

World Health Day: "We need stronger international collaboration."

World Health Summit President Axel R. Pries on health equity

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How can healthcare globally become more equitable? This is the central question of this year's World Health Day on April 7. "Building a fairer, healthier world" is the overarching theme chosen by the World Health Organization (WHO). It is shaped by the COVID-19 pandemic.

World Health Summit President Axel R. Pries on strategies against COVID-19, the role of science, and healthcare for all.

What is most important for improving global health?

We need to improve global collaboration to control the COVID-19 pandemic in the long run. This will require global exchange and partnership between institutions from different areas of politics, administration, and science. The only way to improve global health sustainably is in cooperation. We need to understand that in the face of global threats we are only as strong as the weakest link in the chain.

What role does science play in this?

Above all, we scientists have a responsibility to use our collective expertise to fight the virus and develop therapies. In this context global exchange and partnerships are also of great importance in health research. Working together on forward-looking methods for effective treatment but also for defense against future threats is key to sustainable improvement in global health. The global community needs healthcare for all, and this "Universal Health Coverage", one of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, is far from being achieved.

What do policymakers need to do?

The current pandemic makes it very clear that health and economics cannot be separated. Therefore, health must be integrated into all political areas as a cross-cutting issue: "Health in all Policies" is an urgent requirement and not only in the context of this pandemic. Only with collaboration and cooperation between sectors and stakeholders can we achieve equitable health opportunities and economic prosperity.

(Source: World Health Summit)

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The **World Health Summit** is one of the world's leading strategic forums for global health. Under the traditional patronage of German Chancellor **Angela Merkel**, French President **Emmanuel Macron**, European Commission President **Ursula von der Leyen** and **Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Health Summit brings together leading international experts from science, politics, industry and civil society. Every year in October, some 300 speakers and 2,500 participants from around 100 nations come to Berlin for the World Health Summit. The topics of the approximately 50 sessions include, for example, strategies for improving global healthcare and prevention, digitization, climate change and health, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The World Health Summit 2021 will take place from October 24-26. Speakers already confirmed include **EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen**, **WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus**, **Charité virologist Christian Drosten** and **UNICEF Director Henrietta Fore**.

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