



How unlocking the full potential of medical technologies can help keep Europe healthy – and competitive.

From cancer to cardiovascular disease and neurodegenerative disorders, Europe faces a number of healthcare related challenges. In fact, cardiovascular disease continues to be the leading cause of disability and premature death in Europe, accounting for over 30% of all deaths annually^[1], while in 2022, cancer claimed the lives of 1.3 million EU citizens^[2].

But more than just driving up morbidity and mortality rates, these conditions also drive up costs. For example, EU Member States have seen a 40% increase in healthcare expenditure since 2014^[3].



The good news is that advancements in medical technologies – including diagnostic imaging, radiotherapy and digital tools – have the potential to improve outcomes, enhance disease prevention, and allow providers to deliver more effective patient care.

Helping put this potential into practice is the European Coordination Committee of the Radiological, Electromedical, and Healthcare IT Industry (COCIR).



Delivering a healthier economy

Representing the world’s leading medical technology companies, COCIR is at the forefront of developing the innovative new technologies that enable earlier diagnoses, more effective treatments and, ultimately, a healthier Europe.

COCIR is also a key enabler of a more competitive Europe:

- Out of the more than 1 million people our members employ worldwide, **1/3 are based in the EU**.



- By reinvesting an average of **14%** of their global turnover into R&D, our members make the medical technology sector the second largest contributor of European patent applications^[4]. More so, **3 of the top 10** patent applicants are COCIR members^[5].

- To date, COCIR members have participated in **24 projects** funded under the EU’s Innovative Health Initiative.
- Our members have contributed an estimated **EUR 250 million** in collaborative health research and innovation across the EU.
- As an export-intensive industry, COCIR members support the European economy by maintaining a positive trade balance of **EUR 11 billion**. They also manage complex global supply chains that involve over **11,000 suppliers**^[6].

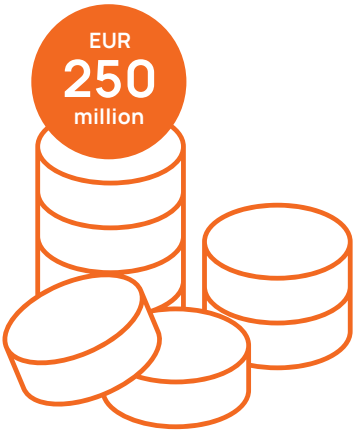


Figure 2: COCIR members’ contribution in collaborative health research and innovation across the EU.

Our prescription for a healthier Europe

Add these figures up and what you get is not only a healthier Europe, but a more competitive one too. Unfortunately, disparities in access to advanced healthcare solutions and fragmented regulatory frameworks across EU Member States have put our once vibrant healthcare sector on life support.

Believing that prevention is the best medicine COCIR urges the EU to prescribe policies that prioritise investing in healthcare research, favour digital transformation, advance sustainability, and enhance health system resilience.

PRIORITISE INVESTING IN HEALTHCARE R&D

The challenge

While demand for healthcare is increasing, a lack of investment and regulatory support has created delays in and the unequal distribution of medical equipment across the EU.

What we're doing

COCIR is investing in solution-focused research and agile innovation that will deliver a range of state-of-the-art preventative solutions. For example, through our Accelerate.EU plan, we are developing a revolutionary radiotheranostic therapy for pancreatic, breast, and brain cancers.



What we need

Funding under the Multiannual Financial Framework's European Life Science Strategy must be earmarked to support the cutting-edge research happening in the imaging, image-guided therapy, and digital health technology sectors.

This includes ensuring access to medical device innovation under the Cardiovascular Health Plan, along with the continued implementation of the Innovative Health Initiative (IHI).

2

FAVOUR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The challenge

With millions of EU citizens dying from cancer every year, there is an urgent need to enhance preventative care.

What we're doing

Artificial intelligence is set to revolutionise healthcare and is already having a transformative impact in medical imaging. COCIR has been at the forefront of this revolution, developing reliable tools and methods for generating data for the European Health Data Space. Furthermore, by helping detect diseases like cancer and Alzheimer's earlier and providing efficient cardiac health monitoring, our AI-based diagnostic tools have already helped save countless lives.



What we need

EU funding to support the development of close-to-market critical medical devices and dedicated regulatory sandboxes that let companies test such groundbreaking solutions as generative AI within a controlled, real-world environment.

3

ADVANCE SUSTAINABILITY

The challenge

To build a more sustainable, energy-efficient, low-carbon and circular healthcare sector.

What we're doing

COCIR has implemented such voluntary initiatives as guidelines for sustainable MEPA purchasing.

Our members have set the goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2050

and are aiming to incorporate sustainability and circularity criteria in the public tenders.



What we need

Clear incentives for sustainable innovation, including mandatory green public procurement criteria and the removal of all regulatory barriers for developing circular medical equipment.

4

ENHANCE HEALTH SYSTEM RESILIENCE

The challenge

A complex regulatory framework and lengthy certification processes make innovation and market access increasingly challenging – the proof being in the fact that Europe no longer holds its once coveted position as the market of choice for launching innovative medical devices^[7].

What we're doing

To help Europe reclaim its position as a global leader in medical innovation, COCIR aims to achieve a 6-month certification time for medical devices.

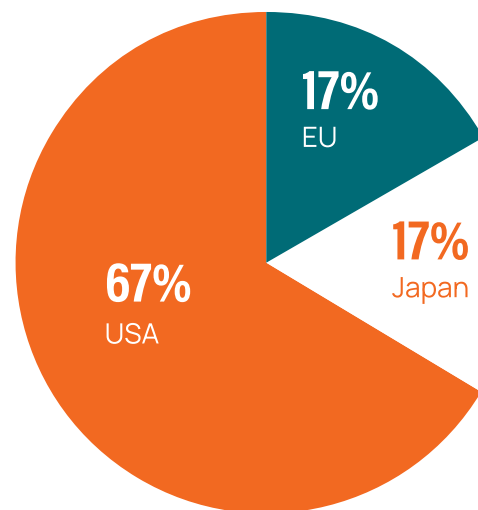


Figure 2: First jurisdiction when applying for certification of a new innovative product ^[7].

What we need

A simplified regulatory framework for medical devices within the European single market, including a revision of the Medical Devices Regulation, and alignment with such horizontal legislation as the AI Act, cybersecurity regulations, and environmental legislation.

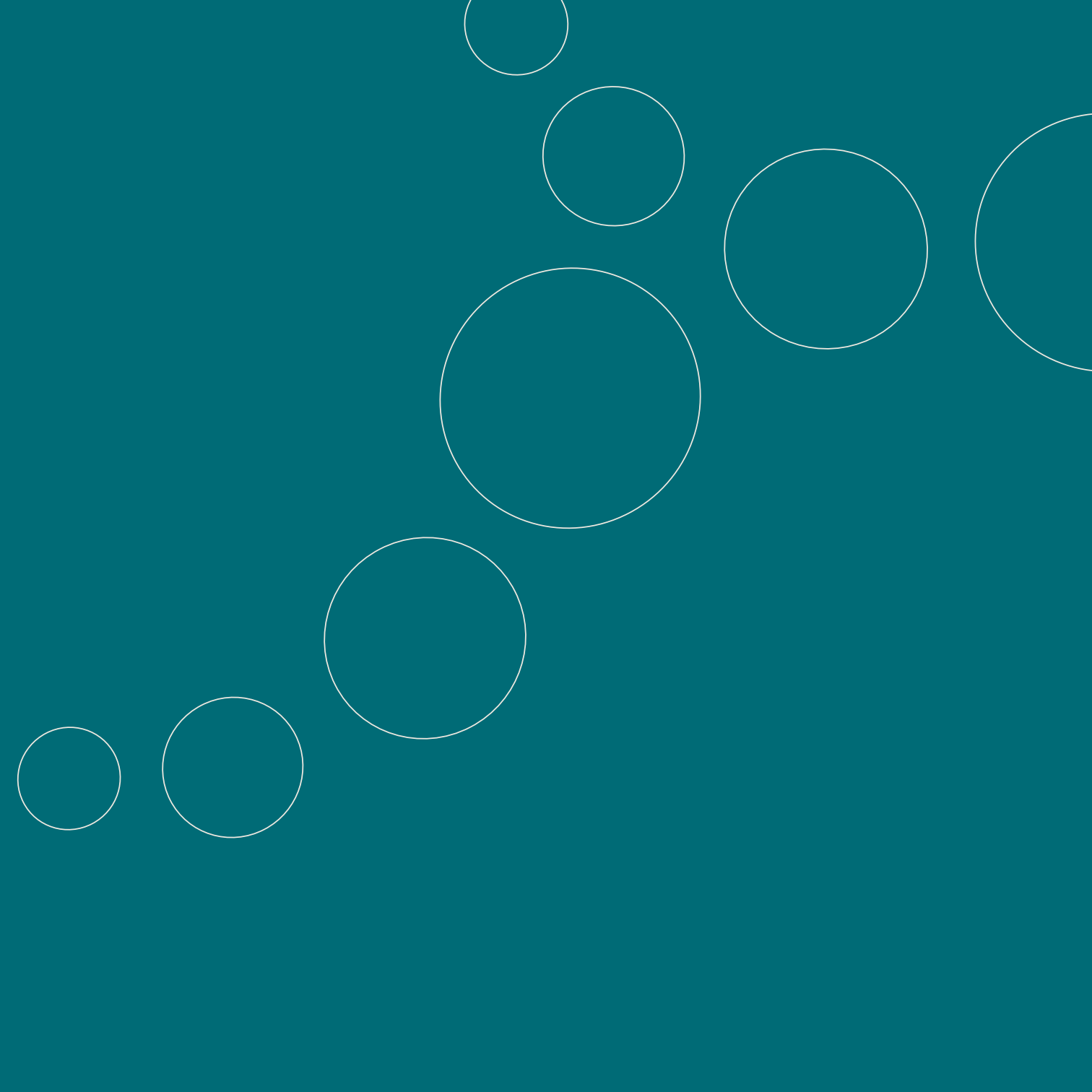
Advancing healthcare with COCIR

With the right policies and support, COCIR will be in an even better position to deliver the thriving, competitive medical technology and digital health industry we need to ensure a healthier, more resilient Europe.



Footnotes

- ^[1] Eurostat, 2025, Cardiovascular Diseases Statistics
- ^[2] 2022 New Cancer Cases and Cancer Deaths on the Rise in the EU: September 2023
- ^[3] Eurostat, 2024, Healthcare Expenditure Statistics by Function, Provider and Financing Scheme
- ^[4] Only corporate members, not NTAs. Based on publicly available information on company websites, annual reports etc.
- ^[5] European Patent Office. Patent Index 2023
- ^[6] DG Trade data for overall medical device industry
- ^[7] COCIR Position on the Future Governance Framework for the Medical Technologies Sector (2024)





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