ENE-001054/2018Answer given by Mr Andriukaitison behalf of the Commission(17.4.2018)

Southern Italian regions have slightly worse averages than those of Italians overall in terms of mortality[[1]](#footnote-1) and life expectancy[[2]](#footnote-2), but better than the EU overall. .

Shortages of medicines are a significant problem that affect many patients. The main drivers of shortages are generally manufacturing problems or the price of medicines, which is under the competence of the Member States. Nevertheless, EU legislation obliges marketing authorisation holders and wholesalers to ensure appropriate and continued supply of the medicines concerned.

The Commission has been working over recent years with the Member States, regional authorities and other stakeholders to tap the potential of innovative solutions, such as digital technologies and data analytics. Digital health solutions have already shown many benefits and have much more to offer in Europe, both to healthcare systems and to people. This will depend to a very large extent on a better use of data and on empowered citizens who trust digital solutions. EU funding supports research and innovation in digital health and care solutions, notably through the EU Research and Innovation programme[[3]](#footnote-3). It also supports the building of infrastructure for cross-border exchange of patient summaries and electronic prescriptions, with funds from the Connecting Europe Facility programme.

The Directive on Patients' Rights in Cross-Border Healthcare[[4]](#footnote-4) established the eHealth Network to advance the interoperability of eHealth solutions. In May 2017, the Commission adopted the Mid-Term Review of the Digital Single Market strategy[[5]](#footnote-5). Digital health and care transformation was included and identified three priority areas for policy actions.

1. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database?node\_code=demo\_mor [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database?node\_code=hlth\_cdeath [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/what-horizon-2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Directive 2011/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 on the application of patients’ rights in cross-border healthcare, OJ L 88, 4.4.2011, p. 45–65 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/content/mid-term-review-digital-single-market-dsm-good-moment-take-stock [↑](#footnote-ref-5)