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Austria's healthcare expenditure increased moderately in 2022

COVID-19-related public health expenditure declined

Wien, 2024-02-07 – In 2022, total current health expenditure in Austria amounted to €49.9 billion or 11.2% of gross domestic product (GDP), according to Statistics Austria. Compared to 2021, nominal expenditure increased only by 1.3% or €0.7 billion respectively. The public sector accounted for €38.7 billion of current health expenditure, €0.2 billion or 0.5% more than in 2021.

„In 2022, public and private healthcare expenditure together will have risen to around 50 billion euros. This is almost 20 billion euros higher than in 2010. The share of healthcare expenditure in GDP has fallen from 12.2% in 2021 to 11.2% in 2022 because nominal gross domestic product has risen even more sharply than healthcare expenditure. Incidentally, before the coronavirus pandemic, the share of healthcare expenditure in GDP was 10.5% in 2019”, says Statistics Austria Director General Tobias Thomas.

Moderate increase in public health expenditure in 2022

The central government, the state governments, the local governments and the social health insurance funds accounted for €38.7 billion of current health expenditure in 2022. This corresponds to an increase of 0.5% compared to 2021 and is well below the average nominal increase of 4.8% between 2004 and 2021.

This development is mainly driven by the decrease in pandemic-related public health spending compared to 2021, which fell significantly by €2.1 billion to €2.9 billion. This is primarily due to a sharp reduction in expenditure for procurement, implementation and provision of COVID-19 testing and contact tracing of around €1.1 billion and for the procurement and administration of COVID-19 vaccines of €0.3 billion. As a result, public health expenditure on prevention declined by 30.0% compared to 2021. Furthermore, expenditure for the procurement of protective equipment and for COVID-19-related subsidies decreased as well. On the other hand, public health expenditure besides of COVID-19-related spending, such as for treatments in medical practices, inpatient rehabilitative care or for pharmaceuticals and therapeutic appliances, increased at an above-average rate and kept public current health expenditure as a total at a high level. The public share of current health expenditure was therefore 77.6% in 2022 (see table 1).

The relatively higher public shares in current health expenditure in 2020 (76.9%), 2021 (78.2%) and 2022 (77.6%) show that the additional health expenditure caused by the pandemic was mainly publicly financed, while it did not lead to a significant increase in expenditure among private financing schemes.

Current expenditure on health of private households, voluntary health insurances, non-profit institutions and enterprises amounted to €11.2 billion or a share of 22.4% of current health expenditure. Private current expenditure therefore rose by 4.4% from 2021 to 2022 (see table 1). This nominal growth is higher than the average increase between 2004 and 2021 (3.2%).

Austria among the top of the OECD ranking

In a comparison of the 38 OECD countries, Austria ranked eighth with a share of 11.2% of GDP in 2022. By far the highest current expenditure on health in this ranking was reported in the USA with a GDP share of 16.6%, followed by Germany (12.7%) and France (12.1%). The OECD average of current health expenditure was 9.2% of GDP, that of the 22 EU Member States in the OECD was 9.1% of GDP.

Around €14.7 billion of public expenditure spent on State Health Funds hospitals

In 2022, public current expenditure for State Health Funds hospitals including outpatient departments amounted to €14.7 billion. The largest share of expenditure was borne by social health insurance schemes adding up to 43.0% (€6.3 billion), followed by state governments with a share of 34.3% (€5.0 billion), central government with a share of 12.4% (€1.8 billion) and local governments with a share of 10.3% (€1.5 billion). The largest amount of public current expenditure was spent on State Health Funds hospitals in Vienna (€4.2 billion), the lowest in Burgenland (€318 million). This mainly reflects the different number of inhabitants in the federal states and the number of patients, respectively (see table 2).

For more information on health expenditure, please refer to our [website](#).

Table 1: Current health expenditure in Austria according to the System of Health Accounts, 2010–2022, in million euros

Public and private expenditure on health ¹	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Current expenditure on health	30 244	35 692	37 021	38 355	39 871	41 651	43 103	49 246	49 897
Public expenditure	22 576	26 433	27 381	28 390	29 772	31 266	33 163	38 516	38 698
Private expenditure	7 668	9 259	9 640	9 965	10 100	10 385	9 940	10 730	11 200
Public expenditure, % of current expenditure on health	74,6	74,1	74,0	74,0	74,7	75,1	76,9	78,2	77,6
Private expenditure, % of current expenditure on health	25,4	25,9	26,0	26,0	25,3	24,9	23,1	21,8	22,4
Current expenditure on health, % of GDP	10,2	10,4	10,4	10,4	10,3	10,5	11,3	12,2	11,2
Gross domestic product (GDP)	295 897	344 269	357 608	369 362	385 274	397 147	380 888	405 241	447 218
Current expenditure on long term care	4 426	5 302	5 537	5 700	5 881	6 070	6 346	6 472	6 715
Public expenditure on long term care	3 459	3 966	4 019	4 071	4 355	4 524	4 822	4 854	5 021
Private expenditure on long term care	966	1 336	1 518	1 629	1 526	1 546	1 525	1 619	1 694

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, National Accounts, company reports, own calculations/estimations. – According to SHA 2011 (OECD/Eurostat/WHO). – Rounding differences were not settled.

1) Health expenditure according to the System of Health Accounts includes expenditure on long-term nursing care.

Table 2: Public current expenditure on health for State Health Funds hospitals, 2022, in million euros

State	Central Government	State Government	Local Government	Social health insurance	General Government, total	% change to prev. year, General Government total
Burgenland	38	112	13	155	318	5.8%
Carinthia	103	232	113	456	905	2.0%
Lower Austria	325	673	447	871	2 315	3.9%
Upper Austria	299	630	466	1 104	2 498	8.2%
Salzburg	115	319	85	397	916	1.3%
Styria	225	682	29	899	1 835	5.0%
Tyrol	156	278	192	498	1 124	6.6%
Vorarlberg	63	178	100	248	588	4.4%
Vienna	504	1 932	61	1 683	4 180	1.5%
Austria	1 827	5 036	1 506	6 310	14 679	4.0%

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, own calculations/estimations, company reports.– Rounding differences were not settled.

Information on methodology, definitions: Health expenditure is compiled according to the “System of Health Accounts (SHA)” on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection since 2005. This internationally comparable system of health accounts was developed by the OECD and published for the first time in 2000 in the form of the manual “A System of Health Accounts”. A revision of the manual was carried out within the framework of a joint project by OECD, Eurostat and WHO (A System of Health Accounts, 2011 Edition).

Based on an EU-regulation (Commission regulation (EU) 2021/1901) it is mandatory for EU member states to provide current health expenditure data (meaning not including gross capital formation in health care provider industries) structured according to the three SHA-dimensions financing schemes (HF), health care providers (HP) and health care services and goods (HC). Statistics Austria publishes annual updates of health expenditure data and submits the results to OECD, Eurostat and WHO for their databases and publications. Current health expenditure according to the System of Health Accounts includes expenditure on **long-term nursing care**. Long-term care according to SHA is composed of medical or nursing care as well as providing help with activities of daily living (support with food intake, washing, dressing, etc.). In contrast, assistant services such as performing household and assisted living are outside the boundary of the current health care expenditure account.

State Health Funds hospitals are acute care hospitals of public and private ownership, which are (partially) financed by the nine State Health Funds. These hospitals are responsible for 85.2% (2022) of all hospital stays of patients and thus represent the most important category of hospitals in Austria.

If you have any questions on this topic, please contact:

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