



Health at a Glance 2015

How does Italy compare?

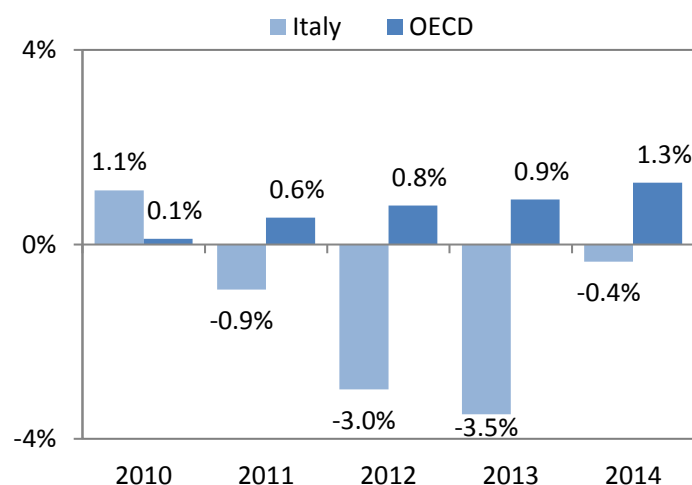
KEY FINDINGS

- Growth in health spending per capita in real terms has been negative in Italy since 2011, with both public and private health spending showing continuous falls.
- Cuts in pharmaceutical spending have contributed to reductions in health spending. The rise in the share of the generic market has helped to reduce prices and spending on pharmaceuticals in Italy, but still the generic market share remains relatively low.
- Italy's indicators of health status and quality of care remain above the OECD average, although Italy lags behind on long-term care and prevention.

Growth in health spending per capita in Italy has been negative since 2011

Health spending per capita in Italy has dropped by 3.5% in real terms in 2013, the third year that it has fallen, and preliminary estimates point to a further reduction of 0.4% in 2014. As a result, per capita spending on health in Italy still remains below the level prior to the economic crisis and well below the level of other high-income OECD countries

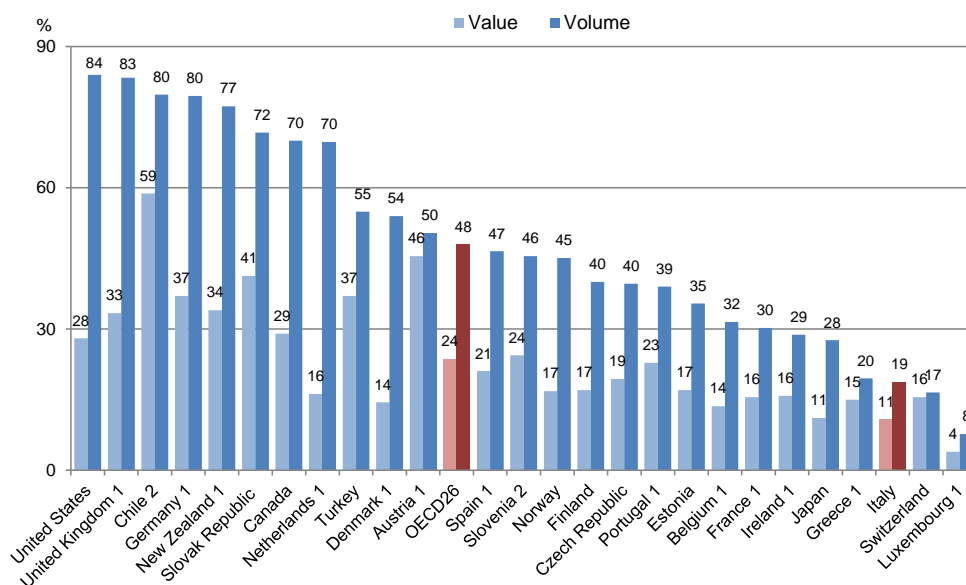
Annual health spending growth per capita in real terms, Italy and OECD average, 2010-2014



Source: OECD Health Statistics 2015, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/health-data-en>.

A number of cost-containment measures have been taken following the economic crisis to reduce public spending on health in Italy. Cuts in pharmaceutical spending have contributed to the overall fall. The generics share of the pharmaceutical market has quadrupled since 2000, contributing to a reduction in prices and spending, but it remains relatively low in Italy, accounting for only 19% of the overall pharmaceutical market in volume in 2013 (compared with an OECD average of 48%) and 11% in value (also less than half the OECD average of 24%). In addition, Italy has a relatively low public share of pharmaceutical expenditure compared with other OECD countries.

The share of the generic market for pharmaceuticals remains low in Italy (2013 or latest year)



1. Reimbursed pharmaceutical market. 2. Community pharmacy market.

Source: OECD Health Statistics 2015, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/health-data-en>.

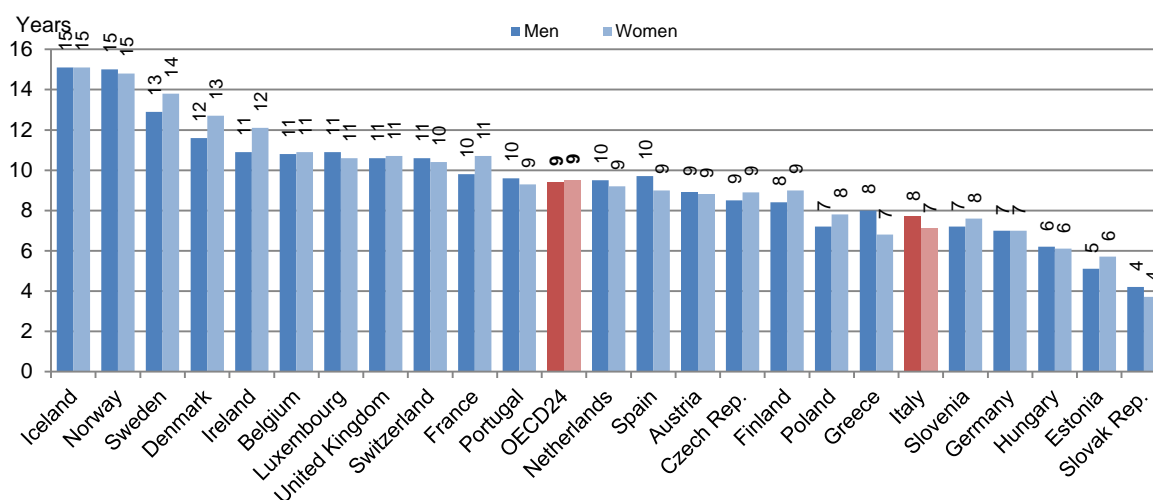
Despite general good quality of care, some worsening health indicators for children and the elderly

Indicators of quality of care for both primary care and hospital care in Italy are above the OECD average in many areas. This is despite levels of health spending below other high-income OECD countries. However, Italy is lagging behind in some areas, like long-term care and prevention of non-communicable diseases.

Life expectancy in Italy, at 82.8 years in 2013, is the 4th highest in the OECD. Life expectancy at age 65 is also among the highest across the OECD and has increased over the years. However, health indicators at age 65 are consistently poorer than in other OECD countries and the average number of healthy life years at age 65 is the 6th lowest amongst OECD countries, with 7 years free of disability for women and about 8 years for men. At the same time, the provision of long-term care for the elderly remains poorer than in most OECD countries.

Alcohol consumption, on average, has dropped more than in any other OECD country in the past 20 years, and obesity rates among adults are below the OECD average (although national statistics are based on self-reports, which likely underestimate true rates). However, rates of overweight and obesity in children are among the highest worldwide. Heavy episodic consumption of alcohol is on the increase, and tobacco consumption is high, in young people. All of these will likely lead to greater demand for healthcare in the future.

Healthy life years at age 65, European countries, 2013



Note: Countries are ranked in descending order of healthy life expectancy for the whole population.
Source: Eurostat Database 2015.

Health at a Glance 2015 provides international comparisons of health status, risk factors to health, health expenditure, access to care and quality of care. For the first time in 2015, the publication also includes a set of dashboard indicators summarising the comparative performance of OECD countries on these different dimensions of population health status and health system performance.

More information on **Health at a Glance 2015** is available at <http://www.oecd.org/health/health-at-a-glance.htm>.

For more information on OECD's work on **Italy**, please visit <http://www.oecd.org/italy>.
