THE ACADEMIC PREPERATION

KIT for Volterra 2019

TABLE

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EUROPEAN UNION EXPLAINED

The **European Union** consists of a supranational organisation, with 28 Member States. It is an economic and political Union whose structure is unique, unlike any other international organisations. The decision making procedure is also unique, an overview of which can be found [here](#). The EU is comprised of several bodies, with the main of these being;

- The **European Council** sets the direction, the guidelines, the priorities of the EU, as well as the Union's common foreign and security policy. The European Council does not have the power to pass legislation, yet the European Commission can be asked to propose legislation over an issue. **The Council consists of the Heads of state or government of EU countries**, the president of the European Commission and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs & Security Policy.

- The **European Commission** is the "politically-independent executive" branch of the EU. With 28 Commissioners (1 from each Member State, responsible for different areas of action) the European Commission has the **exclusive right to initiate legislation**. They propose legislation, oversee its enforcement across the Union and manage the EU budget. They act in accordance with general EU interests.

- The **European Parliament** is a directly-elected EU body with **legislative, supervisory, and budgetary responsibilities**. It is made of 751 members, which are elected by citizens every 5 years. The Parliament co-decides on EU laws,reviews and proposes the European Commission to touch upon an area of legislation. With the treaty of Lisbon, the European Parliament now elects the President of the Commission, approves the college of Commissioners and examines the citizens' proposals for legislation. The European Parliament consists of **20 committees**, that review and propose amendments or reject legislation over specific areas.

- The **Council of the European Union** is structured in issue-specific councils with the respective ministers of the Member States. Its presidency rotates every six months. the council is a main body in the decision making process of the Union, as together with the Parliament, it can adopt legislation and budget, whilst coordinating the Member States' policies.

In terms of legislation, the EU has two sources of law; the primary and the secondary. The primary sources of EU law are the **treaties of the Union**, the accession **treaties of new Member States** as well as the **Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU**. The secondary sources of EU law have to be consistent with the values and directions of the primary law and consist of **directives, regulations, decisions, opinions and recommendations**.

● A **Directive** is a legal tool that sets the direction, the goal that all countries must achieve. However, it is up to individual Member States to propose their own legislation which will help them achieve the aforementioned goals.

● A **Regulation** is legally binding instrument, which must be applied in its entirety across the EU.

● A **Decision** is a legally binding act that applies only to the ones that it's addressed, an individual country or a company.

● **Recommendations and Opinions** make the views of the proposing body known, yet they do not have a legally binding force.

The EU can act only in areas that fall under its jurisdiction. The competences of the EU are divided into three categories:

● The areas in which the EU has **exclusive competence** (only the EU can act and propose legislation) - customs union, monetary policy, common fisheries policy, common commercial policy, international agreements

● The areas in which the **competence is shared** between the EU and the Member State (the Member State can only propose legislation if the EU has chosen not to) - internal market, certain social policy, cohesion policy, agriculture and fisheries, consumer protection, environment, energy, transport, certain public health policies, outer space policies, development cooperation, humanitarian aid, research and development

● The areas in which the EU has **supportive competence** (the EU cannot adopt legally binding acts and can only coordinate, support and supplement national legislation) - industry, culture, education, tourism, civil protection.

EMPL

COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (EMPL)

Workforce of the future: with 15% of youth unemployed in Europe and the rise in technological change, future employers find innovation skills more valuable and suitable employees harder to find. How can Member States prepare the youth to meet the demands of the future labour markets?

by Leonor Rodrigues (PT) and Sara Facelli (IT)

TOPIC AT A GLANCE

"Generation jobless": High **unemployment rates** have been a problem across Member States since the global **financial crisis in 2008**. Though the situation has been slightly improving in the past few years, this issue still affects the youth, with **15% of active European youngsters unemployed**, struggling to find new jobs that require zero experience or to meet the demands that employees require. Moreover, in a McKinsey study of young people and employers, 60% of employers stated that new graduates were not adequately prepared for the world of work.

The question which might arise is: "why is it so hard to overcome this issue?". Finding an answer is not easy either. It can be said this is due to the increasing skills mismatch, between what employers are looking for in a candidate and the skills this generation has. Technological change has been the key driver of change in this field, mainly due to automation and globalisation. How can the largest generation of youth in history, which makes up almost **50% of the global workforce**, get a hold of the **new skills required** for the future labour market, in order to fight youth unemployment?

SOURCE: TRADINGECONOMICS.COM | EUROSTAT

European Union youth unemployment rate (percentages)

CORE CONCEPTS

Youth unemployment rates only include involuntary unemployment - people, between the ages of 15 and 24, who are willing to work at the prevailing wage but cannot find a job. In other words, it does not include the inactive, such as students, and the voluntarily unemployed, who choose not to accept a job at the going wage rate.

NEETs, young people who are "not in education, employment or training" - it currently represents about 17% of the European youth.

Human capital obsolescence is the deterioration of a worker's skills in a certain working field due to the upgrading of the skill level and to the shifts in the type of skills demanded. It often results from **technological change**, including automation and the fast pace of technologies. This has risen the question of **technological employment,** when machines or processes substitute manpower, leading to human unemployment.

Technological change has risen the question of **technological unemployment** - when individuals lose their jobs due to technological advancement or, in other words, the substitution of manpower with technological machines or processes - **automation**.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is a key ingredient to provide people with the skills expected in particular occupations or, more broadly, on the labour market. It acknowledges the demands of the economy but also equips learners with skills for personal development and active citizenship.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The **European Commission** is responsible for developing, implementing and managing EU policy, law, and funding programmes. It has multiple measures and frameworks implemented and funds destined to fight the question of youth unemployment, for example funding of initiatives to fight this matter.

Within the **Member States**, one way of responding to unemployment is to introduce more flexibility in work time and to make it easier to work part-time - countries with low unemployment rates, such as the Netherlands, with 3.6%, have invested in policies to promote part-time jobs. In most countries of the EU youth unemployment is much higher than average unemployment: in some countries like Spain, with Italy, a close runner-up, the youth unemployment rate is 40%. But high youth unemployment is not a problem in all countries: in Germany, the age group most affected by unemployment is people over 50.

The **United Nations Economic and Social Council** (ECOSOC) organises several events per year, such as "Breaking new ground: Partnerships for more and better jobs for young people", to further discuss youth unemployment and what can be done to tackle this issue.

The **International Labour Organisation** (ILO) has had a long-standing commitment to promoting youth employment. Supported by the key players in the world of work, ILO's activities on youth employment span over advocacy, knowledge development and dissemination, policy and technical advice and capacity building services, highlighting the priority areas to create more opportunities for employment for the youngsters. These include, among others, promoting and building skills for green jobs for youth and developing digital skills.

Some EU-funded programmes supporting digital skills development are already in place and developing their own strategies to expand and support the structurally unemployed. An example is the already initiated and successful "Industrie 4.0" programme in Germany.

KEY CONFLICTS

One of the main causes of youth unemployment nowadays is the **change in skills utilised** in the labour market. **Technological and innovation skills** are becoming increasingly relevant. Since technological change inevitably changes the skills requirements of a given job and leads to **human capital obsolescence**, employers struggle to find suitable employees.

While **44%** of the adult population in Europe **lack digital skills**, little investment is made into the professional development of those. Furthermore, according to a survey by internships.com, 31% of students said their schools don't offer or are unaware of courses that encourage the development of digital or technical skills.

Educational systems have not kept pace with the **developing reality of work**, resulting in numerous employers stating they cannot find suitable workers, with the skills they need - there are clear **gaps in technical skills**, such as STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subject degrees, but also in **soft skills**, such as communication, teamwork and punctuality. Moreover, the **learning process** is often seen as **exogenous** to the workplace, assuming that employees' skill levels will remain stagnant throughout their career. Therefore **skills mismatch** can significantly contribute to unemployment. However, if formal training or on-the-job learning strategies in companies and changes in school curricula are implemented, the negative effects of the change in required skills can be offset.

The effects of formal or informal learning following technological change
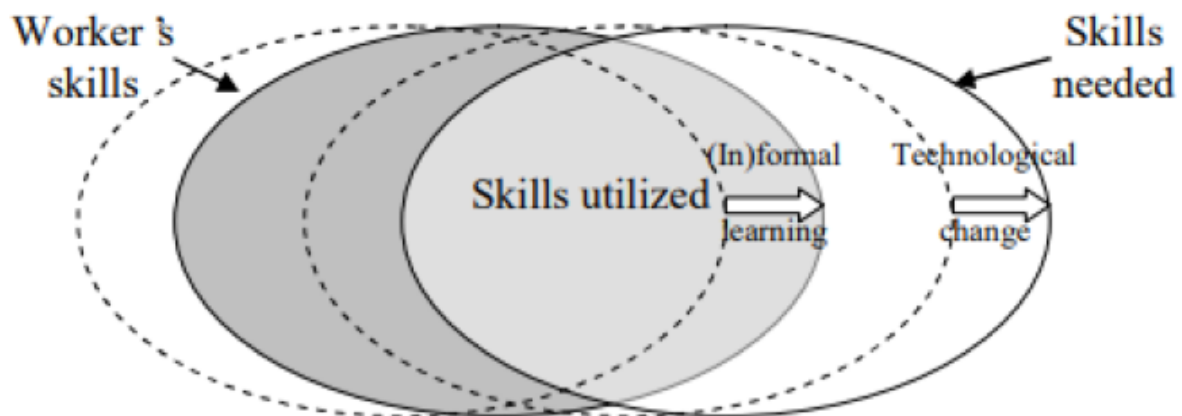
Possible measures to reduce the skill gap resulting from technological change

Furthermore, the current skills mismatch is sometimes caused by a **lack of communication** between education providers and employers. According to a **2012 report** by the management consulting firm McKinsey, in Europe, 74% of education providers were confident that their graduates were prepared for work, but only 38% of youth and 35% of employers agreed.

Lastly, some measures, such as the **European Higher Education Area**, the **European Qualifications Framework** and **Europass**, have been taken in order to promote **workers and students mobility** across the EU and thus offering more employment chances. However, this inevitably leads to an **unemployment gap** between the Member States, causing the so-called "brain drain", with highly qualified workers moving to the Member States with better-paying conditions.

POLICY APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM

One approach to consider is that this problem can be addressed with **proper education and training**, for new entrants into the labour market, that is more focused on intermediate-level **STEM skills, soft skills and technological and digital tools**.

In this respect, **Vocational Education and Training** (VET) is an excellent opportunity for work-based learning experiences. However, according to a survey by the European Commission, 38% of Europeans still think that VET might lead to jobs which are not well regarded in society.

Moreover, there are several questions that arise from technological change, such as automation. Despite the positive traits that digital technologies bring with them, researchers have observed that if automation and digitalisation continue to evolve without a clear strategy for future structuring of the labour market, these restructurings may end up eradicating thousands of jobs.

There have also been created several **initiatives**, such as the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, meant to "assist young people in developing the skills needed to compete in today's job market". The focus of said initiatives and funding interventions should be more clear, as these programmes are not a permanent nor effective solution for dealing with unemployment.

Some reforms have been done, including tailored labour market policies, such as unemployment and recruitment subsidies, to address labour market segmentation which hit young people disproportionately have also been put in place but do not seem to be causing much impact.

MEASURES IN PLACE

The EU can not adopt legally binding acts in order to harmonise Member States' laws and regulations on unemployment, but can only provide arrangements within which the Member States are free to develop their own policy.

Youth Guarantee (YG): launched by the European Commission as part of the **Youth Unemployment Package**, the YG ensures that all **people aged less than 25** receive a good-quality offer of **employment, apprenticeship or continued education**, after four months of being unemployed or leaving formal education. It leaves Member States free to develop and deliver their **own National YG Plan**, providing them with both financial and policy support, facilitating the share of best practices through the Mutual Learning Program.

However, some argued that the YG lacked effective strategies and contributed to weakening Member States' own employment initiatives and investments.

The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) is one of the main EU financial resources to support the implementation of YG schemes.

Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition (DSJC): launched by the European Commission, it mobilises **different actors**, such as the Member States, companies and education providers, in order to ensure that the labour force, ICT professionals and teachers acquire the **digital skills** needed to **remain productive and employable**.

One example of reform under national Youth Guarantee scheme are **Finland's one-stop-shops**, which bring together services from public-private and third sector and provide young **people below 30** with personal advice and **support in career planning**, in order to help them find their path into education and employment.

Moreover, **Austria's dual educational system** combines **theoretical and practical teaching** through joint projects carried out by schools and businesses. Students are given the opportunity to carry out **company-based traineeships**, which allow them to be fully integrated in the labour market and increase their chances to be employed as **qualified skilled workers** after completing their apprenticeship training.

WHAT NOW?

Youth unemployment remains one of the most **pressing issues** the EU currently has to tackle. It is becoming increasingly alarming due to the importance of technology in the labour market, which results in skills gap, human capital obsolescence, the lack of communication between parties and in the unemployment gap.

Different actors are involved and some measures have already been taken, but further commitment will be needed in order to put an end to youth unemployment once and for all. How can the gap in both digital and soft skills be tackled, in line with the rising needs of the labour market? Should VET be fostered and how? How can the measures in place be made more effective? Should the educational systems be reformed and should companies adapt in order to fight against the skills mismatch?

RELEVANT LINKS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

"Tackling youth unemployment and the skills gap": https://europeanmovement.eu/tackling-youth-unemployment-and-the-skills-gap/

"Exploring sustainable and innovative solutions to youth unemployment": https://medium.com/@ThistlePraxis/exploring-sustainable-and-innovative-solutions-to-youth-unemployment-214e2e0f56d7

"Technology as a driver of skills obsolescence and skills mismatch: Implications for the labour market, society and the economy": http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n2297/pdf/ch06.pdf

"The skills you need to succeed in 2020": https://www.forbes.com/sites/ellevate/2018/08/06/the-skills-you-need-to-succeed-in-2020/#4c86132b288a

"What career skills are the most valued by employers?": https://www.michaelpage.com.au/advice/career-advice/career-progression/what-career-skills-are-most-valued-employers

"Innovation skills from the future: insights from research reports" - video: https://www.innovationtraining.org/innovation-skills-for-the-future/

"New skills Agenda for Europe": http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-16-2039_en.htm

"What is communication technology?": https://learn.org/articles/What_is_Communication_Technology.html

"Building a digital future for all in Europe": https://www.openaccessgovernment.org/digital-future/51932/

"Europe's unemployment: no policy issue, a policy issue for Europe or for the Member States or for both?": https://www.cesifo-group.de/DocDL/Forum100-focus2.pdf

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY (ENVI)

Healthcare sans-frontieres: in an era of interconnectivity and increased mobility, how can we safeguard patients' rights whilst realising the potential provided by cross-border healthcare?

by Anna Trost (IT)

TOPIC AT A GLANCE

In 2011, after several years of deliberations, the European Union adopted the **Directive on Patients' Rights in Cross-border Healthcare**, which sets out the right for patients to access safe and high-quality healthcare, also across national borders within the EU, as well as the right to be reimbursed for the treatments received.

Yet **patient mobility** within the EU remains **low**, as in 2014 only 4.6% of citizens reported cross-border mobility, meaning that patients are reported not to travel significant distances for care either because they are unaware of the possibility to do so or due to the bureaucratic procedures required. However, for certain groups of patients, cross-border healthcare constitutes an appropriate and accessible care that caters their needs. Once this movement occurs though, complex issues are being raised about the **reimbursement system**, as well as the **dishomogeneous treatments' costs** among the Member States (MS) and the citizens' **lack of information** about their cross-border rights.

Therefore, whilst the Directive represents a step forward to the interconnection of national health systems, contradictions are all the more highlighting that healthcare is far from being "sans-frontieres".

CORE CONCEPTS

The **right to free movement**, one of the basic rights of EU citizens, enables to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member States. On grounds of public health this right is provided by the Directive on Patients' Rights in Cross-border Healthcare.

One of the pillars of Cross-border Healthcare is **eHealth**, defined by the National Institute of Health as an emerging field in the intersection of medical informatics, public health and business, referring to health services and information delivered through related technologies. Coordinating by the e-Health Digital Service Infrastructure (eHDSI), eHeath national contact points allow the **exchange of personal health data** such as summaries and ePrescriptions.

The adoption of the eHealth system enables the introduction of **ePrescripion**, which consists of an electronic medical prescription transmitted directly to a pharmacy, where the medicine can then be dispensed. Although the Directive on Patients' Rights grants patients, issued with a prescription in one MS, the right to to present and execute it in other MS, it has yet been proved that half of pharmacists presented with a foreign prescription would not dispense the medicine immediately.

The Directive also allows MS to set up a system of **prior authorisation (PA)** up to certain conditions, such as the involvement of overnight hospital accommodation or the requirement of highly specialized and cost-intensive medical infrastructure and equipment. Nevertheless, any system of prior authorisation may not constitute a means of arbitrary discrimination or an unjustified obstacle to the free movement of patients.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The **European Commission**, which represents the interests of the EU as a whole, is the only institution empowered to initiate legislation. The staff members working in the European Commission in support of the 28 Commissioners are organised in departments known as Directorates-General, each responsible for a particular policy area.
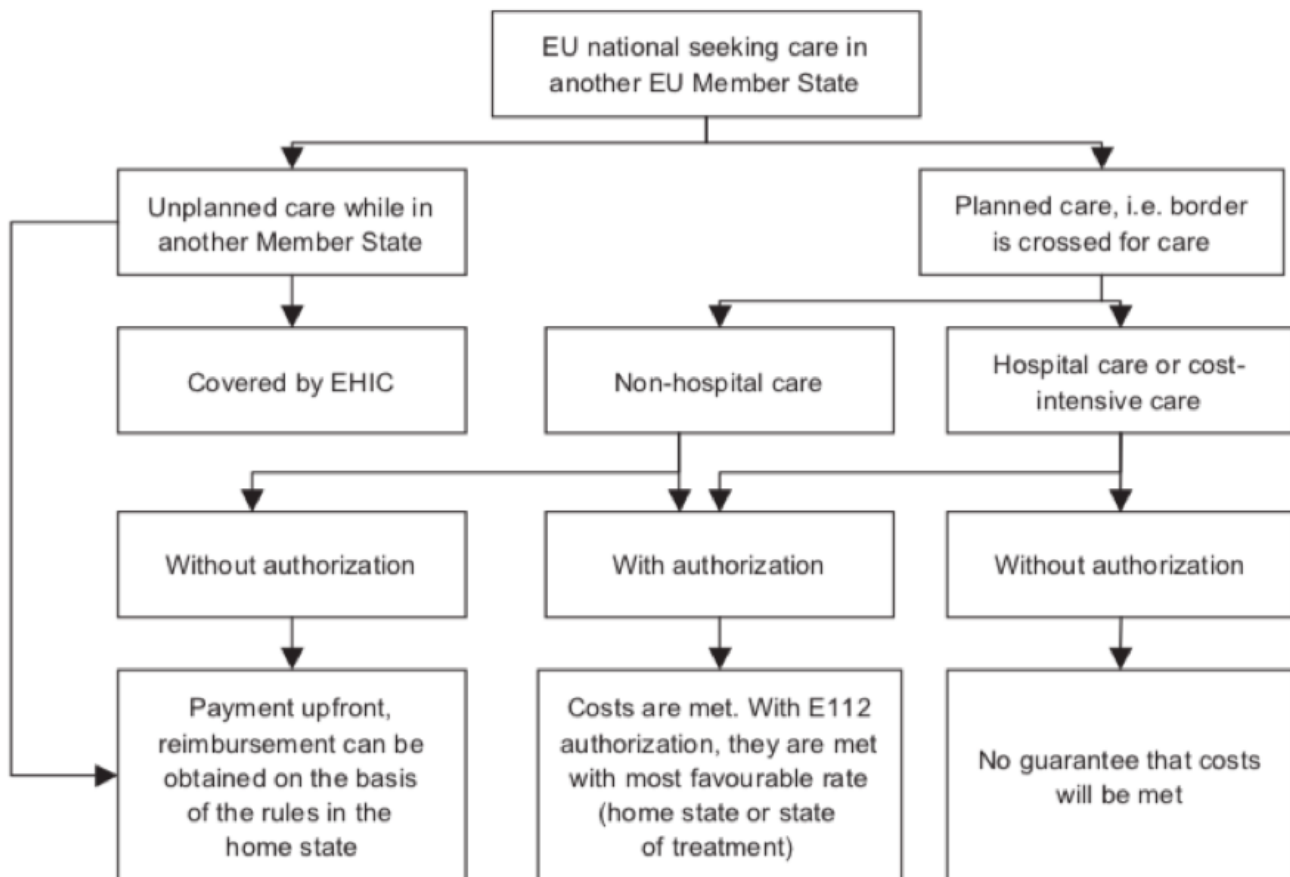
The responsibility for implementing the Cross-border Healthcare Directive lies primarily with the directorate general for health (DG SANTE), which is in charge of the strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of the Health Programme. The other relevant department within the Commission is the directorate general for communications networks, content and technology (DG CNECT), which is responsible for eHealth.

Health is classified as to be a **shared competence**, meaning that measures in terms of public health can be taken both from the EU and its MS. In particular, EU actions are focused on the improvement of the cooperation between member countries in the field of public health, on disease prevention, as well as the on promotion of research. For what concern MS, they have the power to act where the Union has chosen not to, being therefore responsible for providing access to the requested healthcare (**Member State of treatment**) or ensuring that the relevant costs are reimbursed (**Member State of affiliation**).

Patients are the beneficiary of cross-border healthcare. As in some situations the most accessible or appropriate care for patients is only available in a Member States different from the country of residence, the ability to make a free and informed choice to access cross-border healthcare can improve healthcare outcomes.

KEY CONFLICTS

Cross-border patients have the possibility to be reimbursed for healthcare provision in another EU country, as long as the type of treatment and costs involved would **normally be covered in patients' own national health system**. This also indicates that patients, moving to other MS so as to undertake treatments not legal in their country of residence, such as abortion or euthanasia, could not be eligible for reimbursement. Nonetheless, considering that patients have to pay at first on their own for the medical assistance received in the country of treatment, late reimbursements from the affiliation country may prevent those citizens who can't afford the payment in advance from benefiting of the treatment.

EU national seeking care in another EU Member State

- Unplanned care while in another Member State
  - Covered by EHIC
    - Without authorization
      - Payment upfront, reimbursement can be obtained on the basis of the rules in the home state
- Planned care, i.e. border is crossed for care
  - Non-hospital care
    - With authorization
      - Costs are met. With E112 authorization, they are met with most favourable rate (home state or state of treatment)
  - Hospital care or cost-intensive care
    - Without authorization
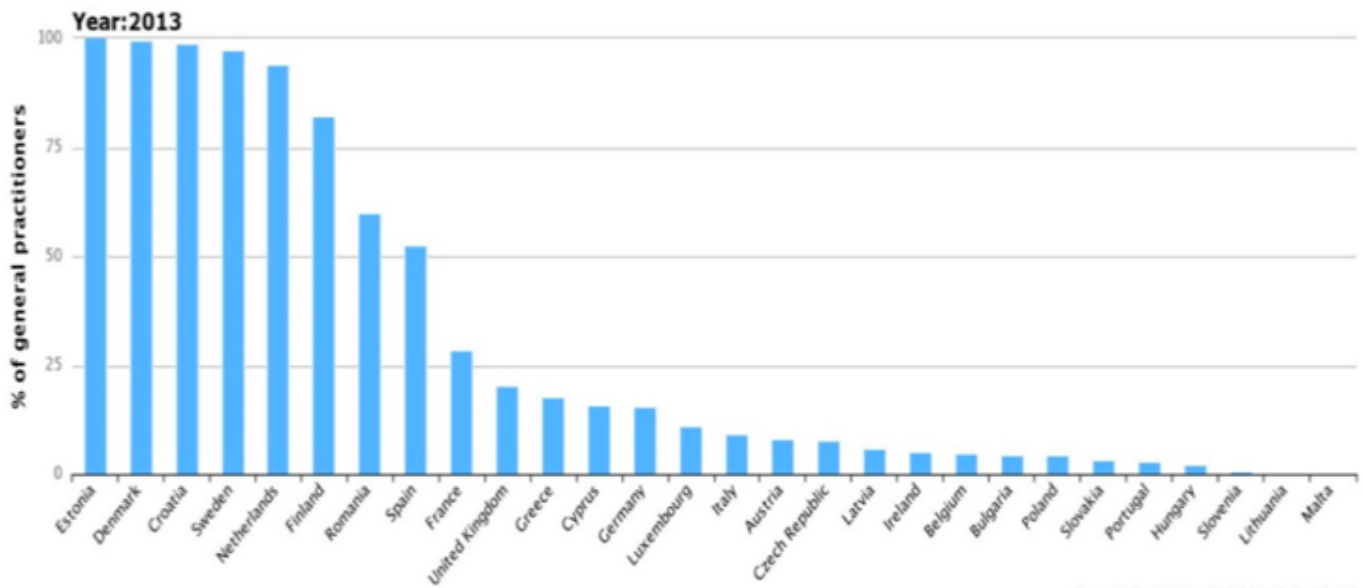   - No guarantee that costs will be met

European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) is a free card that gives access to the healthcare system during a temporary stay in any of the 28 EU countries, under the same conditions and at the same cost (free in some countries) as people insured in that country. **It does not cover costs for those travelling for the express purpose of obtaining medical treatment.**

In addition, according the Directive, the costs of cross-border healthcare shall be reimbursed or paid up to the **level of costs that would have been assumed by the MS of affiliation**, had this healthcare been provided in its territory, without exceeding the actual cost of the healthcare received. However, this system doesn't take into account the MS granting of lower reimbursements, applicable to healthcare received from privates within their own territory, as well as the **discrepant costs** of medical treatments among MS, which may prevent patients insured in an affiliation country, where the healthcare's tariffs are lower than the ones in the country of treatment, from accessing cross-border services. For example, a hip replacement is paid at an (average) level of €8963 in Italy, compared with €1795 in Hungary.

Furthermore discrepancies among MS are also visible in terms of the **technical advancement**, as some countries haven't developed the technical resources to adopt the eHealth system. This impacts on the exchange of data among countries, preventing patients from fully taking benefits of general practitioners' (GPs) interconnection.

GPs using electronic networks to transfer prescriptions to pharmacists

Year:2013

[Bar chart: % of general practitioners (y-axis, 0 to 100) by country (x-axis): Estonia (~100), Denmark (~99), Croatia (~98), Sweden (~97), Netherlands (~93), Finland (~82), Romania (~60), Spain (~53), France (~28), United Kingdom (~20), Greece (~18), Cyprus (~16), Germany (~15), Luxembourg (~11), Italy (~9), Austria (~8), Czech Republic (~7), Latvia (~5), Ireland (~5), Belgium (~4), Bulgaria (~4), Poland (~4), Slovakia (~3), Portugal (~2), Hungary (~2), Slovenia (~1), Lithuania (~0), Malta (~0)]

The Directive promotes also the establishment of **National Contact Points** (NPC) to provide citizens with relevant information on their rights to cross-border healthcare and on the relevant procedures. According to a Eurobarometer survey though, only 10% of Europeans are aware of their existence and less than 20% of citizens feel well informed about their cross-border healthcare rights. A recent study of the Commission on the information provided to patients shows that in-depth information on patients' rights is generally lacking on NCP websites, including insight about the period of time required to process reimbursements and prior authorisation requests, as well as information regarding which treatments are reimbursed.

POLICY APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM

The Directive on Cross-border Healthcare is hindered from its full implementation by the **differences which occur in various MS**. As a matter of fact harmonization of costing methodologies and accounting systems would improve comparability for cross-border transactions, avoiding the imposition of a standardized "European" accounting methodology which would conflict with the EU principle of subsidiarity.

It has to be further noticed, that the creation of cross-border healthcare systems hasn't been accompanied by a verification that same professional standards, although the duration of study in healthcare education tends to be fairly similar, the content of medical training varies significantly both within and between countries, representing potential risks for safety and quality of care.

MEASURES IN PLACE

Directive on Patients' Rights in Cross-border Healthcare is aimed at providing a clear legal framework, as well as resolving ambiguities about the mechanisms involved in cross-border care. The Directive does not create any new patient rights, but it clarifies the existing ones stated in the previous Social Security Regulation (S2/E112). The two legal documents differs from various aspect such as the treatments eligible for reimbursement, the amount of reimbursement and prior authorizations. Overall, the S2/E112 form is more financially advantageous for the patient but significantly more difficult to obtain.

The third EU health programme is the main instrument used by the European Commission to implement the EU Health Strategy. It consists of a funding instrument to support cooperation among MS and support EU health activities.

The European Reference Networks (ERNs) are virtual, voluntary cross-border networks, accessible to healthcare providers across Europe with a view to helping diagnose and treat patients suffering from rare and complex diseases that require highly specialised healthcare and a concentration of knowledge, as well as resources. A key principle of ERNs is to let the knowledge travel rather than the patients.

WHAT NOW?

Even though cross-border healthcare represents a fundamental resource for many patients, only a few of them have actually experimented it, reducing significantly the potential outcome of treatments. In addition, those patients moving to a country of affiliation find a cross-border healthcare system which still seeks for improvement, as it requires an homogeneity among MS that for certain aspects couldn't be more different. How is it therefore possible to make a step toward an efficient cross-border healthcare system when discrepancies among MS keep it a step back?

ESSENTIAL READING

"Cross-border healthcare" by European Patients Forum - it's an overview of the functioning of cross-border healthcare, including some relevant and interesting key issue

"Legal Information" by Healthcare beyond Borders - it gives a clear explanation of the difference between the Directive and the previous S2/E112 form

"eHealth: How it works" by the European Commission - it's an overview of the functioning of the eHealth network

"EU Directive fails to meet expectations for Medical Tourism" by the International Medical Travel Journal - It's an article which explains the Directive on Cross-Border Healthcare from another perspective

"Language and cultural discordance in healthcare communication" - by the International Association for Communication in Healthcare

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE (INTA)

Trading Favours: With Africa set to be a key player in the ever changing geopolitical landscape, how can the EU ensure greater cooperation with Africa when it comes to trade and economic development?

By Tigran Bazarchyan (AM)

TOPIC AT A GLANCE

"Africa does not need charity, it needs true and fair partnership. And we, Europeans need this partnership just as much. Today, we are proposing a new Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs between Europe and Africa. This Alliance, as we envision it, would help create up to 10 million jobs in Africa in the next 5 years alone. I believe we should develop the numerous EU-African trade agreements into a continent-to-continent free trade agreement, as an economic partnership between equals."

In his speech on 12 of September 2018, President Jean-Claude Juncker suggested fostering the European Union's trade relationship with African states. On that day the Commission pledged on a "new alliance" that includes a free trade agreement between the two continents.

The cornerstone for EU-Africa relations is the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, signed in 2007. After its adoption, the donor-beneficiary relations turned into the equal level. One of the areas of the strategy is cooperation in the sphere of trade.

Africa's trade in goods in 2017 per partner
Total trade (exports and imports)

EU	36%	€243.5 billion
China	16%	€107 billion
United States	6%	€44.2 billion

Source: IMF.

The EU is Africa's biggest trading partner, receiving 36% of Africa's trade in goods, worth **€243.5 billion in 2017.** The EU remains the most open market to African exports in the world.

On the other hand, African countries pay attention to the protection of their domestic products, so **liberalisation of trade** in favour of EU would hand the EU terms of trade gain. African countries fear that large EU companies may take over the African market with cheaper products. Also, tariffs will mean low government revenues for African countries.

CORE CONCEPTS

Joint Africa-EU Strategy - Adopted at the Lisbon Summit in 2007 between the 27 EU Member States and 54 African Nations, the Strategy aims at deeper cooperation between the countries of each continent.

Trade Liberalisation - Removal or reduction of restrictions or barriers on the free exchange of goods between nations.

Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)- Arrangement between parties that aims at the reduction of the barriers of investment and increase in trade of products and services between the signing parties.

Tariff - Tariffs constitute a trade instrument, a tax on imports to protect the local producers (WTO definition).

Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) - Is a preferential tariff system, which grants countries with low or no tariffs on export of the goods. It allows its partners vital access to the EU market and contributes to their growth

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

EU institutions. As in all trade agreement with non-EU countries, the European Commission is the governing body responsible for trade negotiations with African states. As vital institutions for EU, the Council of the EU and the European Parliament play a role in trade negotiations, since they decide on the approval of a deal negotiated by the Commission.

African Union:
I.   Executive council: Established in 2002, the African Union's Executive council is responsible for negotiating on behalf of the of 55 African countries on foreign trading policy.
II.   Pan African Parliament: The legislative body of the African Union, the Pan African Parliament, bears a responsibility for approval of the trade deal.

EU-Africa Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states and EU. Based on the Cotonou Agreement the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly aims to bring together the Members of the European Parliament - and the elected representatives of the African, Caribbean, and Pacific states ("ACP countries"): it is the only institution of its kind in the world. Promotion of trade liberalisation and its fostering is among the principles of the assembly.

KEY CONFLICTS

The non-equal parties: The first Economic Partnership Agreements negotiations date back to the 2000. The ensuing negotiations took a highly controversial turn, culminating during the 2007 EU-Africa Summit, when African heads of state and government accused the EU of looking to conclude trade agreements between fundamentally asymmetrical markets.

African Goods in EU market: Traditional **Free Trade Agreements** (FTA) relate to loosening the customs and tariffs for the goods. Despite duty-free imports, EU imports from Africa have fallen by almost 40 percent in recent years starting from 2012, caused by the obstacles that make market access difficult for African companies. In most cases, according to the German development minister Muller, the African producers manufacture goods that do not meet strict European quality standards.

The Geopolitical Factor and China's presence: China's trade with Africa also shall be a factor to take into account on the EU's approach of trade with Africa. China has established deep commercial engagement with Africa. This shall be on thought of, if not solely because of the economic gain, but also for greater geo-political influence.

POLICY APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM

The EU's trade policy can be an important instrument for building capacities to support sustainable growth, job opportunities, economic diversification, and integration in the regional/global economy. Nevertheless, before the negotiation of trade agreements, it is a common practice for trade parties to evaluate the sectors and economic activity, in which trade opening would benefit jobs' creation. Trade agreements also contain guarantees that the agreement would not affect the market access provided to all other potential partners.

Another area of consideration is subsidised sectors and areas. For instance, the agricultural products from the EU should be excluded entirely from liberalisation because the European agricultural industry is subsided. Tariffs of 20% are sometimes too low to effectively protect a sensitive market in African countries. African governments must have the ability to control tariffs to ensure their food security. Special care should be taken not to worsen Africa's food deficits further, and particular attention should be given to the condition of life and work of rural workers.

A vital point is that trade agreements shall involve **binding commitments** aiming to ensure the respect of core International Labor Organisation's standards and the promotion of the correct labor agenda in the region. Certain institutions for monitoring purposes though are yet to be established. By these actions, the EU can increase its political presence in the emerging African continent.

MEASURES IN PLACE

The EU is Africa's closest neighbour and biggest investor, the main trading and development partner and a key security provider. The EU is providing €31 billion in Official Development Assistance to Africa between 2014-2020 to boost Africa's economy, give young people in the continent a chance to build a future, ensure food security and access to energy, and anchor good governance and respect of human rights.

Currently, 52 African countries benefit from a trade agreement, an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) or a trade arrangement (Everything But Arms and the two Generalised Scheme of Preferences, Standard GSP and GSP+) with the EU to grant privileged access to its market. These countries pay fewer or no duties on exports to the EU, giving them vital access to the EU market and contributing to their growth.

WHAT NOW?

For the EU, the long-term goal remains the creation of a comprehensive continent-to-continent free trade agreement, which will be proven beneficial both for African development, as well as ensuring the EU's geopolitical presence in the region. Some other long term goals may include the creation of the free trade area among the African countries and the EU similar to the Northern American Free Trade Area.

In light of the above, Economic Partnership Agreements, Free Trade Agreements including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas on offer to North African countries, and other trade regimes with the EU should be exploited to a greater extent, as they consist new opportunities to the benefit of the Africa-EU trade.

ESSENTIAL READING

"Negotiating EU trade Agreements Who does what and how we reach a final deal" by European Commission, the document describes the responsibilities of each of the three main EU institutions (Council, Parliament, Commission) at the different stages of the trade agreement negotiation procedure.

"EU Trade Policy Explained" by European Commission: Short video thoroughly describing the role of the EU institutions responsible for trade negotiation. Describes the trade policy of the EU and how the EU citizens can impact trade decisions and negotiations.

"Joint Africa–EU Strategy" by European Commission the brief description over the Joint strategy with background information and provides perspective of the European Union regarding the relations and potential trade agreement with African states.

"Factsheet Africa Europe" by European Commission 2018. Description of the EU and Africa relations. Provides relevant information under the trade section "Tapping the full potential of economic integration and trade".

"Why Africa needs the economic partnership agreements" by Dr. Olu Fasan. Article written by visiting fellow of the London School of Economics that provides perspectives of Africa, the needs and obligations of Africa in the scope of the relations with the EU.

"EU-Africa free trade will create more imbalances, say critics" by Deutsche Welle 2018. Article provides the critical perspective towards the EU-Africa relations in the sphere of trade, by providing opinions and quotes from the experts or Ministers.

"Trade between two unequal partners" article by Kingsley Ighobor, Africa Renewal information programme, produced by the Africa Section of the United Nations Department of Public Information. Describes how the trade liberalisation will impact the African market by highlighting potential negative consequences.

"The Economic Partnership Agreements and EU-Africa trade relations: Joint statement from EU and African trade unions" by Trade Law Centre public benefit organisation 2018, November 02: Article provides the perspective of African and EU trade unions over the trade relations between EU and Africa, provides the suggestions of the trade unions.

"Challenges lie ahead for the European Union's lofty new Africa plan" by Erinn Stephan, Global Risks Insights 2018, October 03: Article outline the challenges of that EU faces in the process of building strong relations with Africa. The article provides constructive criticism towards the current plan of the trade relations of the EU with Africa.

"Towards a new 'Africa - Europe Alliance' to deepen economic relations and boost investment and jobs" by Riordli, European Commission. 2018, September 13. The piece provides the recent information in the development of the Africa-EU relations and provides the future course of Actions that EU plans to take.

"State of the Union 2018: Questions and Answers - Towards a new 'Africa – Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs" by European Commission. 2018, September. Description on vital questions regarding the recent statement of the State of Union on Africa-EU relationship.

ITRE

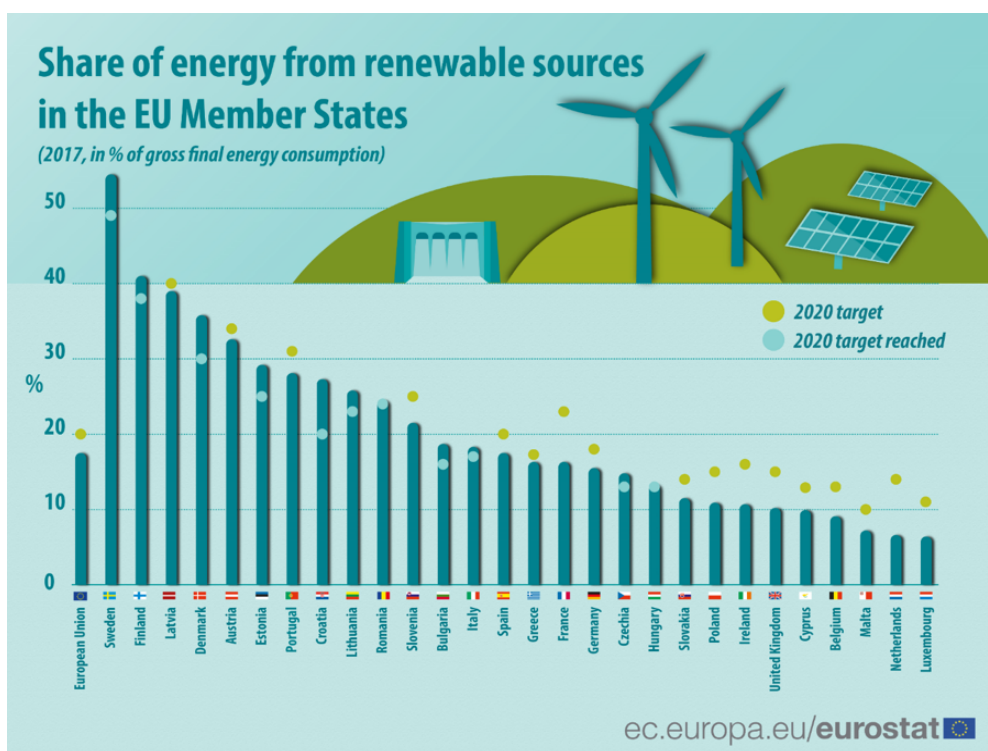# COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, RESEARCH AND ENERGY (ITRE)

Is green really green? With European citizens becoming active consumers, prosumers, crowdsourcers and crowdfunders of the energy transition, what can the EU do to provide the correct information and tools to empower its citizens when it comes to the energy they use?

by Jeroen Smeulders (NL)

TOPIC AT A GLANCE

The process of **Climate Change** is affecting our planet. The primary cause for this process is **Greenhouse Gases (GHG)-emission** which happens during most forms of energy production. As an attempt to address this issue the EU member States set up the **2020 goals**, with the aim of increasing the production of **renewable energy** and to decrease the total **energy consumption** before 2020. The specific goals are different for every Member State, and some have made more progress than others, which can be seen in the picture below.

A different development is the increase of **awareness** about climate change among the citizens of the EU. As a result of the rise in awareness there are many different **citizens' initiatives** to combat climate change in their own way. Most of these initiatives involve **lifestyle-changes** that are more sustainable, such as using less plastics, or reducing their home's energy consumption.

Share of energy from renewable sources in the EU Member States
(2017, in % of gross final energy consumption)

● 2020 target
● 2020 target reached

ec.europa.eu/**eurostat**

A graph showing the progress of each Member State towards their 2020 target in up to 2017. More information and source.

CORE CONCEPTS

Renewable Energy Sources (RES) are solar, wind, hydro power or biofuel. Biofuel is further divided in **simple biofuel** and **advanced biofuel**. Simple biofuel is organic mass like trees, crops and other things with other uses, while advanced biofuel is waste or residues that have no other use, but that require advanced energy production facilities to be processed. Non-renewable energy sources are fossil-fuels, i.e. coal, gas, and oil.

Green Energy is energy that is generated using renewable sources. Energy that is produced using non-renewable sources is often called **grey energy**.

A **prosumer** is both the producer and consumer of a product, in the case of this topic, it often refers to citizens or companies that produce their own energy.

The **EU Emission Trading System (ETS)** is a system that tries to **regulate** the GHG-emissions of Member States in two ways; a **'cap' and a 'trade' system**. The 'cap' is a **limit** imposed on Member States and companies on the amount of **GHG** they are allowed to emit. This limit is **slowly lowered** over time, forcing them to decrease their emission over time, with large fines for failing to do so.

Within this limit companies receive **certificates** that allow them to emit these GHG's, which they are then allowed to **buy and sell** within this system. The **trade** of these certificates **incentivises innovations** to reduce one's GHG-emission, as that would mean they would be able to sell their certificates for a profit.

Guarantee of Origin (GO) are certificates that an energy producer can receive for the production of green energy. These GO's can be bought and sold afterwards, to incentivise producers to use GO's.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The **citizens of the EU** have an interest in the energy consumption policy of their respective Member State as they ultimately feel the consequences of the chosen policies. At the same time, the citizens have the ability to directly influence the energy production and consumption, for example by consuming less energy or producing their own energy, with initiatives like **citizens for energy transition (C4ET)**.
At the same time the **Member States** are ultimately responsible for the creation and implementation of these policies. They do this on a national level, and also on an EU level in cooperation with other Member States.
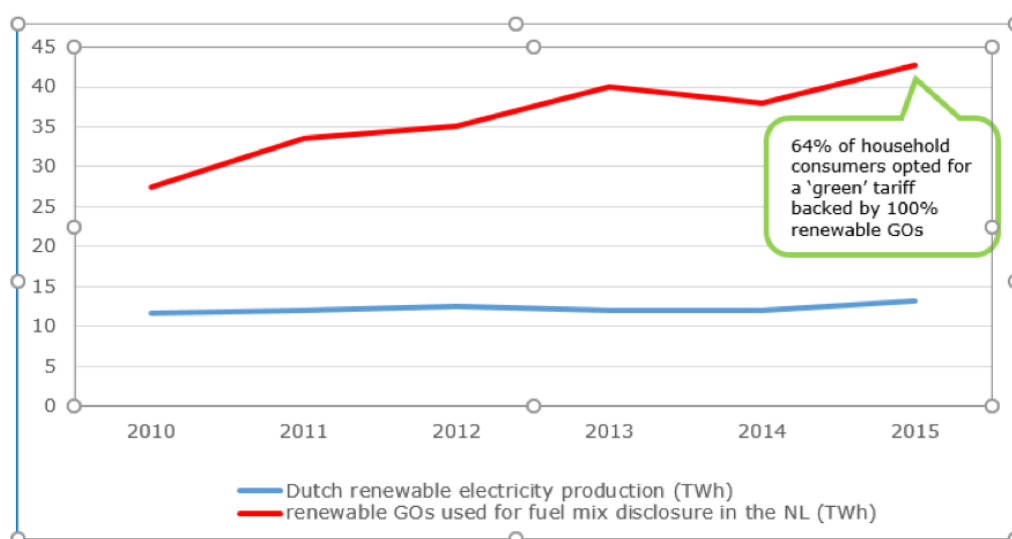
Finally there are also the **large energy producing** and **consuming companies** such as oil companies, and **power production plants**. These companies provide or consume energy on such a large scale that even the smallest change for them has significant impact on the total energy production of a country. Examples of this would be a change to the fuel used by **transport sectors** such as boats or airplanes, or closing coal power plants and opening biofuel power plants.

KEY CONFLICTS

Unfortunately, there is no one-size-fits-all approach towards **household innovations**, as there are **widely varying factors** within and between Member States, regions and even cities or neighbourhoods. Such factors include the local climate, daily amount of sun, averages wind speed, etc.

At the same time, the energy provided to households is often a **mixture** of green and grey energy, even if the consumer pays for purely green energy. This is possible due to the abuse of **Guarantees of origin** (GO's) as a result of them being marketable. Explaining this further, when a company that produces grey energy buys these GO's, they can claim that their energy is green. This leads to a situation where two companies or Member States can claim their energy production to be green, those who produce green energy, and those who bought the GO that was given to the the green energy producer. This **loophole** is visualised in the graph below, as the actual percentage of green energy produced in the Netherlands is far lower than the amount of energy that is "certified" as green.

> 64% of household consumers opted for a 'green' tariff backed by 100% renewable GOs

Legend:
— Dutch renewable electricity production (TWh)
— renewable GOs used for fuel mix disclosure in the NL (TWh)

Showing the discrepancy between energy marketed as green vs produced green energy in the Netherlands. Background and source.

POLICY APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM

As discussed below, every Member State created their own **policy plan** to reach their goals. Here are some common implemented policies:

There are **grants** for research and construction of RES, e.g. windmills, solar panels and hydro power plants. This is sometimes also available in the form of **reimbursements** for **citizen's initiatives.** These reimbursements can be in the form of subsidies or even in the form of skipping waiting lists and getting personal parking spaces in crowded cities. Money is also often invested in **research** towards the improvement of RES, making them more **efficient** and less expensive.
Then there is the option of **improving energy infrastructure** to better handle **fluctuating** renewable energy. These so called **smart grids** are designed to improve efficiency between the power plants (producers) and the households (consumers). By analysing data and by predicting the **total demand of energy** for certain periods of time the power plant can better adjust its' production and therefore reduce its' waste and emissions. Examples of these smart-grids can be found in Portugal and Sweden.

MEASURES IN PLACE

The most relevant piece of legislation for renewable energy are the **2020 goals**, a set of goals with regards to the production and consumption of energy for each Member State, with the aim to achieve a 20% production and consumption of the entire EU by 2020.
As a part of the **2020 goals** every Member State has created their own **national policy plan** which outlines how every Member State will achieve their targets.
There are also already **2030** and **2050 targets** set for the EU and the Member States with regards to sustainable energy production as a percentage of total energy consumption.
Then there is the **Paris Agreement** which is an international agreement to combat climate change through a reduction in GHG-emission. Keep in mind that this is larger than the EU but it might still be useful for the EU's aims, as it is similar in spirit and execution to the 2020 goals.

The EU Emissions Trade System (ETS) is also one of the measures implemented by the European Commision.

WHAT NOW?

The question remains on how the EU should approach the topic of **renewable energy** and **sustainability**, in what ways can and should the EU incentivise and assist **citizens** with their innovations, and how can the **total energy production and consumption** best be adapted to be more sustainable, both on the **large and small scale**. Keep in mind that changes to **large power plants**, while more impactful, take far longer to implement than **small scale changes** for citizens and smaller companies.

RELEVANT LINKS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The strategy towards the Energy Union:
https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/energy-strategy-and-energy-union/building-energy-union

EU renewable energy strategy (video) summary:
https://youtu.be/Q0PfitrwHxs

EU 2020 climate & energy targets summary:
https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/strategies/2020_en

National Renewable Action plans 2020:
https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/renewable-energy/national-renewable-energy-action-plans-2020

Italy's national action plan for the 2020 goals, pages 165-170:
https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/dir_2009_0028_action_plan_italy.zip

Renewable Energy Progress Rapport April 2019 by the European Commision:
https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/report-progress-renewable-energy-april2019_en.pdf

The strategy towards the Energy Union.
https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/energy-strategy-and-energy-union/building-energy-union

EU renewable energy strategy (video) summary:
https://youtu.be/Q0PfitrwHxs

EU 2020 climate & energy targets summary:
https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/strategies/2020_en

LIBE

COMMITTEE ON CIVIL LIBERTIES, JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS (LIBE)

"The right to end? Considering the diverse legal framework of Member States on euthanasia, what should, if any, be the response of the EU on this matter?"

By Umberto Castello (IT), Edma Gjata (AL)

TOPIC AT A GLANCE

Given the pace at which **socio-economic factors** and **technological advancements** have significantly improved healthcare provision within the European Union (EU), it can be implied that its ever-increasing quality has had a better impact on the overall **wellbeing of the European citizens.** However, the healthcare systems among the Member States seem to attach more weight on the protection of the patients' life rather than the right to end it.

With 5.516 deaths, that is nearly 5% of deceases, in 2015 in the Netherlands being due to the choice to undergo voluntary end of life treatment, euthanasia now represents the fifth cause of death among the Dutch population.

Indeed, one of the basic values upon which societies are founded is the **right to life**. This is not only safeguarded with the **European Convention on Human Rights** (ECHR) but has also defined medical ethics since the era of Hippocrates. Yet the complex dilemma, revolving around ethical, moral or legal justifications for **end-of-life practices** carried out through medical procedures, remains unanswered.
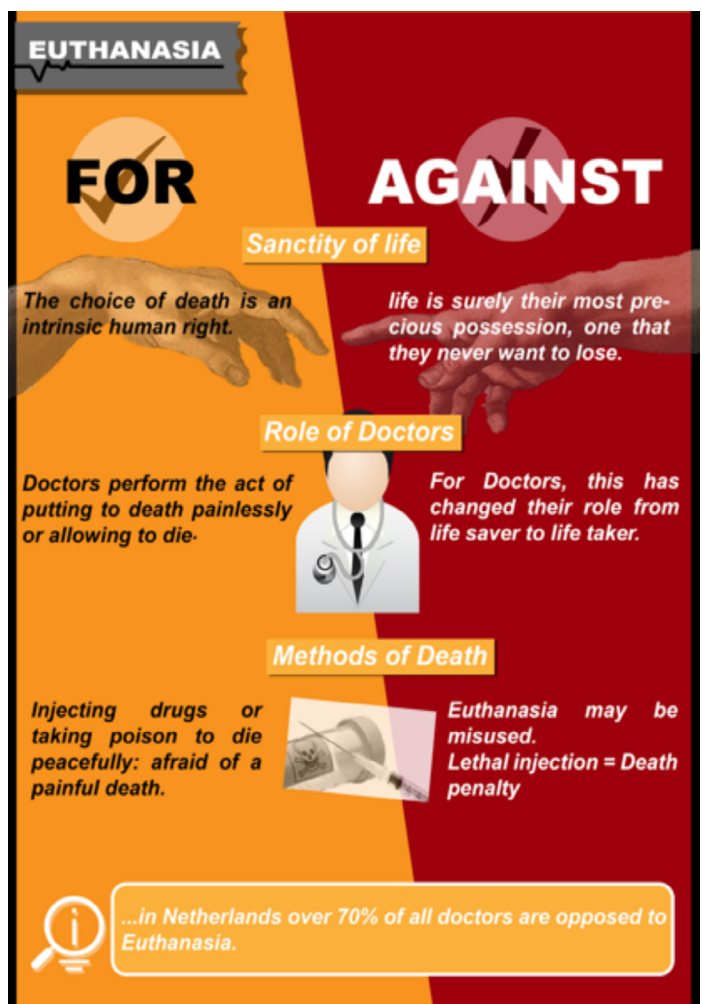
Euthanasia: pros and cons of right to end regulation

CORE CONCEPTS

Euthanasia is generally defined as the painless killing of a patient suffering from an incurable and painful disease or in an irreversible coma. Euthanasia is defined as active when the patient passes away following the administration of a lethal drug, whereas the consensual withdrawal of life-sustaining medical treatment is called passive euthanasia.

The **living will** is a written legal statement that preemptively specifies the medical treatment an individual is preferred to be administered once terminally ill or unable to communicate his wishes.

Informed refusal of treatment is the voluntary withdrawal from medical treatment issued by a conscious patient, after being fully aware and informed about the nature and the complications of his noncompliance.

Palliative care is treatment, care and support for people with a life-limiting illness. It is focussed on relieving suffering rather than on combating the illness.

Assisted suicide refers to the act of providing assistance to terminally ill patients who actively terminate their life.

Euthanasia tourism is the massive movement of people to a specific country with the explicit aim to undergo end-of-life procedures.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The **Council of the European Union** shares legislative power in the EU with the European Parliament and is therefore a co-legislator in the EU constitutional asset. Furthermore, it coordinates the broad economic policies of the MSs and signs agreements between the EU and other countries. As according to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union , public health constitutes a shared competence between the EU and Member States (MS), with the Union supporting and setting minimum standards and national governments defining their own specific policies.

The **European Commission** is the executive body of the EU. It proposes legislation for development and enaction by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU. The European Commission furthermore manages the EU budget, allocates funding and is in charge of monitoring the implementation of EU legislation in MSs.

The **Commission fédérale de contrôle et d'évaluation de l'euthanasie** was established in Belgium in 2002 along with the legalisation of euthanasia in the country. It is in charge of verifying that euthanasia is performed abiding by the rules. It also provides the government with statistics concerning the functioning of euthanasia.

EU and EFTA National Governments define the Member States' juridical asset and healthcare policies. They represent the most important institutional actor, detaining exclusive legislative power on this topic. Major discrepancies separate national juridical stances, with euthanasia being legal in BENELUX and Switzerland, as opposing to the rest of the continent.

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are organisations that work independently and have a significant role when it comes to lobbying and supporting different stances in the most various sectors, including euthanasia. Some collaborate with European and National institutions, such as the European Association for Palliative Care (EAPC) and the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE), representing respectively a pro-choice and a conservative stance. Other NGOs, such as the Swiss Dignitas, perform or take part in the performance of euthanasia.

The **European Court for Human Rights** was founded in 1959 by the Council of Europe in light of the ECHR. It guarantees that the principles declared in the Convention are abided by. Regarding euthanasia, complaints have often been lodged for alleged violations of Articles 2 and 8 "Right to life" and "Right to Family and Private Life" respectively).

KEY CONFLICTS

  The nature of a common European approach on the issue is fragile; **the lack of attempts** to discuss the legalisation of euthanasia or assisted suicide through parliamentary processes has resulted in **fragmentation** and a **growing dissonance** among Member States. The extension of euthanasia rights, if any, falls explicitly under the competence of each Member State, which is called to determine whether the aforementioned end-of-life practices are in accordance with their national policies.

Systems facilitating access to **active euthanasia** are currently limited to Benelux countries and Switzerland, with strict regulations in place, including a list with permitted diseases, age allowance or mental condition of the patient. Hence, end-of-life procedures for a patient suffering or dying from a terminal illness, even when based on informed consent, have **a large context dependency** varying from case to case, including personal, psychological, social and cultural factors, often leaving the concept of **"unbearable suffering"** open to interpretation.

The long-standing dilemma on whether to withdraw life-sustaining treatment or prescribe lethal doses of medication to terminally ill patients, being exposed to continued pain and suffering, constitutes an extremely complex **medical, legal and moral matter**. In 2012, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) approved a resolution stating that euthanasia, as a form of intentional killing "must always be prohibited". If legalised, end-of-life methods might pose an increased risk in the incidence of **non-voluntarily** (when the patient is unable to consent) or **involuntarily** (against the patient's will) medicalised killing. Yet, without euthanasia or assisted suicide appearing as an option, the patients may fear that life will be prolonged unnecessarily, thus leading to an unbalanced attitude between the **safeguard of life** and respect for **individual autonomy.**

The number of patients travelling across borders in order to receive these medical services, lawfully offered in a few countries, has risen sharply with **23 foreign patients** being euthanised in Belgium in 2016 and 2017 alone. In light of these developments, the debate on euthanasia and assisted suicide has reignited with new, "added" elements - the growth of **"euthanasia tourism"** and **foreign doctors** carrying out these practices in the countries where euthanasia is legal. Although the 2005/36/EC Directive allows for medical qualifications to be recognised within the EU, they can still **face prosecution** back in their home countries. To that end, the conflict between **legal requirements** and the **moral and professional values** of healthcare professionals has been under thorough debate.

POLICY APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM

Being a topic that falls exclusively under the competence of the Member States, the first approaches to the issue can take the form of **national legislation.** For instance, the issue of euthanasia tourism in Switzerland has seen the first attempt of regulation with the **Swiss Zivilstandsverordnung SR 211. 112.2.**

Secondly, the matter can be addressed from a supranational perspective, as part of a **cross-border discussion on human rights** like the one taking place in the resolution 1859 of the Council of Europe, which firmly stated that euthanasia shall always be prohibited, as a form of intentional killing. Although not legally binding, it represents the general stance on the topic.

Besides, EU institutions play a central role in some specific facets of the issues, such as the **protection of the doctors' and the patients' rights**, i.e. the application of what asserted in Directives 2005/36/EC and 2011/24/EU.

Furthermore, specific requests can be addressed to **NGOs** both by national governments and by EU institutions. As such organisations represent a major stakeholder in the debate on euthanasia and its administration, legal frameworks and funding programmes tailored on their specific competences could be enforced.

MEASURES IN PLACE

The **Directive 2011/24/EU** states that every European citizen has the right to enjoy healthcare provision in all members of the Union, with specific reimbursement by their states described case by case. This does not apply to EFTA member states, even if freedom of movement allows European citizens to enjoy these countries' national healthcare.

The **Directive 2005/36/EC** regulates the certificates of competence of professionals, including doctors, who are now capable of toiling in every member state of the European Union with full recognition of their qualifications. These individuals thus work as according to the law of the country where they act.

Article 16 Paragraph 2 of the **Swiss Zivilstandsverordnung (SR 211. 112.2)** responds to the issue of the so-called "Euthanasia Tourism". It requires euthanasia applicants to reside in Switzerland for a minimum of six months before the treatment.

The **Resolution 1859 2012 of the PACE** is a legally non-binding regulation, primarily regarding the "question of advance directives, living wills and continuing powers of attorney". Notwithstanding, it explicitly states in Article 5 that "Euthanasia, in the sense of intentional killing [...] must always be prohibited".

The **Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms** (ECHR), by the "Council of Europe," (1953) is the main piece of legally binding European legislation with concern to human rights. In particular in Articles 2 and 8, respectively concerning the Right to Life and the Right to Personal and Private Life, have been addressed in cases of euthanasia, for its denying might imply an infraction of Article 8, whereas its permission might be considered disrespectful of Article 2.

WHAT NOW?

 Given the diverse attitudes to euthanasia or assisted suicide within the EU and the major differences regarding national legal frameworks, what measures could be taken in order to optimise the approach of relevant stakeholders? While considering the increasing medical travel opportunities as a result of healthcare globalization, should the EU have a stance on this matter, and if yes, to what extent? With euthanasia being a sensitive moral and ethical issue, what steps can be taken to further improve the coordination of medical and ethical bodies that administer end-of-life practices and accommodate the needs of terminally ill patients?

RELEVANT LINKS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Legislation

 "Protecting human rights and dignity by taking into account previously expressed wishes of patients, Resolution 1859" by the "Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)," (2012), Article 5 mainly.

 "Convention on the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR)", by the "Council of Europe," (1953). The ECHR is the main piece of legally binding European legislation with concern to human rights.

 "End of life and the European Convention on Human rights, case law", by the "European Court of Human Rights", (2000-2018). These examples clarify the interpretation of articles 2, 3 and 8 of the aforementioned convention regarding Euthanasia.

Opinions and reports

Articles

 Brussels denies EU rules encourage 'euthanasia tourism', by James Crisp, The Telegraph (2018). The article provides an insight into how 'euthanasia tourism' affects healthcare professionals who carry out the procedure in EU countries where euthanasia is legal.

 Euthanasia Tourism: Is The E.U. Encouraging Its Growth?, by Cecilia Rodrigues, Forbes (2019). An analysis of how the phenomenon has various legal implications in different Member States, thus putting countries such as Belgium at risk of becoming popular destinations for the so called "mercy killings".

Euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide: a view from an EAPC Ethics Task Force. The Board of Directors of the European Association for Palliative Care (EAPC) captures some of the underlying norms and values of controversial discussions related to palliative care and euthanasia practices.

Swiss to crack down on suicide tourism, by Michael Leidig & Philip Sherwell, The Telegraph (2004). This article refers to how Swiss authorities have restricted access to euthanasia and assisted suicide for foreign patients considering the notable increase of applications for these procedures.

Death on demand: has euthanasia gone too far?, by Christopher de Bellaigue, the Guardian (2019). The critical point of view and real life cases, supported by the experiences of a famous Dutch doctor, offer a new perspective on the matter.
Ethical problems of euthanasia, from BBC, pinpoints the ethical issue of euthanasia, while briefly confronting for and against arguments.

"Europe split on right-to-die regulation", by Lorry Herber, Deutsche Welle (2014). The article provides the reader with a comprehensive look on the contemporary legal landscape in euthanasia regulations, including a specific description of the approach of the UK to suicide tourism.

Podcasts

"Euthanasia - Aurelia's Story", by Linda Pressly, BBC news (2018). The Podcast tells the Aurelia's story, a Dutch girl whose death caused great shambles in the Netherlands.

"Better off dead", a series of podcasts by Andrew Denton, ABC Earshot (2015/2016). The podcasts stand up for self-determination and the right to end.

Videos

"Assisted Death & the Value of Life: Crash Course Philosophy #45" 6:50 - 9:00. The video addresses the topic neutrally presenting both sides of the argument.

"Death with dignity", by Grace Pastine, TEDxStanleyPark (2016). The video takes a significantly pro-choice stance, with moral and factual arguments.

"Why legalising Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide is a bad idea" by Brian Holdsworth (2018). As opposed to the previous video, this one presents a radically pro-life position, sustained with a more provocative argumentative approach.

TRAN

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND TOURISM (TRAN)

Trouble in Paradise: Taking into account the important economic benefits of tourism, should the EU and the UNESCO try to control the tourist boom, in order to protect the locals and the cultural heritage sites, and if so, how?

By Heather Gowman (AT)

TOPIC AT A GLANCE

Over the past decades traveling has become less of a luxury and a far more common part of life, thus becoming more affordable to the average citizen. **A boom in the tourism industry**, with a particular interest in the so called **cultural tourism**, has led to certain local communities and heritage sites becoming overrun with tourists.

This rise in popularity of cultural tourism has allowed some areas to **thrive off the industry** and has become a driving economic factor. In some areas, it has become the main source of revenue, such as in the idyllic Hallstatt town in Austria. However, other communities and cities are unable to cope with the number of tourists streaming in and out of their premises on a daily basis. **Local citizens are unable to stay in their own towns** due to a rising disparity in their income and purchasing power, as prices are driven up due to tourism.

Moreover, the number of tourists visiting certain ancient heritage sites is **an endangerment to the cultural heritage sites itself**. Sites have not only been vandalised or damaged such as in the case of the Colosseum in Rome but in some cases, sites are damaged due to the exposure from the sheer volume of tourists. With restorations being very expensive and not always possible, it is important to protect sites that are a part of our **European culture** whilst maintaining a healthy economic environment.
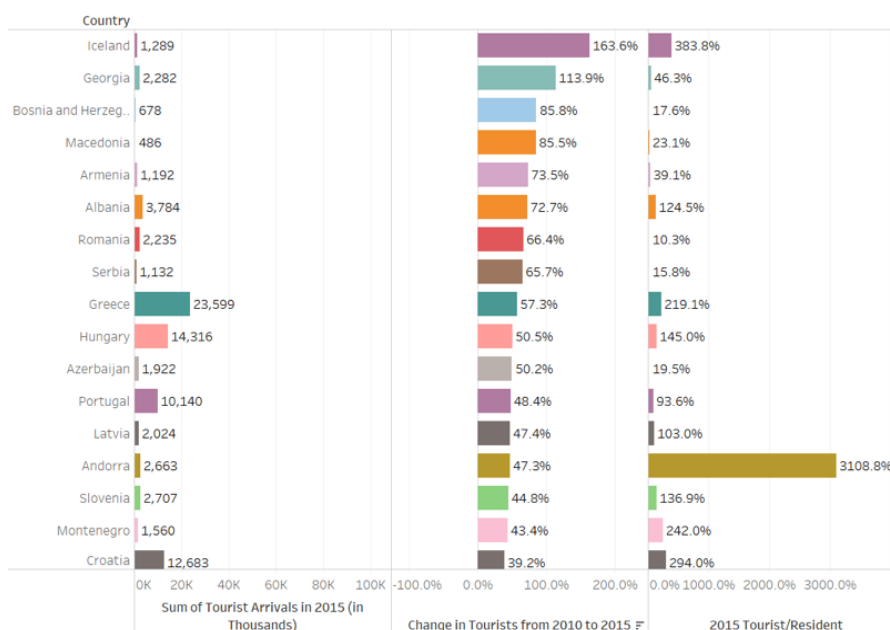
The graph shows the development of tourism in regards to tourist arrivals and tourist to resident ratio in Europe, demonstrating the importance of the tourism sector.

CORE CONCEPTS

The **freedom of movement** of citizens within the EU and the dismantlement of internal borders, as per the Schengen agreement, simplified traveling within the EU and has allowed experiential learning about other countries and their cultures. Culture has long been a travel motivation leading to the concept of **Cultural Tourism**; local heritage sites, landscapes, traditions, etc. constitute key tourist attractions,leading to an ongoing **tourist boom** in certain cities with a particularly relevant amount of historical sites and cultural heritage such as Rome or Venice. Furthermore, there is a **current tourist trend** that has tourists visiting popular sites or cities leading to a rapid increase of tourists in a very concentrated area. This occurrence, known as **overtourism**, can have negative consequences on these sites if it is not managed properly.

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** is the United Nations agency that concerns itself with culture, whereby one of its key initiatives is the protection of cultural heritage sites.

Member States and local communities are the affected actors who often have to deal with the consequences of overtourism. Their political and economic decision making influences the amount of tourism flow and play a major role in the protection of cultural heritage sites.

The Council of Europe, which is made up of representatives of States' parliaments, lays its main focus on Human Rights while also playing a key role in the protection of Europe's cultural heritage sites. While the Council does not enjoy legislative powers, it recommends policies and areas of potential actions that Member States can take up for the protection of cultural heritage sites.

The World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) is the United Nations' agency dedicated to the tourism sector. Its goals are targeted to promoting sustainable tourism in a way that it is still accessible to the majority of the population, whilst addressing how to best manage heritage sites in a sustainable and functional manner.

KEY CONFLICTS

  The tourism industry is ever growing and contributes a significant part of revenue in historical cities. Tourism has many **benefits**, especially in the economy sector, considering the wide range of skills and jobs linked to the industry. As can be observed in the following graph, the tourism sector contributes a vast number to GDPs through direct factors such as jobs creation, indirect factors such as spending by local governments for promotional purposes and the resulting induced factors which can be seen as the spendings by direct and indirect employees. This large economic contribution has allowed for the restoration of ancient buildings and the building of better infrastructure to accommodate for the increased number of people. It has helped forgotten rural communities get on their feet again and has helped countries recover from financial crises.

EUROPE:TOTAL CONTRIBUTION OF TRAVEL & TOURISM TO GDP
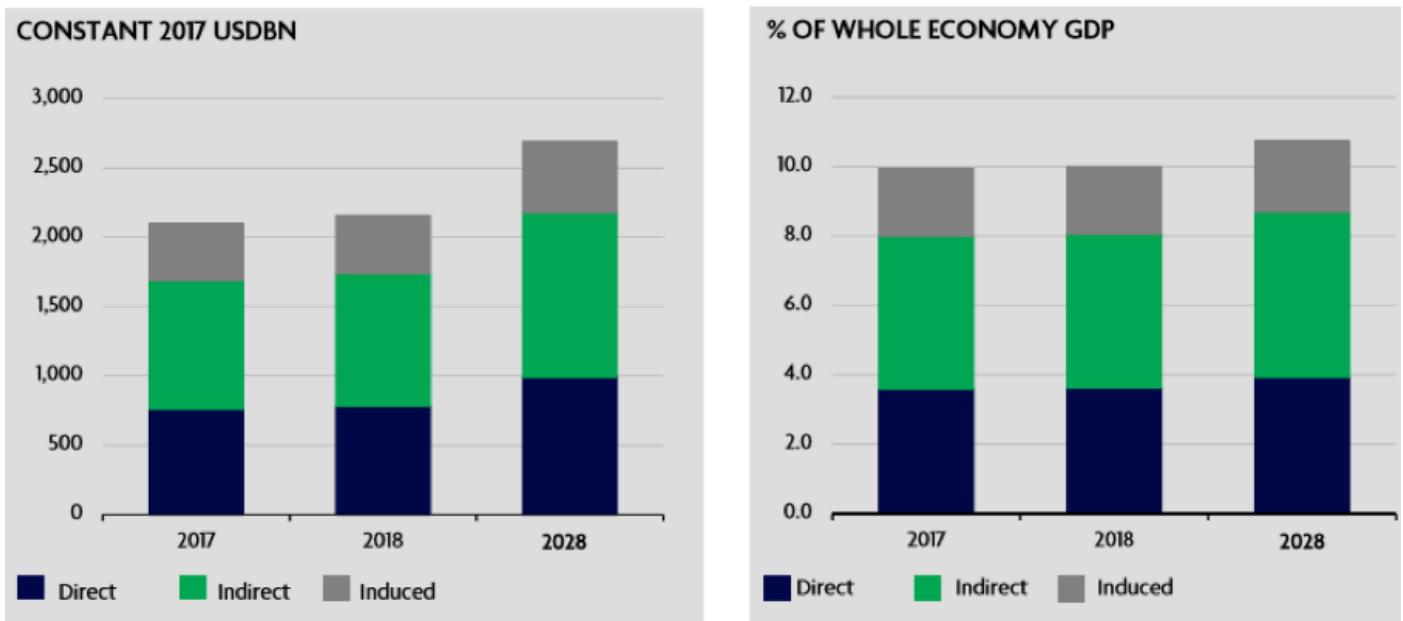
  In terms of **culture and education**, tourism and travel allows citizens to learn about history and delve into other cultures whilst enriching the understanding of their own cultural identity as well. Visiting heritage sites gives tourists a tangible look into the past and is a way of increasing interest in cultural identity. Tourism and travel fosters intercultural dialogue and strengthens international relations by allowing for a deeper understanding, as well as reminding citizens of our common cultural history.

Some cities though are unable to cope with the economic, environmental and socioeconomic effects, such as rent prices being raised making it improbable to accommodate locals. This is in particular, caused by the profitability of short term letting, which has additionally been made a simple process through sites such as Airbnb, in comparison to long term. In addition, already vulnerable coastal areas are affected by the impacts of climate change due to tourism and citizens develop hostility towards visitors. Locals are often unhappy about the number of people streaming in and out of their city and in some cities such as Mallorca signs have been left telling tourists to leave. Tourists have also been known to **vandalise** cultural heritage sites whose value cannot always be quantified as for example the damage done to Stonehenge. Consequently, a fine balance must be found within the tourism sector since it can impact heritage sites and cities in an extremely negative way.

POLICY APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM

The most important programme in place in regard to cultural heritage is the **Horizon 2020**, which is the EU's biggest Research and Innovation Programme. The framework of the programme is based on three pillars, namely excellent science, industrial leadership and societal challenges. Concerning cultural heritage, the programme addresses how it can be protected and promoted sustainably, through the use of technological means.

Local administrations have long tried to address over tourism by setting **quotas** with the most notable example of Santorini. Greek authorities have addressed the issue by limiting the number of cruise ship passengers that are allowed access to 8000 per day while in Venice, rather than limiting the number of tourists, authorities have made the decision to implement a tourist tax.

Another way of preserving cultural heritage while also making it far more available to everyone is the **digitisation** of it. Europeana is one such initiative of the European Union and has more than 50 million cultural subjects in its database. Curious Travellers is a crowd funded initiative in this field that allows people to access, view and interact with digital archaeological structures of actual heritage sites. These are made thanks to 3D imaging using tourists' sent in photos to the initiative as well as other available online material. This initiative is ensuring that even if a cultural heritage site is destroyed we will still be able to view it and won't lose our cultural identity in the long-term.

MEASURES IN PLACE

The **Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage** first linked the idea of protecting both natural and cultural heritage sites in 1972. Once ratified, the Convention calls States' Parties to report regularly on the state of their World Heritage Sites.

The **Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property** that was adopted on the 3rd of May 2017, aims to combat the destruction, damage and trafficking of cultural property.

UNESCO's **World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme** calls all stakeholders to take common action and manage tourism and heritage in a sustainable way, whereby natural and cultural heritage are protected while still available to the public.

The World Tourism Organisation has also established a **Global Code of Ethics for Tourism** (GCET) in which they address governments, the tourism sector, local administrations and tourists alike providing them with a guide and set of core principles for sustainable tourism.

WHAT NOW?

What can be done to ensure the protection of cultural heritage sites, while allowing citizens access to their European cultural heritage? Do local administrations need to concern themselves with the tourist boom? If so, should they initiate their own small scale protective measures or shall overtourism be resolved at a national or an EU level? How should the EU, Member States and local administrations react to the concerns of locals in regards to overcrowding and the anti tourism movements? Should municipalities, cities and countries shift economic focus away from tourism or adjust their approach in the industry and if so, how can they ensure there is no loss of revenue in the process?

RELEVANT LINKS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

'UNESCO World Heritage and Tourism Programme' by UNESCO - the vision, mission and key objectives of the programme

'Commentary: Venice flooding is getting worse - and the city's grand plan won't save it' by Carl Amos and Georg Umgiesser (2018) - a commentary on Venice's precarious state and endangered cultural sites

'Our European Heritage' by EU Science and Innovation' (2018) - brief video promoting European heritage and 2018 as the European year for cultural heritage

'Crowded Out: The Story of Overtourism' by Responsible Travel (2018) - documentary about overtourism

'Mass Tourism affects major travel destinations in Europe' by Nik Fes (2016) - an article concerning European cities that have fallen victim to overtourism

'Cultural Heritage and Urban Tourism: Historic City Centres Under Pressure' by María García-Hernández, Manuel De la Calle-Vaquero and Claudia Yubero (2017) - article addressing historic city centres as an important part of European cultural heritage and the debate on overtourism

'Travel and Tourism Economic Impact 2018 Europe' by World Travel and Tourism Council (2018) - a more detailed look with precise figures and statistics into the economic impact of travel and tourism

'Socio Economic Impact of World Heritage Listing' by UNESCO - explores the impacts of sites being added to the World Heritage Listing

'Global Code of Ethics for Tourism' by UNWTO - brochure about the global code of ethics for tourism

'European Union Tourism Trends' by UNWTO - a detailed look into tourism trends in the European Union including economic and socio-economic aspects