deep expertise in regional health issues enriched the dialogue and anchored the roundtable with a Latin America's perspective.

With several Ministers participating, the Latin-American roundtable offered an exceptional opportunity to raise the importance of health resilience at the highest-level. Our messages

from this roundtable were also highlighted during the MCM consultation, which took place the following day.

This event also enhanced the visibility of the Stronger Together Campaign across the region, enabling more stakeholders to contribute to its objectives and strengthening the global coalition advocating for smarter, sustainable, and investment-oriented health policies.



Costa Rica's Minister of Health, Mary Munive and Costa Rica's Minister of Foreign Trade, Manuel Tovar Rivera, Business at OECD Ministerial Council Meeting Consultation side-event on health in San José, Costa Rica March 2025.

Aligning Health and Finance: Investing in Sustainable Healthcare

The first panel of this roundtable explored how strategic investment in health can generate economic value and support long-term sustainability across Latin America and beyond. Bringing together experts from governments, the private sector, the OECD, and other experts, the discussion highlighted a shared conclusion: health systems are at a pivotal moment. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed their vulnerabilities but also demonstrated the economic benefits that emerge when countries treat health as a strategic priority rather than a cost to manage.

Panellists underscored that investing in health strengthens labour markets and boosts productivity. They pointed to the need for more innovative financing approaches, from blended finance to long-term investment models, that enable governments and businesses to co-invest in infrastructure, technology etc. Sustainable financing requires not only additional resources, but smarter allocation built on clear incentives and measurable outcomes.

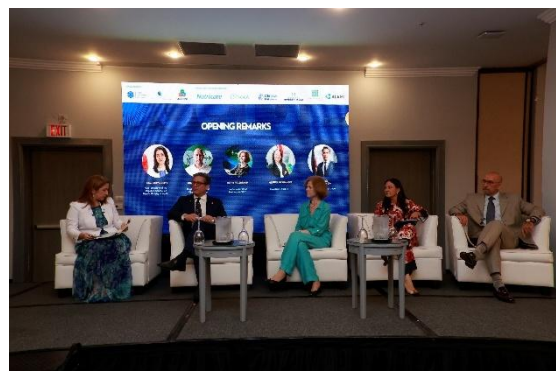
Building a Competitive and Trustworthy Healthcare Ecosystem

The second panel of this event examined how transparency, collaboration, as well as innovation can reinforce both trust and competitiveness within healthcare systems. Speakers stressed that trust is essential for public confidence and successful reform, while competitiveness enables the sector to innovate, attract investment, but also deliver higher-quality care.

Speakers highlighted that strengthening transparency is possible through clearer communication, consistent and harmonised regulatory practices, and better data use. Public-private collaboration emerged as a central driver of progress, with industry bringing technological expertise and innovation capacity, and governments providing the regulatory stability needed to scale solutions sustainably. Panellists noted that adopting digital tools or modern infrastructure help to provide new care models, which significantly enhance system performance.

The discussion also emphasised the critical role of the private sector in driving innovation. Through new technologies businesses help build more agile and efficient health systems that are better prepared for future shocks. Strengthened public-private partnerships,

participants agreed, will be essential to accelerating this transformation and delivering more resilient systems across the region.



Panellists of the Business at OECD Latin American Roundtable on Health in San José, Costa Rica, March 2025.

Overall, the roundtable demonstrated that building a trustworthy and competitive healthcare ecosystem is essential for long-term resilience in health sector. This can only be achieved by aligning transparency, innovation, collaboration, and harmonised regulatory regimes, enabling countries to build systems that better serve populations while supporting economic stability across the region.

Key insights

- **Health is a strategic economic driver.** Strengthening health systems boosts productivity and long-term growth.
- **Collaboration and trust are key.** Trust, transparency and a strong collaboration between sectors are critical for sustainable health systems.
- **Regional perspectives must inform OECD health policy debates.** Integrating regional priorities into OECD discussions is essential to ensure they remain visible and reflected in high-level decision-making.

May: 2025 B7 Canada Summit Side Event: Health Security for Economic Security

Introduction

On 15 May 2025, *Business at OECD* organized a high-level roundtable under the theme of Health Security for Economic Security held back-to-back with the B7 Summit and in partnership with its host, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. As a strategic partner for the second year in a row, this side-event on health, convening over 100 participants, marked our first official contribution to the B7 Summit agenda. This roundtable provided a strategic platform to advance multi-stakeholder collaboration between the public and private sectors, aligning priorities to address emerging health challenges.

Opening Remarks

The opening remarks focused on the critical need to view health not only as a societal obligation but also as a strategic economic priority. The importance of resilient health systems for stable labour markets, reliable supply chains, and sustained long-term growth was also emphasized. Participants called for deeper collaboration among governments, businesses, and civil society. Policymakers were urged to prioritize health as a foundational pillar of economic policy and a driver of national growth and competitiveness. The remarks also reaffirmed the OECD's role in fostering resilient and future-proof health systems.

As part of our Campaign, this roundtable aimed to emphasize the central role of health in achieving economic security. It brought together representatives from the B7, business, and the OECD to engage in meaningful dialogue on strengthening the resilience and responsiveness of health systems in the face of current and future crises. In the context of growing global health risks, recognizing health as both an economic

imperative and a pillar of economic resilience is increasingly necessary.

Setting the Scene

The COVID-19 pandemic was a turning point in recognizing health as a cornerstone of economic resilience. This roundtable discussion exposed how weak health systems can disrupt labour markets, supply chains, and investor confidence. Hence investing in healthcare is not just a social need but an economic priority. Participants stressed that economic stability depends on health security and called for global, cross-sector efforts to strengthen health systems.



Panellists at the Business at OECD B7 Summit side-event in Ottawa, Canada, May 2025.

Innovation, particularly in biotechnology, artificial intelligence (AI), and life sciences, was highlighted as a critical economic driver, capable of generating jobs, boosting productivity, and addressing demographic challenges. Countries like Canada were recognized for leveraging research and higher education to translate scientific advancement into economic value.

The discussion also called for rethinking global preparedness and health governance as fragmented crisis responses were shown to have high economic costs, reinforcing the need for prevention, sustainable financing, and strong public-private partnerships. International organizations, including the

OECD, were seen as key platforms for promoting transparent, risk-based policies. This roundtable recalled that resilient health systems are essential for economic competitiveness, and that long-term, strategic investment in health must remain at the centre of global policy agendas.

From Dialogue to Action: Advancing health as a pillar of economic resilience in the international agenda

What began nearly four years ago as a dialogue within the OECD has now evolved into a strategic priority, reflecting a growing global consensus: resilient health systems are fundamental to sustainable economic growth. The panel discussion explored this evolving understanding, emphasizing that health should no longer be viewed as a cost but as a strategic investment and essential driver of economic stability.

Against a backdrop of geopolitical instability, demographic transitions, population aging, climate change, and rapid technological transformation, panellists examined both the risks and opportunities facing today's health systems. They emphasized the systemic nature of health, with vulnerabilities in supply chains, labour markets, and environmental systems underscoring the urgent need to transition from reactive, disease-focused models to proactive, prevention-oriented care. Since, despite its benefits, prevention is still underfunded, panellists urged smarter investments, especially in the health workforce, system efficiency, and healthcare solutions and innovations.

Key points included the need to redesign health systems around people's needs, emphasizing prevention and population resilience; to recognize the health sector as a driver of economic growth and industrial innovation, and tackle workforce shortages by rethinking care models and strengthening

talent pipelines. Digital health and artificial intelligence were presented as a gamechanger, capable of transforming healthcare delivery and expanding access, only if the appropriate regulatory frameworks and global collaboration are in place. Initiatives like the OECD's PaRIS initiative were cited as vital tools to measure the effectiveness of health investments and enhance system accountability.

Panellists reinforced that health is not a standalone issue, it is inherently global and cross-cutting, demanding coordinated action across sectors and borders. Avoiding protectionism, fostering international trust, and maintaining open, rules-based trade were viewed as critical to enabling global health innovation and ensuring equitable access. Canada's leadership in research, regulatory excellence, and innovation was highlighted as a model contribution to the international effort.

The panel expressed a strong call for continuity, accountability, and deeper collaboration. The discussion also stressed that health should stay central in global economic policy and that B7 recommendations must lead to real action and long-term strategies on the topic.

Health as a Strategic Asset

The second part of the panel discussion dwelled further into the risks, opportunities, and shared responsibilities in global health. Panellists stressed that lasting progress needs a whole-of-society approach, emphasizing the need for strategic collaboration with the private and public sectors to reframe health as a long-term economic investment.

The industry was identified as a critical driver of this transformation, bringing to the table data, infrastructure, and innovation, including AI-driven health tools. Panellists stressed the importance of embedding the private sector into health strategy development and urged policymakers across all ministries, not just health, to recognize health as a core

component of economic and national resilience.

Successful practices from B7 countries were highlighted, showcasing the benefits of treating health as an investment. These included multi-year budgeting for health, targeted spending on health workforce development, and robust public-private partnerships. Crucially, the panel called for clearer demonstration of returns on health investments to secure sustained political and financial backing. The discussion also addressed the growing challenge of building public trust and depoliticizing health.

Participants advocated for greater transparency in demonstrating the return on health investments, combating misinformation, and leveraging international platforms like the B7 and the OECD to maintain consistent dialogue and accountability. The conversation also emphasized the importance of open and predictable markets for health goods and services. In this context, the OECD was recognized for its valuable role in this space, particularly through initiatives, which strengthen the foundation for global cooperation on the topic of health.

The event concluded with a call to action: global health resilience must be proactively embedded into multilateral frameworks, including the B7 and the OECD. The time to act is now, before the next crisis, by investing in sustainable health systems, enabling collaboration, and making health a permanent pillar of international economic policy.



Participants of the Stronger Together: Health Security for Economic Security Roundtable, held as a side-event to the B7 Summit in Ottawa, Canada, May 2025.

Key Insights

- **Health is an economic priority:** Panellists underlined that health security is foundational to productivity, workforce resilience, and macro-economic stability. As such, it must be embedded at the highest levels of economic decision-making, including G7 and OECD agendas.
- **Reframing spending as investment:** Participants stressed the need to treat health as a strategic long-term investment rather than a cost centre. Strategic investments in prevention, innovation, and system resilience unlock measurable returns through stronger productivity, reduced healthcare burdens, enhanced societal stability, among others.
- **Embedding prevention in health financing:** The discussion highlighted the persistent underinvestment in prevention and the need to structurally integrate it into financing models. Long-term benefits, including reduced care costs, healthier ageing, and productivity gains—are especially evident in life-course immunisation programmes.
- **Fostering predictable, innovation-friendly policy environments:** The May dialogue brought forward the importance of regulatory and policy predictability to attract private capital, de-risk long-term investments, and support innovation. Creating stable, innovation-enabling ecosystems is essential to mobilise both corporate investment and institutional investors in health.
- **Stronger public-private collaboration:** Business plays a central role in delivering scalable solutions and driving innovation across prevention, digital health, and workforce transformation. Strengthened public-private partnerships are needed to accelerate system reforms and enhance health system performance.

Keynote Presentation: The Innovation Imperative - A Time-Critical Policy Crossroad for Economic Growth and Healthcare Resilience

High-income countries, particularly the G7, are at a critical juncture where aging populations and the rising burden of non-communicable diseases (NCD) are converging into a “silent pandemic.” Cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory conditions, diabetes, and neurological disorders are replacing infectious diseases as the primary threats to public health. The demographic shift toward older populations is accelerating this burden, with NCD-related deaths in the G7 projected to rise sharply by 2050. The cost of inaction is not just human, it is profoundly economic, particularly noting that:



Michael Oberreiter, Head of External Affairs International Roche, Business at OECD side-event to the B7 Summit in Ottawa, Canada, May 2025.

- A projected 46% increase in productivity-related economic burden from selected diseases (HER2+ breast cancer, MS, retinal diseases) will be seen high-income countries over the next decade.¹
- The five major NCDs could cost more than the GDP of most G7 countries combined between 2010 and 2030.²
- The broader impact could reach \$12 trillion in lost global GDP by 2040, if the trend remains unchecked.³

Contrary to perceptions of healthcare spending as a financial drain, the data presented affirms that health innovation is a driver of economic growth:

- Up to one-third of economic growth in advanced economies over the last century is linked to improved health.⁴
- 35% of life expectancy gains between 1990-2015 were due to pharmaceutical innovation.⁵
- Every \$1 invested in health yields a \$3 economic return, making innovation not only a moral imperative but also an economic necessity.⁶

Strengthening prevention, including through immunization for older adults and those living with chronic conditions, can significantly reduce hospitalizations and complications, protect system capacity, and improve healthy life expectancy. Immunization, early diagnosis, and timely access to innovative treatments are essential components of a sustainable, cost-effective strategy to reduce the NCD burden and support both workforce and economic resilience.⁷

¹ Wif0r Institute, The Value of Investing in Innovative Medicines: Socioeconomic Burden and Annual Social Impact of Roche Treatments for HER2+ Breast Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis and Retinal Disease. Available from: [link](#).

² World Bank. GDP (current US\$). Available from: [link](#).

³ McKinsey Global Institute. Prioritizing health: A prescription for prosperity. July 8, 2020.

⁴ Arora, S. (2001). Health, Human Productivity, and Long-Term Economic Growth. The Journal of Economic History, 61(3), 699-749. Available from: [link](#).

⁵ Buxbaum JD, Chernew ME, Fendrick AM, Cutler DM. Contributions of Public Health, Pharmaceuticals, And Other Medical Care To US Life Expectancy Changes, 1990-2015. Health Affairs. 2020;39(9):1546-1556.

⁶ McKinsey Global Institute. Prioritizing health: A prescription for prosperity. July 8, 2020.

November: B20 South Africa Summit: Health Systems for a Changing World

Introduction

On 18 November 2025, *Business at OECD* (BIAC) convened a full-day side-event to the B20 Summit, entitled “*OECD Impact, B20 Drive: The Business at OECD Nexus.*” Organized back-to-back with the B20 Summit and in partnership with BUSA, the event served as *Business at OECD’s* official contribution to the B20 agenda. The objective was to provide a strategic, multi-stakeholder platform to strengthen collaboration between the public and private sectors, align shared priorities, as well as foster actionable policy solutions in response to emerging global challenges.

We hosted a dedicated health panel under the theme “Stronger Together: Health Systems for a Changing World.” This future-oriented discussion explored how the private sector partners with governments to strengthen health systems, improve access, and prepare for future health crises, ensuring health remains a priority on global agendas.

Reframing Health as a Strategic Economic Investment

The final panel offered a forward-looking assessment on how global health systems must adapt to rising demands, demographic shifts, technological disruption, and persistent workforce challenges. Convened under the *Business at OECD* Stronger Together Campaign, the discussion underscored the importance of maintaining health as a strategic priority on international policy agendas, particularly amid increasing economic, geopolitical, labour market, and climate pressures.

Despite variations across national health models, panellists agreed that the core challenges are universal: shortages in health

workers, strains in delivery capacity, rising costs, ageing, growing chronic disease burdens, the need for resilient systems capable of withstanding future shocks, among others. Emerging technologies, especially AI, were viewed as transformative tools for diagnostics, prevention, operational efficiency, but also as sources of concern around data reliability and trust.



Whitney Baird, President and CEO, United States Council for International Business (USCIB), Olga Mironenko Stampfer, Vice President International Relations, UnitedHealth Group, Adrien Delamare-Deboutteville, Head of Africa Pharma Multi-Country Organization and Country Lead of Egypt, Sanofi, Hanni Rosenbaum, Executive Director, Business at OECD.

Driving Innovation and Preparedness Through Public-Private Partnerships

A particular focus was placed on public-private collaboration as a catalyst for system transformation. Participants noted that constrained public budgets and increasing demand for services create both, an opportunity and the necessity for private sector engagement. Beyond financing and innovation, businesses can contribute new care pathways, patient-centred delivery models and prevention-oriented strategies.

⁷ Reimagining our response to non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and mental health | IFPMA. Available from [link](#).

Trust and transparency were identified as essential foundations for durable partnerships. Panellists also stressed the importance of reforming reimbursement and incentive structures to reward prevention, long-term health outcomes, and workforce sustainability, rather than prioritising short-term treatment costs alone.

Looking ahead, participants outlined priority actions for global health governance under future G20/B20 presidencies and within the OECD's work programme. Ensuring that health remains central to economic and multilateral agendas was seen as essential, backed by strong evidence-based metrics demonstrating the return on investment of prevention and innovation. AI and digital health were considered indispensable components of future systems, provided that policy frameworks evolve to ensure responsible integration and safeguard against misinformation and fragmented deployment.

Health literacy was identified as a cornerstone of effective health systems and a shared responsibility across governments, businesses, and educational institutions. It was framed not only as a public health objective but also as an economic multiplier: improving individuals' ability to manage their health can reduce avoidable hospital demand, enhance productivity, and lower long-term system costs.

When considering access to medicines and innovation ecosystems in emerging markets, panellists stressed the importance of collaborative, context-sensitive approaches that go beyond product supply to include education, capacity-building, co-designed solutions with local actors, among others. AI was acknowledged as a tool already contributing to efficiency and system coordination, but one that must be paired with strong human expertise and policy safeguards.

The session closed with a clear call to action: Health must be treated as a long-term economic investment and a driver of societal resilience. This requires urgency, inclusive partnerships, as well as a strong focus on

prevention, innovation, and accountability. The OECD should further embed health in economic policy discussions and highlight the returns on prevention. The private sector reaffirmed its readiness to collaborate with the OECD in developing scalable solutions to reinforce health systems global.

Key Insights

- **Integrated Health must be reframed as a long-term economic investment**, with prevention and innovation positioned at the core of resilient health systems.
- **Strong public-private partnerships are essential** to modernize care pathways and ensure both sustainable workforce and financing models.
- **Digital health and AI offer major opportunities for efficiency and coordination but** require robust policy frameworks to ensure trust and equitable impact.

December: Health Forum 2025

Background

On 3 December 2025, we convened our Annual Health Forum in Paris under the theme “Healthcare’s Competitive Future: From Reactive Systems to Economic Catalysts.” Held for the 7th time, this flagship event marked the culmination of a year-long global dialogue on the economic value of health, building on high-level discussions in Costa Rica, Canada, and South Africa. Bringing together nearly 200 senior leaders from business, government, and the OECD, our Forum highlighted a fundamental shift in health policy thinking: positioning health not merely as a social good, but as a strategic economic investment, essential for both productivity and sustainable growth.

The discussions reflected a growing consensus that robust health systems are critical to economic stability. OECD evidence demonstrates that investment in health delivers substantial economic returns, (e.g. through higher productivity, stronger labour markets, reduced long-term system pressures etc.) at a time where health and care already account for one in nine jobs across OECD economies.⁸ Against this backdrop, participants explored how health can be embedded more firmly into long-term economic strategies.

This 2025 edition reaffirmed *Business at OECD’s* commitment to advancing health as an economic imperative and to strengthening public-private collaboration. By aligning health policy more closely with other sectors including innovation, digital transformation, artificial intelligence, as well as sustainable financing, we reinforced the foundations for competitive and resilient health systems. This dialogue continued to inform engagement with the OECD Health Committee and global partners, supporting the development of smarter health policies worldwide.

⁸ [OECD, Health at a Glance, 2025.](#)



Selected OECD Ambassadors, Olga Mironenko Stampfer, Chair, Business at OECD Health Committee, Hanni Rosenbaum, Executive Director and Rokas Morkunas, Director, Business at OECD, Health Forum 2025.

Health as a Catalyst for Productivity and Growth

The opening keynote set the stage by underscoring health as a strategic economic imperative for national and OECD agendas. Healthcare mobilises significant resources, and with rising pressures and changing needs, there is a clear opportunity to strengthen current systems to make them more sustainable over the long term. There is shared objective across countries: ensuring people stay healthy and receive timely care, despite increasing system pressures and persistent under-funding. To reach that goal, we should focus on unlocking productivity and competitiveness; two emerging priorities.

Three key areas shaping the future of the health sector were identified. First, the importance of strengthening prevention by identifying risks earlier and reducing avoidable emergency care, including through earlier intervention before clinical symptoms emerge, which can both save lives and deliver strong economic benefits. Second, innovation in the health sector, with digital tools and AI highlighted as drivers of efficiency, supporting improved patient identification, more

automated processes, and smoother care pathways, provided that data gaps and connectivity challenges are effectively addressed.⁹ And third, the need to transform health financing models by moving away from volume-based approaches toward value-based care that rewards quality and workforce engagement.

At a critical moment for global health, scaling innovation and investing in prevention were presented as essential levers to unlock the full economic potential of health and deliver meaningful outcomes for both patients and for the society more globally.

Health Globally: A Strategic Lever for Productivity and Economic Resilience

This first panel discussion underscored the need to fundamentally change the narrative around health: moving from viewing it as a cost driver to recognising it as a strategic lever for competitiveness, productivity and fiscal sustainability. In light of ageing populations, labour shortages, climate-linked risks, rising system pressures, panellists agreed that governments must shift toward prevention-first strategies, early detection, and smarter investment, prioritizing quality spending over quantity. Despite broad acknowledgment of the importance of health, it remains insufficiently embedded in economic agendas, calling for stronger coordination between health and other ministries (economy, finance, labour, social affairs) to achieve a whole-of-society approach.

Building on this framing, pharmaceutical and medical innovation act as powerful economic multipliers, contributing significantly to GDP and employment and generating spill-over benefits across the wider economy. Investing in health innovation not only strengthens

resilience but also drives both industrial competitiveness and high-value job creation.

Participants emphasized that financial stakes are substantial: in countries like France, health expenditure represents around 11-12% of GDP while social security faces mounting deficits, illustrating the urgency of spending better, not necessarily more.¹⁰ Workforce pressures, with projected reductions in staff, further underline the need to improve efficiency through innovation and better data use. At the same time, delayed or uneven access to new medicines (illustrated by the fact that one in five medicines is not filed in Europe) was highlighted as a growing concern, undermining productivity, slowing disease control, and weakening system resilience. This reinforces the need for policy frameworks that support timely uptake of high-value innovation.



Panel 1: Olga Mironenko Stampfer, UnitedHealth Group, Tamara Schudel, Roche, Michele Mestrinaro, Novartis, Christine Lepage, Medef, Whitney Baird, USCIB, Mark Pearson, OECD, Health Forum 2025.

Speakers shared three concrete focus solutions to driving outcomes and restoring system sustainability: i) Value-based care; ii) Better health literacy, and iii) Closer engagement with private sector stakeholders. Recognising and quantifying the economic cost of inaction is essential, as the lack of early detection, slow uptake of innovation, and sustained under-investment in prevention lead to missed productivity gains, higher long-term expenditures, and avoidable

⁹ For further information on AI and Health, see our *Business at OECD* publication “AI for Health: Empowering and Reinventing the Health Sector for the Better”, 2026. Available from

¹⁰ [State of Health in the EU France Country Health Profile, 2025.](#)

pressure on health and social protection systems. Strengthening the economic case for upstream investment, including through robust modelling and clearer articulation of avoided costs, was repeatedly cited as essential to shift political decision-making.

Lessons from recent global fora, including the B7/B20, G20 or the United Nations General Assembly, reinforced the importance of investing upstream in prevention, scaling innovation such as AI, and measuring the cost of inaction. The OECD's efforts to integrate health into its economic work as well as upcoming opportunities under the 2026 G7/G20 presidencies, were seen as critical levers to advance this agenda. Ultimately, panellists agreed on the need for better access to data, stronger productivity and outcome metrics, modernised workforce capabilities, and financing approaches that reward value rather than volume. These elements are essential to improving population health and supporting long-term economic gains.

The Rise of Predictive Health

The second panel examined the role of predictive health in enabling a strategic shift from reactive healthcare delivery towards proactive, personalised prevention. The potential of AI-enabled diagnostics and predictive analytics relies on high-quality, interoperable data, and an enabling policy environment. Most countries still invest less than 3% of health budgets in prevention, despite strong evidence of economic returns, from reduced hospitalisations to higher productivity and avoided long-term costs.¹¹ This underinvestment represents a missed opportunity to strengthen system efficiency, fiscal sustainability, and economic resilience.

Examples highlighted included early detection of lung cancer, suicide-risk prediction models, and the role of physical activity and immunisation strategies in

extending healthy life expectancy. Panellists underscored that adult immunisation is a highly effective, scalable prevention tool that helps reduce complications and pressure on acute-care, enabling older adults and people living with NCDs to stay healthier and active for longer. They also underlined the need to rebuild confidence in vaccination through trusted intermediaries such as community pharmacists, and through evidence-based communication with consistent public messaging.



Panel 2: Rebecca Richmond, Optum, Francesca Colombo, OECD, Caroline Brooks, WFSGI, Carla Cartwright, J&J, Diane Thomson Pfizer, Health Forum 2025.

A core theme was the importance of extending the conversation beyond the health sector to labour markets, education, and urban planning. Panellists emphasized the need to improve prevention literacy, introduce more flexible budgeting frameworks, and enable multi-year investment cycles to support innovation and minimise the costs associated with delayed intervention.

Participants outlined the enabling conditions for predictive health to develop effectively: strong multi-stakeholder collaboration, a workforce equipped with digital and analytical skills and tools, secure and standardised data infrastructure, and value-based payment models that measure outcomes in real-world settings, including patient-reported outcomes.

Overall, panellists agreed that predictive health represents a major opportunity to

¹¹ [OECD, Health at a Glance, 2025.](#)

improve quality of life and deliver substantial economic savings. Realising this potential will require whole-of-system collaboration and responsible innovation to guide both policy and investment decisions.

Fireside Discussions – Climate Resilience and Workforce Transformation: Building Systems Fit for the Future

Across two fireside discussions, speakers underscored that health systems are facing a dual transformation challenge: (i) adapting to accelerating climate risks while also (ii) preparing a workforce capable of delivering innovation-driven/prevention-first care. Together, these conversations highlighted the depth of systemic shifts now required to safeguard population health and sustain productivity.

The first discussion focused on the growing intersection between climate change and health. Participants stressed that climate-related hazards (e.g. extreme heatwaves, floods etc.) are already amplifying chronic disease burdens, straining hospital capacity while also worsening inequities. Vulnerable populations face disproportionate risks, and health systems are not yet equipped with the data, tools, or even skilled workforce needed to respond. Strengthening climate resilience therefore means addressing both the environmental determinants of health and the carbon footprint of healthcare itself.



Fireside 1: Patricia Pascual-Iliakis, Opella, Kumi Kitamori, OECD, Dr Mike Devoy, Bayer, Health Forum 2025.

Decarbonisation of supply chains, climate-aware procurement, as well as nature-based adaptation strategies were highlighted as core levers, alongside a powerful co-benefit of all: keeping people healthier and reducing demand for acute, high-emission care. However, we witness persistent data gaps, the need for clearer institutional mandates on climate and health, and the need to embedding these priorities into long-term planning cycles. Sustainability, both environmental and social, emerged as the essential themes.

The second fireside discussion turned to the human infrastructure that underpins all health systems. With ageing populations, rising chronic conditions, alongside the projected labour shortages in coming years, workforce preparedness is becoming a critical priority.



Fireside 2: Dr Jane Barratt, International Federation on Ageing, Glenda Quintini, OECD, Charles Wolf, Sanofi, Health Forum 2025.

Speakers emphasised that prevention and innovation will only scale upwards if frontline professionals are empowered with the right skills and working conditions. This includes both reskilling and upskilling to use AI and digital technologies effectively, improving working environments (e.g. address burnout, creating more flexible pathways into health professions, among others). AI was described as a potential game-changer, able to automate administrative tasks, support clinical decision-making, ease workforce pressures, but only if trust and training keep pace with

technological change. Speakers also highlighted that investment in people must be seen as strategic capital rather than an expendable cost.

Across both fireside discussions, all contributors emphasised the need for stronger, system-wide coordination to drive meaningful change in the health sector. Progress on climate resilience, data modernisation, prevention, as well as a future workforce reform are essential, requiring closer public-private collaboration and engagement across key ministries. The discussions concluded that future-proofing health systems depends on integrating climate sustainability with workforce transformation, supported by innovation, skills development, and trust across the health ecosystem.

Financing Health Differently: Investing in Impact, Not Illness

The final panel highlighted the urgent need to reframe health expenditure as a long-term, high-return investment essential to economic growth and social resilience. Speakers emphasized that treating healthcare as a cost, rather than an investment asset, limits countries' ability to unlock the full value of prevention, early diagnosis, self-care, and innovation.

With ageing populations, rising chronic disease, growing fiscal pressures, traditional budgeting cycles and siloed approaches are no longer sustainable. Instead, countries must adopt fiscal models that recognise the measurable economic returns of health investments. This includes areas such as prevention and early diagnosis. Adult immunisation alone delivers returns of up to 19 times the initial investment yet remains under-prioritised and vulnerable to short-term budget cycles. Building on this economic framing, participants pointed to three main

levers: reduced absenteeism, sustained labour participation, and stronger productivity. Speakers also emphasised the value of OECD tools, such as the System of Health Accounts, the System of Health Evidence and Productivity (SHEP), and the Patient-Reported Indicators Survey (PARIS), which help quantify these returns in terms recognised by finance ministries.



Firestarter Panel 3: Mark Hicken, J&J, Health Forum 2025.

Panellists emphasised that many of the greatest gains in life expectancy and disease control have come from innovation, particularly in pharmaceuticals and immunisation. Yet, investments in these areas remain insufficient. Vaccines, for example, represent less than 1% of health spending despite delivering significant returns, and prevention as a whole receives only a fraction of OECD countries' budgets.¹² While strong evidence of return on investment exists for prevention and early detection, finance ministries often lack the tools and coordination mechanisms to integrate these returns into fiscal planning. Stronger collaboration between health and finance ministries, supported by clearer economic data, was identified as a foundational step toward a prevention-aligned fiscal framework. Efficiency gains from reducing low-value care could free up to ~1.2% of GDP for reinvestment in prevention, diagnostics and advanced therapies.

The discussion also highlighted mechanisms that could shift systems toward value-based,

¹² [OECD, Health at a Glance, 2025.](#)

investment-driven models: innovative payment approaches, multi-year budgeting, co-investment with the private sector, and fiscal tools that explicitly reward early intervention and integrated care. Panellists stressed the importance of protected, multi-year prevention budgets, including for adult immunization, supported by instruments such as earmarked prevention funds and social-impact financing, to avoid erosion through annual budget cycles. Payment reforms must also correct misaligned incentives, such as those embedded in Diagnosis-Related Groups (DRGs), which often undervalue prevention and diagnosis because they reimburse treatment volume rather than avoided illness.



Panel 3: Mark Hicken, J&J, Greg Perry, GSF, Patrick Jeurissen, Phillips, Lotte Steuten, OHE, David Elvira Martinez, Sanofi, Frederico Guanais, OECD, Health Forum 2025.

Speakers added that strengthening outcome measurement, particularly patient-reported data, is essential to demonstrating value and building credibility with decision-makers. The economic cost of inaction across chronic disease, multimorbidity to mental health was repeatedly highlighted, underscoring the need for strategic, long-term planning that recognises health as a productivity multiplier.

Ultimately, the panel called for a paradigm shift: moving from short-term budgeting to long-term investment strategies that prioritise prevention and innovation as engines of sustainable growth. Delivering this will require better data, modernised fiscal frameworks, and stronger whole-of-government

cooperation, supported by trusted public-private partnerships. Financing health differently can unlock substantial economic value and help build healthier, more competitive societies.

Key Insights

- Health is shifting from a social cost to a **strategic economic investment**.
- **Prevention and predictive health emerged as major levers for sustainability**, as current spending remains heavily curative while prevention budgets stay below 3% in many countries despite high economic returns.
- **Prevention, including adult immunisation, requires protected, multi-year financing and modernised fiscal tools** to avoid annual budget erosion and unlock long-term economic returns.
- **Innovation, especially AI and digital tools, is essential to boosting efficiency** and system resilience, but requires interoperable data and workforce readiness.
- **Financing health differently is critical**, shifting from short-term cost management to long-term investment models that recognise measurable economic returns and require closer alignment between health and finance ministries.

Keynote Presentation:

Evidence shows new care models are driving better patient outcomes

A growing body of research shows that moving health care from a volume-oriented, transaction-based system to one that rewards high-quality, comprehensive and proactive care can deliver better outcomes at a lower cost and keep people healthier over their lifetimes.

Research published over the last year shows patients in models where physicians are fully accountable for the cost and quality of care have better overall health outcomes, compared to those in traditional volume-based models.¹³



Dr. Wyatt Decker, Chief Physician, UnitedHealth Group, Health Forum 2025.

- Up to 43% less likely to be hospitalized for acute or chronic conditions
- 39% less likely to be readmitted to the hospital within 30 days
- 19% less likely to undergo avoidable emergency care
- 23% less likely to use high-risk medications that can be harmful or fatal if used incorrectly

These models, which emphasize care coordination and preventive medicine, have also proven to have broader spillover effects for those patients in traditional, volume-based models¹⁴, including:

- 82% more annual wellness visits
- Up to 21% lower emergency room use

¹³ Am J Manag Care. 2025;31(10):540-547 <https://doi:10.37765/ajmc.2025.89740>

¹⁴ Am J Manag Care. 2025;31(8):390-396. <https://doi.org/10.37765/ajmc.2025.89686>

Conclusion

2025 marked the beginning of a new chapter in our Stronger Together Campaign, demonstrating the power of collective engagement to position health as a strategic economic priority across regions and global policy platforms. The Campaign delivered a year-long series of high-level events across continents: Central America, North America, Africa, and culminating in our flagship Health Forum in Europe. In total, the Campaign engaged hundreds of leaders from government, business, the OECD, and international organisations, ensuring that the voice of business was consistently present at key political moments.

Each event contributed a distinct lens and strengthened our overarching narrative. The Latin American Roundtable on Health advanced regional dialogue on sustainable and resilient healthcare systems. Our B7 side-event in Ottawa highlighted the link between health security and economic security. Our B20 side-event in South Africa placed health at the intersection of markets, governance, innovation, and resilience. Finally, our flagship Health Forum in Paris, brought together these perspectives and set the stage for embedding health more firmly into long-term economic strategies.

Across these exchanges, a coherent storyline matured over the course of the year. The MCM side-event in March set the economic and system foundations, establishing health as a driver of productivity, resilience, and growth, and underscoring the need for trust, data, and system capability. May introduced the strategic levers and enabling conditions, reframing spending as investment and elevating prevention and early detection. As well as, calling for predictable, innovation-friendly policy environments that can mobilise private capital and scale high-value solutions. The December Health Forum brought all these messages together and highlighted the long-term fiscal architecture required to realise these returns,

including protected multi-year prevention budgets, modernised payment models that reward outcomes and adoption of innovation, and OECD-aligned measurement tools to productivity gains, and avoided costs. This progression strengthens narrative continuity and provides a clearer bridge into the more advanced investment-driven and prevention-centred agenda that emerges at year-end.

“Health is no longer solely a social responsibility: it is a foundational driver of productivity, resilience, and long-term economic growth.”

From San José to Ottawa, and onward to Johannesburg, and Paris, participants consistently emphasised the need to treat health as an investment, mobilise smarter financing, scale innovation, as well as build trust through transparency and strong public-private partnerships. The Campaign also brought forward regional perspectives that are often under-represented in global debates, reinforcing the importance of elevating health discussions within platforms such as the OECD Ministerial Council Meeting, the B7, the B20, among others. This Campaign showcased the essential contribution of business to shape future-ready health systems and demonstrated what can be achieved when sectors and countries work together toward a common goal.

As we close the 2025 cycle, our Stronger Together Campaign will continue to further anchor our messaging through global visibility, enriched by diverse expertise, and positioned to further contribute to OECD discussions in the years ahead. In 2026, we will actively work with our members in the context of the French B7 and US B20 Presidencies and will continue our close cooperation with the OECD on its health agenda. We will

reconvene in Paris for our 8th Health Forum in December 2026.

Acknowledgments

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Their engagement has been essential to the success of our *Stronger Together* campaign as we continue to make health a lasting pillar of sustainable prosperity.

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