

For summer season, Croatia will dispense ePrescriptions for Finish citizens and allow the access of Czech patient summaries, while Croatians traveling Estonia can get their ePrescriptions dispensed there

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These exchanges will now be possible as the eHealth Network, comprising e-health agencies in Europe, agreed on 2 April 2019 that Croatia can send and receive ePrescriptions across borders and receive the Patient summaries of citizens coming from other European countries (the sending of patient summaries to other Member States will occur in a second time). This decision was supported by a positive vote of eHealth Member State Expert Group (eHMSEG) on the 11th March.

Two countries have already started to exchange ePrescriptions in Europe: since the 21st January 2019, over 1000 Finnish patients have been able to go to a pharmacy in Estonia and retrieve medicine prescribed electronically by their doctor in Finland. Two other countries, Czechia and Luxembourg, received the approval from the eHealth Network early this year to start exchanging Patient Summaries of citizens coming from other European countries, which will practically occur in the coming months. Croatia will thus be the fifth country which opens this opportunity to the European citizens. These services are indeed progressively put in place by the 22 European countries taking part in the initiative.

In 2011, the European institutions adopted the Directive 2011/24 which ensures continuity of care for European citizens across borders. The directive gives the possibility for Member States to exchange health data in a secure, efficient and interoperable way. Two cross-border health services are now being progressively introduced in all EU Member States. The ePrescription and eDispensation allow any EU citizen to retrieve his/her medication in a pharmacy located in another EU Member State, thanks to the electronic transfer of their prescription from his/her country of residence to the country of travel. The Patient Summaries provide background information on important health-related aspects such as allergies, current medication, previous illness, surgeries, etc., making it digitally accessible in case of a medical (emergency) visit in another country. It is an abstract of a larger collection of health data called the European Health Record, on which the Commission has adopted a Recommendation last 6th February with the objective of setting common standards, the European Electronic Health Record Exchange Format¹.

Both services, ePrescriptions and Patient Summaries, are made possible thanks to the eHealth Digital Service Infrastructure which connects the eHealth national services, allowing them to exchange health data through the setting-up of eHealth National Contact Points, and is funded by the European Commission's Connecting Europe Facility.

The whole eHealth cross border infrastructure is steered by the eHealth Network composed of national authorities responsible for eHealth, and managed at technical level by the eHealth DSI Member States Expert Group (eHMSEG) which is formed by managers responsible for implementing the eHealth NCPs and are nominated by the participating countries.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/health/ehealth/cooperation_en