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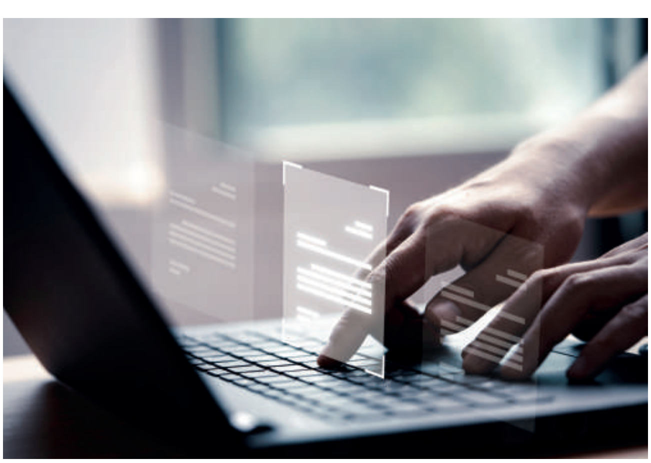
Digitalization

The Transformative Opportunity of Our Time

The disruption caused by the Fourth Industrial Revolution was accelerated by COVID-19. We all know. However, with how accessible the internet is today, would you believe that the number of people who go online every day is still increasing?
According to the World Bank, the digital economy makes up more than 15% of the global GDP and has grown 2.5 times faster over the previous ten years than the GDP of the physical world. The digital economy, which captures the value produced by economic activities that use digital technology for the production, distribution, and exchange of goods and services, is a crucial part of GDP calculation. Depending on the country, the digital economy's precise GDP contribution varies, but as the use of digital technology continues to grow, it is playing a bigger role in determining the global economic environment. It is estimated that 70% of new value created over the coming decade will be based on digitally-enabled-platform business models.

Nevertheless, despite evidence of widespread benefits through digital transformation, its implementation is not without challenges. Businesses worldwide cite skill gaps and cultural differences. A lack of clarity on transformation strategy and insufficient alignment across organizational departments are top reasons as to why some businesses stall momentum in their digital transformation efforts. And even if as new technologies spread rapidly around the world, billions of people have still never used the internet, exacerbating exclusion, the unequal concentration of power and wealth, and social instability. The World Bank tells us of about one-third of the global population, or 2.6 billion people, remaining offline in 2023. While more than 90 percent of people in high-income countries used the internet in 2022, only one in four in low-income countries use the internet. 850 million people lack any form of identification. Many do not have the basic skills to use the internet effectively. Hospitals, schools, governments, and businesses cannot operate effectively without digital tools. The digital divide holds back growth and limits opportunities, becoming synonymous with a development divide.



Even within the EU, despite the Member States' advancement in their digitalization efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic, they still struggle to close the gaps in digital skills, the digital transformation of SMEs, and the roll-out of advanced 5G networks. Achieving universal access to broadband, all over the world. will require over US$400 billion by 2030 and neither the public nor the private sector can do this alone. Governments need to make bold reforms and the private sector can reduce costs, risks, and increase efficiency and innovation. The EU alone has put on the table significant resources to support the digital transformation. EUR 127 billion are dedicated to digital related reforms and investments in the national Recovery and Resilience Plans. This is an unprecedented opportunity to accelerate digitalization, increase the Union's resilience and reduce external dependencies with both reforms and investments. Member States dedicated on average 26% of their Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) allocation to the digital transformation, above the compulsory 20% threshold. Member States that chose to invest more than 30% of their RRF allocation to digital are Austria, Germany, Luxembourg, Ireland, and Lithuania.

The benefits of digitalization must be accessible to all. Digital skills have become imperative and urgent to develop innovative business models. At this stage, digital marketing is vital for your business and brand awareness. This means that, today, you need to meet your customers where they are already spending time: on the internet. Infomedix International can empower your business through its medical B2B digital infrastructure and data. Marketing has always been about connecting with your customers in the right place and at the right time, our digital medical trade platform can do this.
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Exclusive features include advanced ApT technology which improve every 2D image to ensure the best result for every projection. Patented algorithms for 3D reconstruction always lead to an optimal outcome. Low-dose protocols, using SafeBeamTM technology and servo-assisted alignment protect patient health, and the 10" on-board touch screen control panel featuring NewTom's powerful imaging software suite with specialist interfaces and tools, allows for user-friendly workflow and provides professionals with access to online assistance.

Unlike traditional sensors, the Cadmium Telloride (Cd-Te) Direct Conversion Detector, now available on NewTom GiANO HR, does not require the conversion of X-rays into visible light - as it is capable of sensing it directly and converting it into precise, accurate digital signals. This enables extremely high resolution diagnostic images obtained at low X-rays doses.

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Focus

Kazakh is the state language. Russian has the status of an official language and is the de facto language of administration.

Thanks to the positive evaluation of the reform path undertaken, in 2019 the World Bank's Doing Business index placed Kazakhstan at 28th place (53rd in 2015).

12th place in the world for oil reserves; 14th for gas reserves; 1st for uranium production, and the 2nd for its reserves. Coal, zinc, tungsten, barium, silver, lead, chromium, copper, fluorite, molybdenum, and gold are present in large quantities.

Kazakhstan has an export-oriented economy. It counts China, Italy, Russia, the Netherlands, Uzbekistan, India, Turkey, and France as its main export destinations. Others include Switzerland, Greece, Spain, Romania, South Korea and the US.

Part of the Eurasian Economic Union, together with the Russian Federation, Belarus, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan, an area which has a market capacity of approximately 170 million people and the possibility of exporting, within the Union, without restrictions.

Kazakhstan a Market of Opportunities

READING TIME 3.50 min

Author: Silvia Borriello
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Sustained economic growth has transformed Kazakhstan into an upper middle-income economy. Yet, going forward, the country faces formidable challenges to navigate safely into a sustainable growth model. Despite these challenges, Kazakhstan's economy remains the largest in Central Asia, and with unfulfilled potential, that continues to deliver sustained growth, despite its failings.

Situated at the heart of the Asian continent and the crossroads between Asia and Europe, Kazakhstan is the second-largest republic of the former Soviet Union, after Russia, and the ninth-largest country in the world in the territory. It stretches from the Caspian Sea in the west to the Altai Mountains in the east, bordering China and Russia.

The country has an abundance of natural resources - including oil, gas, coal, ferrous metals, copper, aluminum, zinc, uranium, and has exploited these resources to build Central Asia's leading economy. **It is also emerging as a major transport and logistics hub in the region, linking the large and fast-growing markets of China and South Asia to those of Russia and Western Europe by road, rail, and ports on the Caspian Sea.** Kazakhstan presents a trade gateway to a market of about 100 million consumers in Caspian Sea countries, 76 million in Central Asia and 350 million in Western China.

Since the 2000s, the country has seen impressive economic growth driven by the first generation of market-oriented reforms, abundant mineral resources extraction, and strong foreign direct investments (FDI). **Sustained economic growth has transformed the country into an upper middle-income economy, commensurately raising living standards and reducing poverty. With a growing middle class, Kazakhstan provides trade and investment prospects for firms seeking new opportunities in this growing, emerging market.**

This progress, however, masks vulnerabilities and unevenness in the country's development model, still excessively dependent on price fluctuations of oil and other raw materials, and on trade with Russia and China. Thus, besides the strong political commitment to building a solid reputation as the strongest, most stable, and reform-oriented economy in Central Eurasia, Kazakhstan still faces slow productivity growth, wealth inequality, rising living costs, limited job opportunities, and weak institutions.

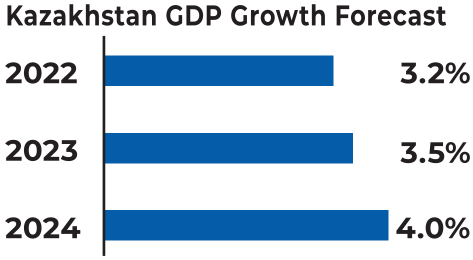
Since his election in 2019, President Tokayev (successor of president Nazarbayev, after 29 years in office), has progressively launched a further plan of structural economic reforms, aimed at stimulating economic growth and competitiveness. **In this regard, a special Supreme Council for Reforms has been established with main objective to reform the public administration, to incentivize the ecological transition of the domestic productive system, to attract greater FDI and nation branding, with the aim of reaching a 5% growth rate by 2025.** These reforms have become even more urgent because of the effects of the pandemic on the Kazakh social level where, especially in rural areas, the country has suffered a clear worsening of living conditions, as certified by the World Bank, with approximately 12% of Kazakh population living below the poverty line. The Gov-

> "Slowing economic growth, growing inequality and elite capture, and weak institutions reflect the flaws of the resource-based and state-led growth model and raise the risk that Kazakhstan could become stuck in the "middle-income trap".

	Kazakhstan	Azerbaijan	Russia	Uzbekistan
Population, million	19.1	10.1	146.2	35.2
GDP per capita (PPP, USD)	26,754.4	14,479.71	29,812	7,734
World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Index (2019) (out of 141 economies)	55th	58th	43rd	

Source: European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Kazakhstan GDP Growth Forecast



Source: World Bank

Since Kazakhstan's economy relies heavily on oil-related revenues, and given the global shift toward decarbonization, the Government should focus on diversifying the economy. The transition to renewable energy needs to be accelerated to ensure a sustainable and resilient economic future.

ernment is further committed to a privatization plan, to promote the competitiveness and efficiency of the Kazakh market.
Despite the challenges, Kazakhstan recorded 3.2% GDP growth in 2022, according to the World Bank, and is expected to see a moderate increase in growth to 3.5% in 2023 and to 4% in 2024. The economy is, in fact, benefiting from high global oil prices and supply-chain restructuring away from Russia. However, close political and economic integration with Russia will continue to pose risks. In addition, political instability may spark again due to elevated inflation and worsening socioeconomic conditions.

Market Potentials - A growing middle class and a rise in real incomes have increased demand for quality products and brand names. Inexpensive Russian and Chinese goods flow across Kazakhstan's borders, but Western goods and expertise are also in demand. In some cases, consumers are willing to pay more for imported goods and services that offer higher quality and innovation. The country has much to build on: experienced leaders interested in taking Kazakhstan to the next level; a developing civil society eager to assist in the reform process; large land area with potential for development of agriculture and renewable energy; a geographical position that places it in the crossroads of regional transportation, and a young, dynamic, and educated work force.

Launched in 2018, the Astana International Financing Center (AIFC) offers special tax, visa, and employment regimes for companies looking to invest in Kazakhstan. The AIFC Court and International Arbitration Center (separate and independent from the Republic of Kazakhstan judicial system) provide a common law court system for the resolution of commercial disputes. AIFC is also actively involved in developing green finance and a green bonds market in the country, as well as other sustainable development programs.

Ongoing Health Reforms and Public Spending to Improve Health Service Accessibility, Equity and Efficiency

READING TIME 7.10 min

Once member of the former Soviet Union, the world around Kazakhstan has shaped both it and its culture. The exploitation of its natural resources and the migration of surrounding peoples into the country have influenced its development and geography. A new movement to reinstate traditional Kazakh culture has resulted in various reforms in both its society and government, including reforms in healthcare.

With the aims of increasing the coverage and quality of health services and reducing informal and out-of-pocket payments, Kazakhstan has gradually established a Mandatory Health Insurance system. **A Social Health Insurance Fund was set up in 2016, becoming the single purchaser of publicly paid health services in 2020. The state-guaranteed basic package of health services has been complemented by a package of services funded by mandatory health insurance.** Funds are pooled from three sources: the government (to cover socially vulnerable groups, such as children, older people, pregnant women and the unemployed), and contributions from employers and from employees.

The basket of publicly paid services is relatively extensive, but there is a need for co-payments. Citizens and permanent residents of Kazakhstan have access to two packages of medical care: the State- Guaranteed Basic Package, which is financed by the state budget, and the Social Health Insurance package. The Social Health Insurance Fund is the single public purchaser for both packages of services. Services covered in the State-Guaranteed Basic Package include emergency care and transport; primary care; specialist outpatient care for acute conditions, tuberculosis (TB), and HIV, noncommunicable diseases and contagious diseases; day care for specific diseases; inpatient care for contagious diseases and specific diseases listed by the Ministry of Health; and rehabilitation

	Kazakhstan	Central Asia (average)	WHO European Region upper middle-income countries (average)	WHO Eruopean Region (average of all countries)
Per capita health spending USD, 2019 (adjusted for purchasing power)	765	552	1,338	3,226
Health spending from public sources, 2019	59.9%	37.2%		
Share of out-of-pocket spending as % of total health expenditure, 2019	33.9%	57.1%	44.1%	

Source: WHO_European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies

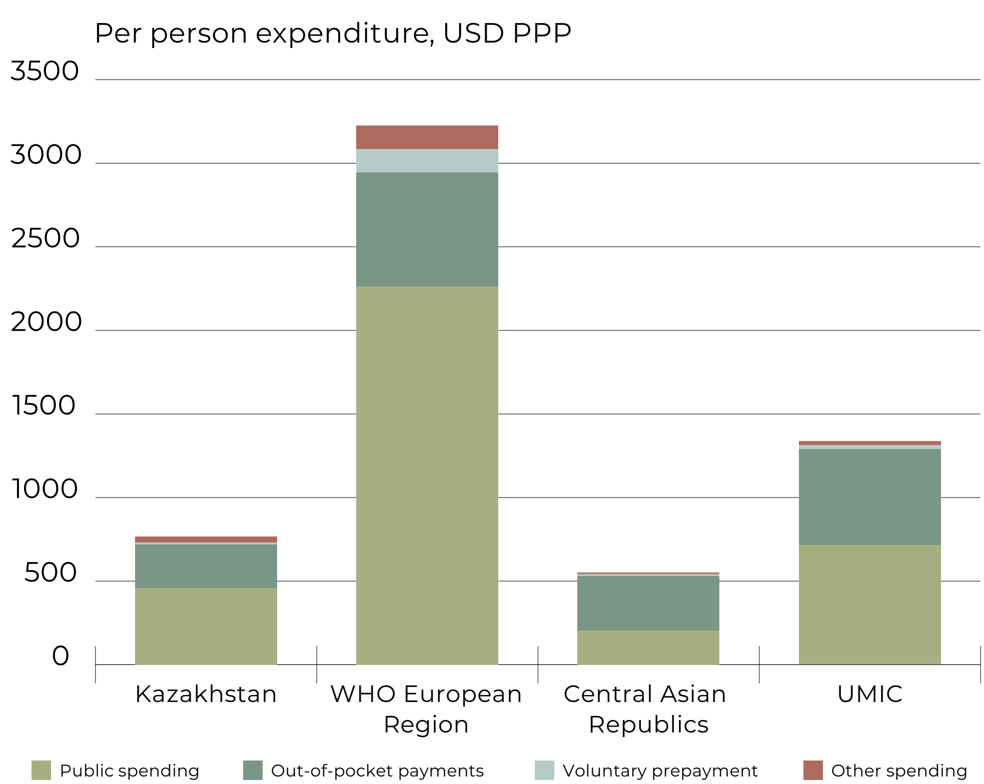
Kazakhstan, a state historically under Russian influence, now pursues a complex balancing multi-vector foreign policy to diversify its economic corridors. This involves seeking support from the U.S. and the EU to contribute to strengthening Kazakhstan's economic position and national independence in a region stuck between a revanchist Russia and an assertive China.

and palliative care for specific diseases. Services covered in the social health insurance package include specialist outpatient care, day care and inpatient care for a broader variety of diseases and conditions. **In 2021 the proportion of the population covered by social health insurance was 81.3%, a decline from 84% in 2020**. According to national data, the 18.7% of the population that is not covered by social health insurance are people of working age who are not registered as employees or as unemployed.

Since independence, the health system has been subject to various steps of decentralization, although the central government has retained considerable authority, and overall governance is centralized. The Ministry of Health is responsible for developing national health policies and legislation and facilitating international collaboration. The regional (*oblast*) health departments are responsible for managing and delivering healthcare services in their respective jurisdictions. They also own and manage all state-owned hospitals and polyclinics in their regions with a relatively high degree of autonomy. The Ministry of Health is the owner of all national clinics and research centers.

Undergoing reforms aim to shift the country towards universal healthcare however, despite

Kazakhstan Spends Less on Health Than Countries with Similar Income Levels



Notes: 2019 data. UMIC: upper middle-income countries in the WHO European Region; PPP: purchasing power parity. Source: Global Health Expenditure Database (WHO, 2022a). Taken from: WHO - European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, 2022 edition

steady growth in funding, healthcare financing is still very limited, especially if we consider Kazakhstan's national wealth. Per capita spending on health amounted to US$ 765 in 2019 (adjusted for purchasing power).
When measured as a percentage of GDP, health spending accounted for only around 2.9% of GDP in 2020 (the latest year for which internationally comparable data are available), in comparison with the global average of 9.89%. Since then, the government has increased public spending on health, and overall spending on health as a percentage of GDP is likely to have increased as well.
Most health spending comes from public sources, which was around 60% in 2019, higher than in Central Asian countries, but it has declined from around 75% in 2009. Conversely, the share of out-of-pocket payments as a percentage of health expenditure increased to 33.9% in 2019. Yet, this was still far below the averages for Central Asia (57.1%) and upper middle-income countries (44.1%) and, following recent increases in public spending on health, the share of private spending is likely to have decreased. Most out-of-pocket payments (66%) are for medicines and medical products and outpatient services including dental care (26%). Over the years, the government has steadily increased healthcare funding and reduced the influence of private insurance. Voluntary health insurance accounts for 6.4% of current health expenditure.

Healthcare in Kazakhstan is majorly dependent on its economy. With an average yearly income of $26,754 per capita, Kazakhstan cannot yet achieve widespread public insurance without further stimulating its economy. While government funding for healthcare is far behind similar countries, the steady growth of business and investment will allow it to slowly increase. Unfortunately, most people in Kazakhstan were already struggling with limited healthcare funding, high levels of chronic disease and restricted access to care prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has further exacerbated the problem nonetheless, with steady growth and progress, social reforms, and long-term fundings from world organizations (e.g. the World Bank), Kazakhstan's healthcare system and overall health is expected to improve over time.

Health Status - The health system is still hospital-centric, but there is shift in funding towards primary and outpatient care. Government priorities also include improving its public health administration system, enhancing mother and child health services, emphasizing preventive measures such as diagnostics, treatment of lifestyle diseases, patient rehabilitation, development of personalized medicine and providing expanded medical personnel training.
Despite overall high levels of health workers, there is a shortage in rural areas. To address this problem, local governments have introduced social benefit packages for new specialists arriving in rural areas, including start-off funds for transportation and accommodation, allocation of land at beneficial terms, and benefits related to utility costs, transportation, and children's nurseries. National initiatives have also sought to strengthen the health workforce through a revision of medical education and training.

> ” While government funding for healthcare is far behind similar countries, the steady growth of business and investment will allow it to slowly increase.

Moving towards universal health coverage is a high priority for Kazakhstan and this was reiterated in the National Project "Healthy Nation" for 2021–2025. The UHC service coverage index increased from 38.7% in 2000 to 75.9% in 2019, almost reaching the average of the WHO European Region (77.1%).
Poor diet, smoking, pollution, and inadequate healthcare, especially in rural areas, negatively affect the health of Kazakhstan's population and noncommunicable diseases remain the main cause of mortality. Although still representing serious challenges, important ad-

	Kazakhstan	Central Asian Republics	WHO European Region, average	EU
Life expectancy at birth, both sexes combined (years), before Covid-19	73.1	73	78.3	80.9
Maternal mortality, per 100 000 live births, est.	15.5	23.6	12.7	6.3
Infant mortality per 1000 live births, est.	9.0	17.7	7	3.5

Notes: EU: the 28 EU Member States until 2020. Source: WHO, 2022b.

The World Bank and Kazakhstan

In 2019, economic expansion caused wages in Kazakhstan to increase by 8.9% and poverty to decrease to 8.5%. Though the quick spread of COVID-19 in the country backtracked some of these achievements, the World Bank has set up the Country Partnership Framework, a strategy for increasing economic support for Kazakhstan from 2020 until 2025. The goals of this framework are to expand economic diversity, minimize the healthcare gap between rural and urban areas, decrease carbon usage and increase energy efficiency. Part of the World Bank's work in Kazakhstan includes offering grants to businesses to improve health and economic outcomes. The World Bank has sponsored and commercialized inventions like X-matrix (a wound dressing for burns) and invested in agricultural technology to boost Kazakhstan's economy.

vances have also been made in the fight, prevention and treatment of both HIV and tuberculosis.

Furthermore, in recent years, increased policy emphasis, on extending public coverage of services and improving equitable access, has led the country to make major life expectancy gains, with all health indicators having improved substantially. Life expectancy at birth has been increasing steadily, to 73.1 years in 2017 (from 65.7 years in 2000), higher than many Central Asian countries, but as in many other countries, the COVID-19 pandemic had a major detrimental impact and, according to national data, life expectancy at birth decreased to 71.4 years in 2020, a decline of 1.8 years compared with 2019. In 2019, the government approved the State Program for the Development of Healthcare 2020-2025. Target indicators under the program include increasing life expectancy to 75 years; reducing the risk of premature mortality of people 30 to 70 years of age due to cardiovascular, oncological, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes; reduction of maternal mortality from 15.5 to 14.5 per 100,000 live births and reduction of infant mortality from 9.0 to 8.3 per 1000 live births. Nonetheless, despite major reductions in maternal and infant mortality, regional differences remain.

Market Opportunities - Domestic manufacturing of medical equipment is limited with 90% of equipment imported. The bulk (85%) of medical equipment is purchased by the public sector. Most procurement for public healthcare institutions is done through government-related tenders. More than 37% of medical equipment currently in use is obsolete and the government recognizes the need to update equipment in use in the country's public hospitals. **Local producers of medical equipment are unable to fully supply the market with necessary equipment and there are no capabilities to develop a strong local industry in the near-term.** Currently, there are about 60 companies in Kazakhstan registered as medical equipment producers, most of which are small businesses with very low production volumes. Customer service in Kazakhstan is sometimes lacking.

Regional Hospitals	492
Other State Department Hospitals	39
Private Hospitals	242
Total No. of Hospitals	**773**

Hospital beds per 100 000 pop., 2020	574
Physicians per 100 000 pop., 2020	407
Nurses per 100 000 pop., 2020	752

The number of hospitals in Kazakhstan has fluctuated since 2000, increasing from 938 in 2000 to 1.085 in 2006 and then declining to 773 in 2020. **Closure of hospitals has mostly occurred in rural areas and around 56% of rural hospitals were closed between 2013 and 2018. Hospital closures were often accompanied by the strengthening of central district (*rayon*) hospitals and upgraded technology.** Some hospitals were also restructured to become multiprofile general facilities intended to ensure better access to quality services. In 2020, 492 hospitals were run by the regional (*oblast*) health authorities, 39 were run by other state departments and 242 were private hospitals. **Despite reductions in hospitals and beds, capacity remains higher than in many other countries.** Many hospitals are in poor condition, especially in rural areas. Investments have facilitated a modernization of the hospital infrastructure in Kazakhstan, although renovations have mostly benefited larger hospitals and facilities. Tertiary care hospitals have received a lot of attention in terms of investments and renovations and are largely new builds. In contrast, rural hospitals have received much less investment, and many are outdated. Furthermore, existing medical equipment is not fully utilized, with only 55% of all medical equipment being used optimally.

In December 2019, the Kazakhstani government and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the implementation of a Comprehensive Program for the Modernization of Healthcare Infrastructure in Kazakhstan. The program envisages the construction of up to 19 new hospitals to replace 40 outdated existing facilities and the upgrade of up to 50% of the hospital bed capacity as part of the State Health Care Development Program for 2020–2024. The hospitals included in this initial first phase of the program include: Kyzylorda, Kokshetau, Kostanai, Taraz, Pavlodar and Atyrau. In 2020, the EBRD issued a solicitation to identify a consultancy for the development of a comprehensive healthcare needs assessment and functional specifications for these hospitals.

Among main Sources:

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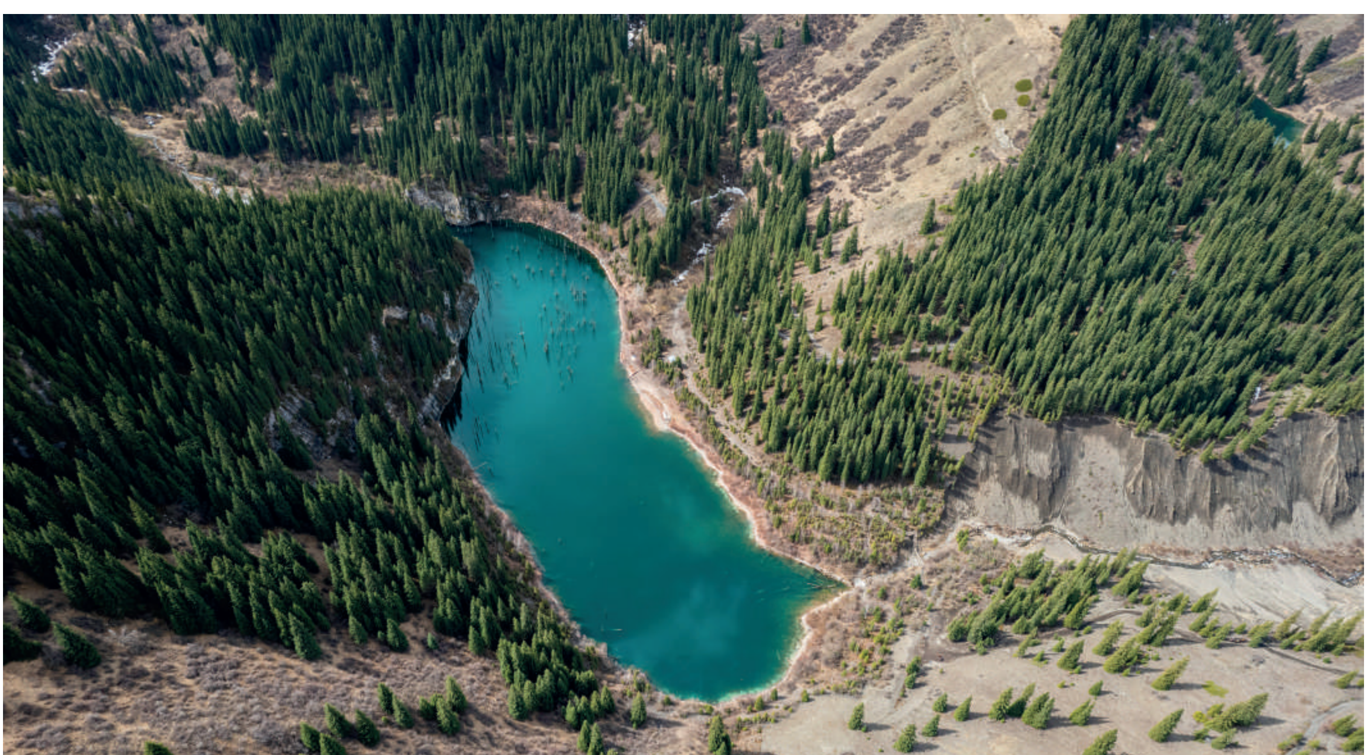
-InfoMercatiesteri, Ministero degli Affari Esteri e della cooperazione Internazionale, https://www.infomercatiesteri.it/scambi_commerciali.php?id_paesi=130#

-European Bank for Reconstruction and Development



Market Outlook

The ASEAN Economic Community saw the need to develop an ASEAN Digital Economy Framework Agreement that sets ASEAN's unified strategy to turn the region into a digital economic powerhouse. Negotiations for the Agreement are set to start in 2024

By 2027, the IMF forecasts ASEAN's economy will be the 4th largest economy in the world behind only India, the US and China.

By 2030, the region's digital economy is projected to top $1 trillion. Last year alone, 25 new unicorns—companies valued at over 1 billion US dollars— were created in the region.

According to the UN, seven ASEAN Member States were ranked in the top 100 of the world's e-government development index 2022: Singapore (12), Malaysia (53), Thailand (55), Brunei Darussalam (68), Indonesia (77), Vietnam (86), and the Philippines (89).

There are already over 7,000 digital start-ups in Southeast Asia, 80% of which are based in Indonesia, Singapore, or Vietnam. A rising number are gaining coveted 'unicorn' status, attracting the eye of global investors, and joining the exclusive billion-dollar club.

Collectively, the region has become the largest adopter of Facebook anywhere in the world, and Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, has earned the crown as the global Twitter capital.

The rapid and unprecedented digital transformation is driven by rising disposable incomes, a strong start-up sector, Southeast Asia youthful, tech-loving populations and a generalized socio-cultural mind-set shift to digitalization.
All in all, Southeast Asia's digital economy is grounded on strong social and economic fundamentals, and offline to online trends, which provides much to be optimistic about, especially as the region settles into its 'digital decade'.

Southeast Asia
Riding the Wave of Digitalization

READING TIME 5.33 min

Author: Silvia Borriello
Editorial Director
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E-commerce, and the digital transformation of the economy have supported and undergirded Southeast Asia's impressive economic growth in recent years. The digital revolution has helped offset gale-force headwinds from the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, inflation, and supply chain imbroglios. Although the path to the region's $1 trillion digital economy, by 2030, is grounded on strong social and economic fundamentals, greater support from governments is needed to foster a more sustainable digital ecosystem, to achieve the region's maximum potential.

Digital transformation worldwide was already increasingly changing how companies make and offer their propositions and interact with their customers. But the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified this, with technology emerging as a critical means of resolving public health challenges and continuing to facilitate the new online consumer landscape. This accelerated digitalization is disrupting the world's economy, making it one of the most significant growth engines for many developing nations.

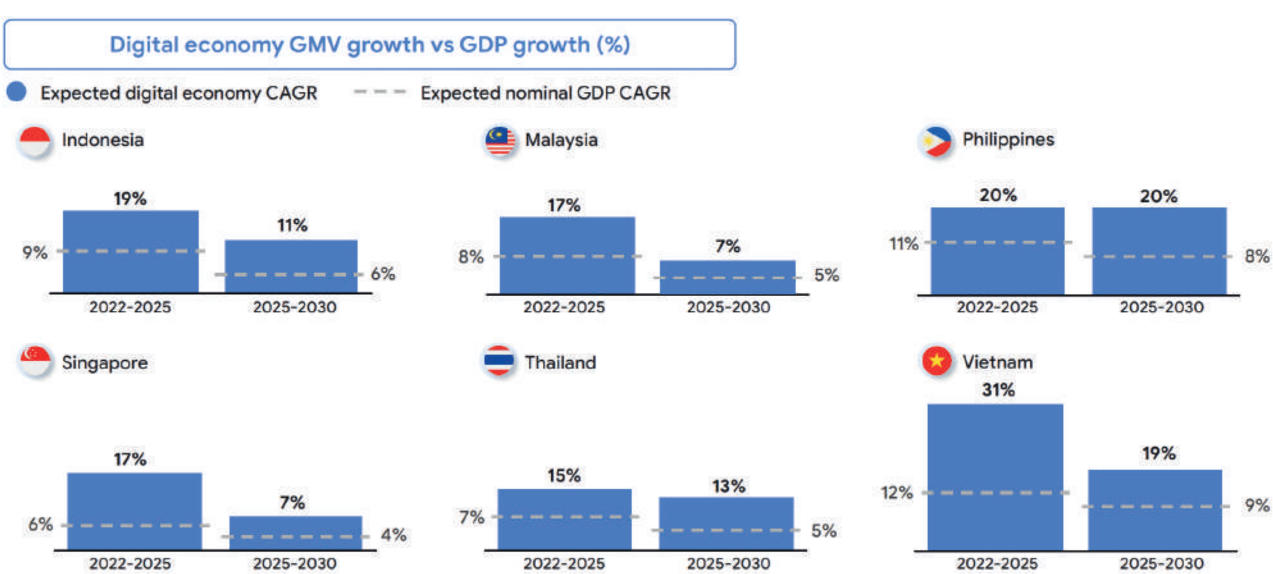
Among them, the digital transformation of South and Southeast Asia is opening a range of opportunities for its citizens, especially for younger generations. Many Asian countries are even in the lead globally in certain sectors of digitalization. For example, the Philippines and Malaysia have become the top two countries in e-commerce retail growth, increasing by 25% and 23% per year, respectively.

According to the latest *e-Conomy SEA Annual Report by Google*, Temasek and Bain, the digital economy in Southeast Asia's six largest economies (comprising Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam) is on track to be worth USD 600 billion, and hit 1 trillion by 2030. In 2016, the first of these studies projected that the region's digital market, measured by gross merchandise value (GMV = total value of transactions), would be worth $200 billion by 2025; it reached $218 billion in 2023, two years ahead of projections, jumping 11% from the previous year, and is projected to grow 6% annually.

Although macroeconomic headwinds have implications on consumers, Southeast Asia has weathered global headwinds with more resilience, compared to other regions around the world. Consumer confidence started to rebound in the second half of 2023 after falling to lower levels in first half 2023. **GDP growth is maintaining pace, and the digital economy is expected to grow two times as fast as GDP through 2030. Investors are increasingly spreading their bets in emerging countries and sectors and remain confident in**

" This accelerated digitalization is disrupting the world's economy, making it one of the most significant growth engines for many developing nations.

Southeast Asia's long-term prospects and the opportunities they bring. The UN-ESCAP (United Nations -Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) reports that Asia is the fastest-growing region in the global e-commerce marketplace. Around two-thirds of people in Asia use mobile services, the most significant number of mobile phone users globally, and there is still room for further expansion. The fastest growth rates are in Southeast Asia. Countries like Singapore (87%), Malaysia (83%), and Thailand (75%) have comparatively higher smartphone penetration. However, in the case of smartphone market



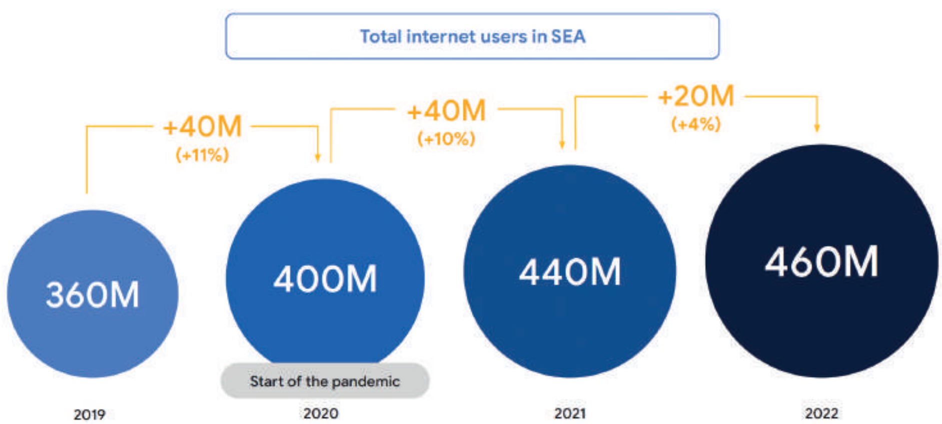
GMV= gross merchandise value. Gross merchandise value or GMV is the total value of the products sold, usually by e-commerce businesses and online retailers, over a certain duration. This metric is an indicator of a country/company's growth and gives an idea of its performance over time.
Sources: Bain analysis; GDP data from IHS, Central Bank, World Bank

> Around two-thirds of people in Asia use mobile services, the most significant number of mobile phone users globally, and there is still room for further expansion.

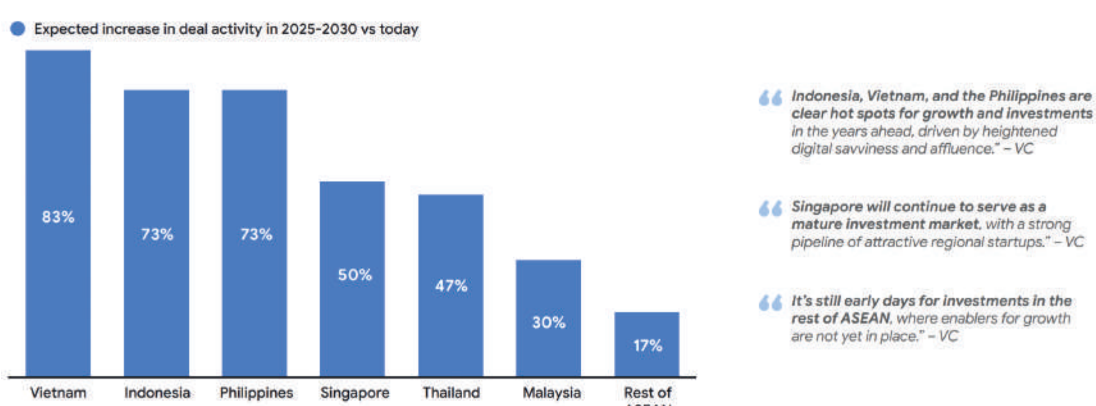
growth, the Philippines has the highest increase: over 90%.
Heavy smartphone penetration is inevitably facilitating digitalization in these regions and digital adoption continues to rise with 100 million additional internet users that have come online in the last three years, albeit at a slower pace than the steep acceleration seen at the height of the pandemic, with urban consumers driving the economy. **Singapore and Indonesia were leading investment destinations in 2022, yet again. Vietnam, Indonesia, and the Philippines are most likely to attract more investors over the longer-term.** In addition, the region enjoys some of the cheapest and accessible devices, and data, in the world, with over 95% of Southeast Asia's internet users having access to LTE/WiMax connectivity.

Several are the factors that have contributed to the rapid growth in digital consumption in Southeast Asia. Firstly, a vast digital-native youth population and rising disposable incomes. Secondly, the rapid adoption of financial services accessible via smartphones is helping millions of people make digital payments. Thirdly, with such high mobile penetration, consumers regularly use e-commerce and social media sites to buy products and services. ***McKinsey & Company* estimates that the proportion of digital payments in Asia will be at 65% in 2024, against an average of 52% globally, making the continent the world's consumption growth engine.**

Most governments in South and Southeast Asian countries have introduced supportive policies to boost the digital economy and infrastructure. The last 20 years have in fact seen a gradual digital shift also among public-sector organizations. **Covid-19 has served as a catalyst, resulting in significant increases in technology investment across public-sector agencies of all kinds, installing a significant digital-first mindset shift amongst its population.** Citizens and businesses have



Graphic source: Google, Temasek and Bain, e-Conomy SEA, 2019, 2020, and 2021; Statista for 2022



Graphic Source: Bain, Southeast Asia Venture Capital Investors Survey, Q3 2022
VC = Venture Capital Investors

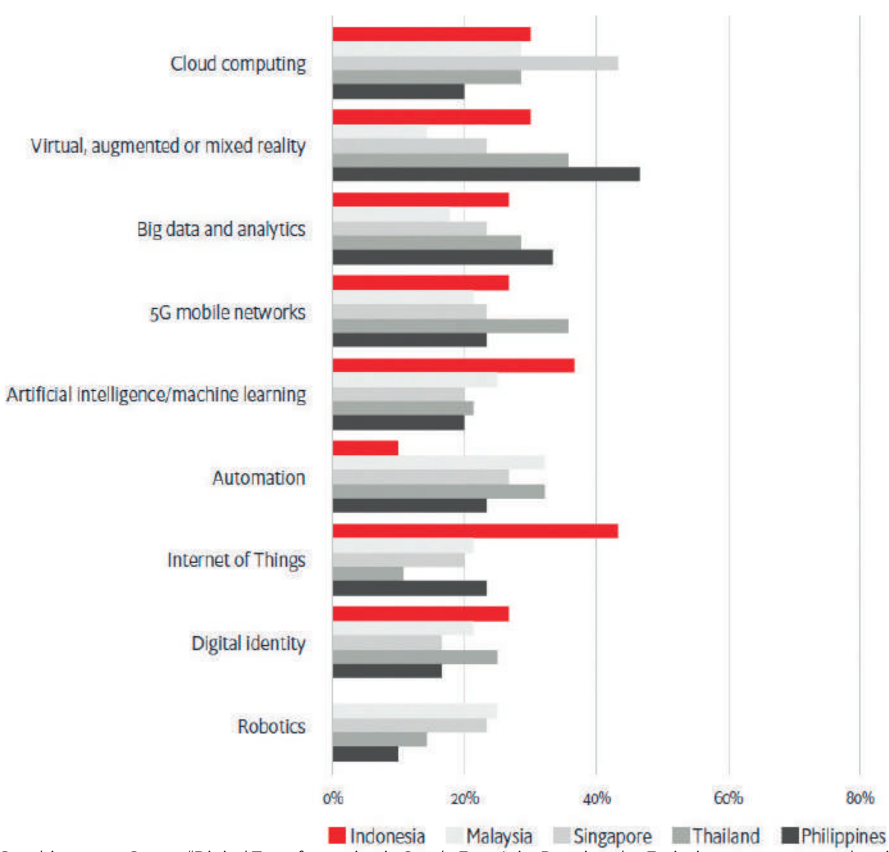
Keeping up with innovation in society is a key motivator of digital transformation

What factors chiefly motivate your organisation's digital transformation strategy today? Select up to four.

Graphic source: Survey "Digital Transformation in South-East Asia: Reaping the Fruits in government and society.", conducted by Economist Impact and commissioned by Microsoft. - The Economist Group 2022.

Perceptions around the benefits of using different technologies differ across South-East Asia

Which of the following types of technology factor most prominently in positively impacting broad societal areas? Select up to three.



Graphic source: Survey "Digital Transformation in South-East Asia: Reaping the Fruits in government and society.", conducted by Economist Impact and commissioned by Microsoft. - The Economist Group 2022

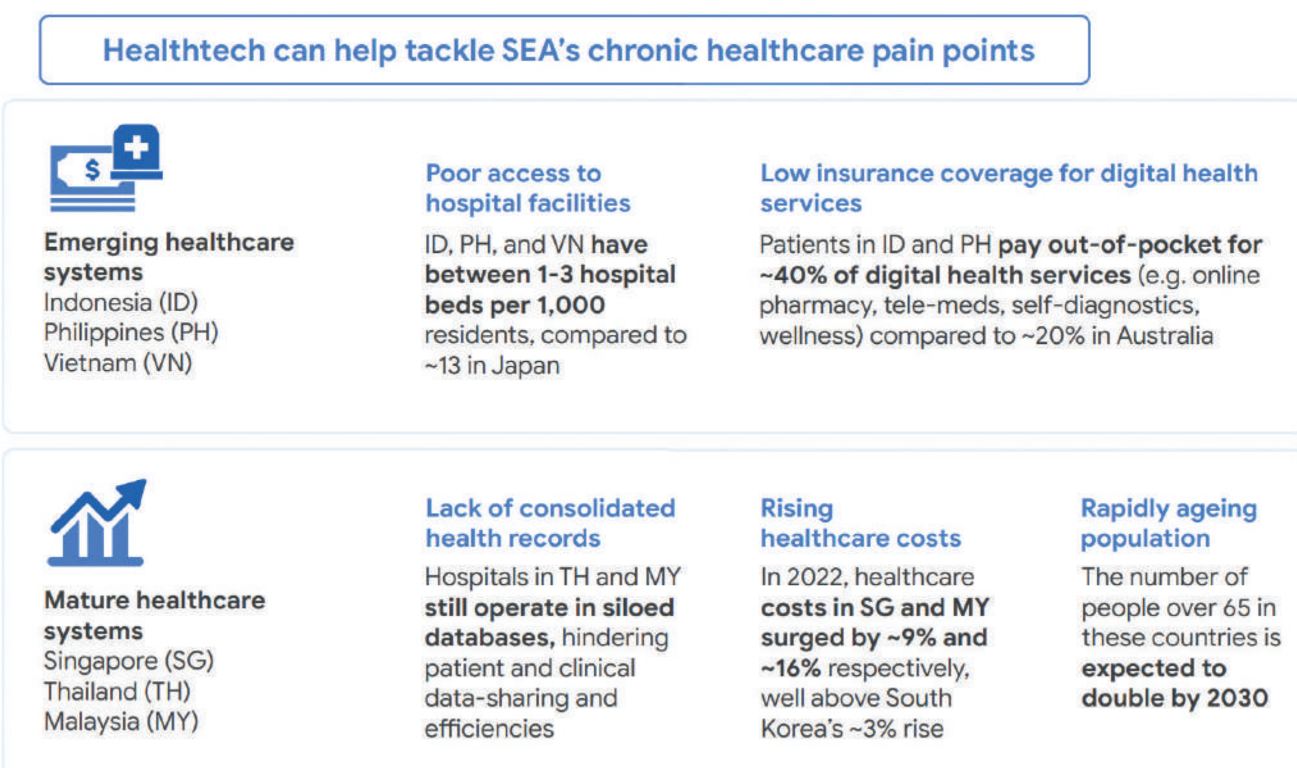
> From the urban-rural divide to low digital literacy, the region continues to grapple with challenges that could hold back that growth.

come to expect digital services from their government. The digital transformation of government organizations will have an impact across a broad range of areas in society.

According to a survey of senior-level employees from 150 government organizations across Southeast Asia, conducted by Economist Impact and commissioned by *Microsoft - The Economist Group 2022*, 71.3% of senior-level employees say the pandemic has accelerated the pace of their digital transformation in their field. This wide acknowledgement has also resulted in a corresponding increase in investments in digital technologies, with nine in ten (90.7%) of respondents saying their organizations have increased investment in digital technology since the onset of covid-19.

ASEAN has the chance to be leader in the creation of new digital services and producing digital leaders; the path to a $600 billion -1 trillion digital economy in 2030 remains geared on Southeast Asia's economic fundamentals. **Nonetheless, the digital divide across nations and within nations is the most compelling problem for the region's digital progress.** From the urban-rural divide to low digital literacy, the region continues to grapple with challenges that could hold back that growth. According to World Bank's 2021 estimates, except for Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei, the other Southeast Asian states have over 40% of their populations located in rural areas, furthermore, while ASEAN has a high internet penetration rate of over 70%, and most of its population own smartphones, this doesn't mean digital literacy.

Poor Access And Rising Healthcare Costs Are Key Reasons For Healthtech Adoption



Source: Bain analysis

Furthermore, the different countries are at different stages of developing their regulatory framework. Regulations often lag behind innovation and, as the landscape evolves, there has to be new, effective laws to areas like data and privacy protection. Singapore and Malaysia fare well across several digital integration indicators, including data protection and cybersecurity, digital payments, as well as digital skills, innovation, entrepreneurship, and infrastructure readiness. Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar have a lot to catch up with the regional digital integration efforts. Myanmar falls further behind all the other ASEAN states.

Thus, greater government and institutional support is needed to achieve the region's maximum potential. These governments must ensure a conducive environment that will allow digital economies to grow in a way that is inclusive, sustainable, open, and secure. They should foster a more sustainable digital ecosystem by promoting digital start-ups, removing entry barriers, developing human capital, and establishing national regulatory frameworks for the digital economy.

Among main sources:

-"Digital Transformation in South-East Asia: Reaping the Fruits in government and society" -survey of senior-level employees from 150 government organizations across South-East Asia, conducted by Economist Impact and commissioned by Microsoft- The Economist Group 2022

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MEDICA and COMPAMED

Medical technology business is profiting from strong appeal to international visitors

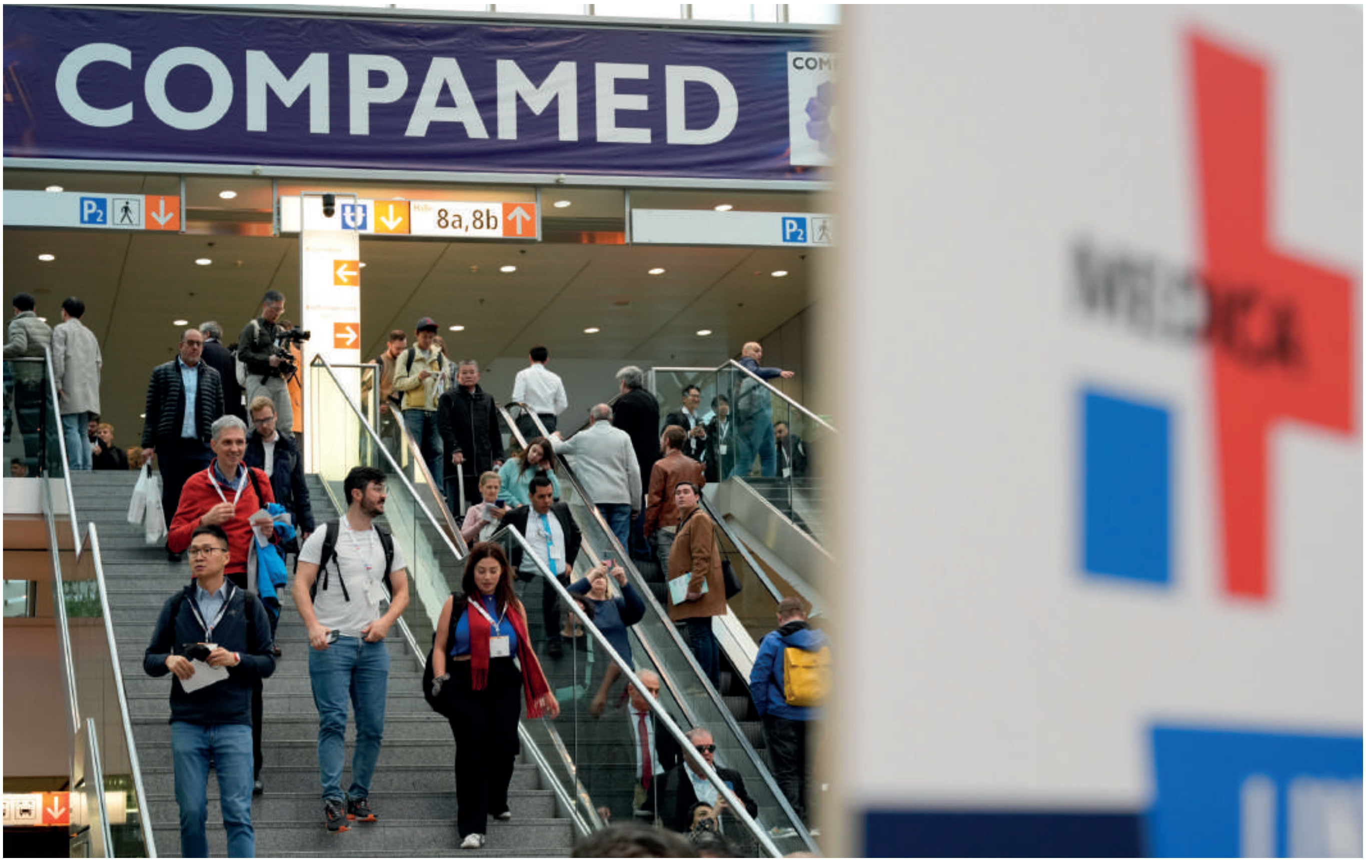
High proportion of decision-makers, unique variety of innovations and a high-calibre accompanying programme

After four days of business, MEDICA and COMPAMED in Düsseldorf delivered impressive confirmation that they are excellent platforms for the worldwide medical technology business and the top-level exchange of expert knowledge. "Contributing factors were the strong appeal to international visitors, the high proportion of decision-makers, the high-calibre accompanying programme and the unique variety of innovations along the entire added value chain", summarised Erhard Wienkamp, Managing Director of Messe Düsseldorf, looking back at business in the halls of the internationally leading medical trade fair and the flagship event for suppliers in the medical technology industry. From 13 to 16 November, the 5,372 exhibiting companies at MEDICA 2023 and their 735 counterparts at COMPAMED 2023 offered a total of 83,000 healthcare professionals (up from 81,000 in 2022) impressive proof that they know how to realise modern health care in doctors' offices as well as clinics – from the supply of high-tech components to high-performance consumer products.

"About three quarters of our visitors travelled to Germany from abroad. They came from 166 countries. Both events are therefore not only leading trade fairs in Germany and Europe, the figures also demonstrate their great importance for global business", said Christian Grosser, Director Health & Medical Technologies at Messe Düsseldorf. More than 80 percent are significantly involved in important business decisions in their companies and institutions.

The "push" by MEDICA and COMPAMED for cooperation and international business is of significant importance for the industry. This is emphasised by current reports and statements from industry associations. Even if the medical technology market in Germany remains the unchallenged number one with a volume of approximately € 36 billion, the export quota of the German medical technology industry is assessed at just under 70 percent. "MEDICA is a good marketplace for the strongly export-oriented German medical technological industry to present itself to its (potential) customers from all over the world. It attracts many international visitors and exhibitors", said Marcus Kuhlmann, Head of Medical Technology at the German Industry Association for Op-

> "About three quarters of our visitors travelled to Germany from abroad.
> They came from 166 countries."



> The highlights of each MEDICA, in addition to the numerous innovations, traditionally also include the multi-faceted accompanying programme with celebrity visits and presentations.

tics, Photonics, Analytical and Medical Technologies (SPECTARIS).

Innovations for better health – digital and powered by AI

Whether at the expert trade fair, conference or professional forums, the main focus this year was on the digital transformation of the healthcare system in the context of the growing "outpatientisation" of treatment and networking among clinics. Another trend is solutions based on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and supporting systems, for example robotic systems or solutions for implementing processes that are more sustainable. The innovations presented by exhibitors included an AI-controlled wearable to improve sleep quality (by stimulating the brain through precise neurofeedback signals), an energy-saving yet effective cryotherapy procedure as well as robotic systems for diagnostics, therapy and rehabilitation – from robot-aided sonographic examinations and cardiovascular surgery without physical contact of the instruments as they navigate through blood vessels to the upper body mobilisation of bed-ridden patients.

Top speakers "spiced up" specialist topics and provided orientation

The highlights of each MEDICA, in addition to the numerous innovations, traditionally also include the multi-faceted accompanying programme with celebrity visits and presentations. **Federal Minister of Health Karl Lauterbach** participated (by video call) in the opening ceremony of the accompanying 46th German Hospital Day and in the discussions concerning the major hospital reform in Germany and the significant changes this will bring to the structure of available healthcare.

The "hot topic" of artificial intelligence was discussed in numerous sessions and from a variety of different perspectives in the conferences and panel talks that accompanied the professional trade fair. Globally renowned AI experts, among them **Bart de Witte, Prof. Paul Lukowicz** and **Prof. Dr Aldo Faisal** provided the necessary scientific background. The issues were both very specific, for example how 'ChatGPT' could provide medical use (for example by "translating" complicated phrases in letters by doctors into a commonly understood language), and of a more general nature. Bart de Witte, as a specialist for digital transformation in healthcare, addressed, among other things, the "greater whole" in his keynote speech at the MEDICA HEALTH IT FORUM. He currently sees the use of AI in healthcare as having arrived at a very critical junction and advocates for a "democratisation" of medical AI. The storage of medical knowledge in digital form should not be the exclusive domain of a few technological giants. Instead, it should be made available for public access. If not, the potential for using medical AI would also be very limited.

> As a sought-after brand ambassador in the medical sector, Riedel knows MEDICA well: "It's always exciting here to see how products and technology evolve.

Digital innovations – start-ups are causing a significant stir

The programme on stage at MEDICA had many further highlights to offer. Among these were the finals of the 12th MEDICA START-UP COMPETITION (on 14 November). In the annual competition for outstanding digital innovations, this year's winner in the final pitch was the start-up Me Med from Israel with an immunoassay platform for performing highly sensitive, fast, multiplex protein assessments. In the meantime, a developer team from Germany took first place at the finals of the 15th 'Healthcare Innovation World Cup': Diamontech introduced a patented, easy-to-use tool for non-invasive, painless measurement of blood sugar levels.

COMPAMED: Key technologies for the medicine of the future

For anyone interested in seeing the performance capabilities of suppliers in the medical technology industry, Halls 8a and 8b were a must-see. Here, during COMPAMED 2023, about 730 exhibiting companies from 39 countries presented an array of innovations that demonstrated their specialised competence regarding key technologies and their use in medical technology, in medical products and in medical technology manufacturing. The breadth of topics in the five worlds of experience ranged from micro components (e.g. sensors) and microfluidics (e.g. technologies for managing liquids in the smallest spaces, for use in test applications within laboratory medicine) to materials (e.g., ceramics, glass, plastics, composite materials) to sophisticated packaging solutions for cleanrooms.

Two expert panels integrated into COMPAMED offered a deeper look at current trends in technology, both regarding research as well as development of the procedures and novel products on exhibition. Further, there was a lot of practical information on relevant foreign markets for medical technology and on regulation requirements to be met in order to achieve marketing authorisation.

"I am happy to see that there was again a strong focus on international cooperation this year at COMPAMED. Especially in times of global crises, I think this is very important indeed. The exhibitors at our joint booth, too, are happy about the high international proportion of visitors and very happy with the quality of these contacts", said Dr Thomas Dietrich, Executive Director of the IVAM International Microtechnology Business Network, in his positive summary of the trade fair.

All information regarding live events at the trade fair (including many voices by exhibiting companies and visiting professionals) are available online at: **www.medica-tradefair.com** and **www.compamed-tradefair.com**

Date of the next MEDICA in Düsseldorf: 11 –14 November 2024

Date of the next COMPAMED in Düsseldorf: 11 –14 November 2024

The dates for the next international medical trade fairs of the Messe Düsseldorf Group are available online at: **https://www.medicalliance.global**

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KIMES 2023

Remark of KIMES 2023

Proposing a new direction for the medical environment and industry in the New Normal Era under the theme of "Better Life, Better Future"

Exhibits including AI, VR, Medical robots, Smart Healthcare, Big Data, as well as advanced medical devices reflecting the trend of convergence between different industries were put on display.
Ever since the spread of COVID-19 in January 2020, this is the first exhibition to be held in the entire 1st and 3rd floor of COEX, occupying Halls A/B/C/D, as well as the Grand Ballroom, covering a total area of 40,500sqm.

At **KIMES 2023** which is the largest exposition of medical devices in Korea, majority of exhibitors joined the show to expand their business. Digital healthcare, AI, Robot technologies being in the limelight these days were one of highlights at the show.

Linked Events for Business Synergy Effect

- Medical Korea 2023 (Global Healthcare & Medical Tourism Conference, Korea Health Industry Development Institute) Medical Korea 2023 (Global Healthcare & Medical Tourism Conference), held in conjunction with KIMES this year to create a business synergy effect, is an annual international medical conference and exhibition organized by the Korea Health Industry Development Institute that provides a platform for entry to the international medical market, promotion of policies to retain foreign patients, as well as global branding of Korea's medical sector, aimed at the exchange of information in the international medical market and expansion of domestic and foreign networks.

- GMEP 2023 (Global Medical Equipment Plaza, KOTRA)
Following last year, the [Global Medical Equipment Plaza (GMEP 2023)] was held in conjunction with KIMES. As a trademark conference in the biomedical field organized by KOTRA, GMEP organized export consultation conference in order to support the growth of domestic firms in face of the New Normal Era.

- MedicomteK 2023 (Medical Components Technology Korea)
The medical device field has expanded its spectrum beyond medical devices, reaching out to fields including AI, Deep Learning, and Robot Science. MedicomteK 2022, as a medical components and technology exhibition designed to promote the development of advanced medical technology, provided an opportunity to not only exchange the latest information, but also witness the present and future of the components and devices industry and gain a competitive edge.

KIMES Live ! – Promotion and Marketing Support for Untact Exhibitors

In the New Normal Era, we operate 'KIMES Live!' in order to support the online marketing of exhibitors in response to the new business environment. We simultaneously run the live broadcast in sync with the offline exhibition, where a professional reporter visits the exhibitors' booths in person and introduces them in both English and Korean in real-time for buyers and clients who are not able to physically attend the exhibition. After the show is over, we produce edited content for each exhibitor and post it on our official YouTube channel for exhibitors to utilize.

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HKTDC
Hong Kong International Medical and Healthcare Fair 15th | E PLUS
香港國際醫療及保健展

16-18 May 2024 Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre
9-25 May 2024 Click2Match (Online)

Healthcare Week in Hong Kong boon for global medical industry

Attracting global healthcare elites, affirming confidence for Hong Kong's strong role in the medical and healthcare sector in the region

Hong Kong International Medical and Healthcare Fair will return on 16-18 May 2024.

Global healthcare sector leaders streamed into Hong Kong **for the second International Healthcare Week**, organised by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKTDC). As the flagship Healthcare Week events, **the third Asia Summit on Global Health (ASGH)** and **the 14th Hong Kong International Medical and Healthcare Fair (Medical Fair)** featured fruitful discussions on a wide range of topics including the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area as an innovation powerhouse, complemented by exchanges on Chinese-Western medicine, aging and women innovators. This flagship event has confirmed Hong Kong's status as an international R&D and business healthcare platform, where university research projects have been linked with potential investors and innovative medical devices promoted to international markets.

The ASGH attracted over 2,500 participants from 40 countries and regions. The **Medical Fair** welcomed over 10,000 visitors from 56 countries and regions. More than 300 one-on-one deal-making sessions and over 600 business-matching meetings were also arranged to help participants seize business opportunities.

Dr Peter K N Lam, Chairman of the HKTDC, said: "Drawing on its strengths in scientific research, a world-class medical system, a highly skilled workforce, strong financing and fundraising capabilities and advanced logistics and transportation infrastructure, and backed by the huge market of the Greater Bay Area, Hong Kong is the preferred hub and perfect springboard into Asia for the growing healthcare market.

"The strong support from the healthcare industry for the Healthcare Week is overwhelming. It has created synergies for medical and healthcare industry professionals and unleashed Hong Kong's strengths in upstream and downstream healthcare industries, Hong Kong is ready to play a bigger role in the medical and healthcare fields in the region," **Dr Lam** added.

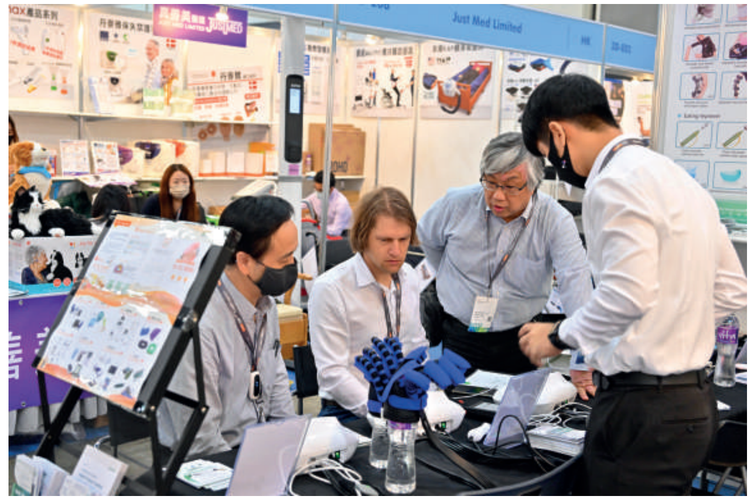
ASGH: thematic sessions examine hot topics

ASGH, co-organised by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and the HKTDC, continued to bring together healthcare leaders, innovators and investors. The first-day **Plenary Session: Reimagining the Future of Healthcare** invited **Sir Jonathan Symonds**, CBE, Chair, GSK as one of the speakers. He said: "When COVID struck, the world didn't collaborate in the way that it should have. There will be another COVID. We cannot operate in the same way as we did. We must tackle global problems globally." Another speaker, **Mr Tatsuo Yasunaga**, Representative Director, Chair of the Board of Directors, Mitsui & Co., Ltd, noted: "In implementing value-based healthcare, we try to achieve both clinical outcome improvement and cost savings. We expect to achieve the first goal through new drug and medical device developments and health risk management. We are also moving towards personalised healthcare to bridge the gap between medical care and prevention."

The **Unleashing Opportunities in Integrative Chinese-Western Medicine** session today examined research, treatment and medicine developments that transformed markets in Asia and abroad. The session showcased the potential for complementary, integrative healthcare and highlighted the business opportunities that collaboration between Chinese and Western medicine presented.

Mr Abraham Chan, Founder, Chairman, CEO and Executive Director at PuraPharm said modernising Chinese medicine included standardising products by creating standardised granules from herbs. Computer programmes let practitioners diagnose conditions and dispense treatments. Big data collected by practitioners helped improve products and perform drug discovery.

Noting Hong Kong's high life expectancy and increase in the elderly population, panelists at the **Ageing Well: Breakthroughs and Investment Landscape in Longevity** session said this presented both challenges and opportunities, such as drug discovery, The third Asia Summit on Global Health (ASGH) and the 14th Hong Kong International Medical and Healthcare Fair (Medical Fair) featured fruitful discussions on a wide range of topics



research financing and monitoring gadgets.

Dr Donald Li, Chairman of the Elderly Commission, said higher demand for a wide range of healthcare products and services generated opportunities. This was especially true of monitoring devices allowing the elderly to live at home safely.

Medical Fair: A proven platform reaching out to global buyers

The Medical Fair, organised by the HKTDC and co-organised by the Hong Kong Medical and Healthcare Device Industries Association (HKMHDIA) ran under the HKTDC's EXHIBITION+ hybrid model. The physical fair at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) successfully closed today, while exhibitors and buyers from around the world can continue conducting business online via the Click2Match smart business-matching platform until 25 May.

University projects showcased

In recent years, the Hong Kong SAR Government has actively promoted collaboration between the government, industry, academia and researchers by bringing together enterprises, universities and research institutes to cooperate and promote technological innovation.

At **ASGH**, the hybrid **InnoHealth Showcase** and **exhibition zone** featured projects and solutions from more than 140 healthcare-related innovative technology enterprises, from which 50 of the enterprises and projects are presented by five local major universities, namely CUHK, HKBU, HKU, HKUST and PolyU. The Co-founder, Director & Chief Scientific Advisor of exhibitor Gut Rhythm R&D (Hong Kong) Limited **Prof John Anthony Rudd** said: "The event was highly successful for us. We gained a lot of exposure and were able to attract several potential investors. We also learned a lot and are very confident we could move forward."

Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) and Cyberport joined ASGH as Health Innovation Partners from which ITC showcased 16 health-related InnoHK R&D centres to demonstrate Hong Kong's strength as a global innovation powerhouse.

Numerous companies in the healthcare industry as well as six local universities and various enterprises supported by the universities, which are commercialising their research and development accomplishments, joined the **Medical Fair** to showcase cutting-edge medical products and technologies. Among the university-affiliated companies are Sramek Insight Limited, Herbap Biotech, Agilis Robotics, Metasurgical Technology, Cellomics International and Greater Bay Biotechnology.

This year's fair, the largest in its history, assembled more than 300 exhibitors to feature the latest medical technologies and equipment, healthcare products and solutions and related services, drawing many buyers and industry professionals to source both onsite and online.

"I am glad that I met nearly 100 representatives from various medical organisations, our main target customers. I estimate that this fair will make over 60% of our yearly sales," said Mr King-Wah Tai, a sales representative for medical facility manufacturer Janley Limited (HK). The company has participated in the Medical Fair since 2014 and has benefited greatly from this year's fair. "Taking this chance to interact with people from the sector, understand what they need and how they think is very important to our business. The fair is not just for generating sales but also the perfect place to gain insight," Mr Tai added.

Mr Valentin Cipian Pantea, Manager of Neomed S.R.L. from Romania, visited the Medical Fair to look for new medical-uniform manufacturers. "I plan to order about US$200,000 worth of products and hope to build a long-term relationship with them. Besides, using the Click2Match platform, I made a valuable business connection with a manufacturer from Mainland China. The platform is very helpful in getting to know people entirely out of our usual circle."

Get ready for Hong Kong International Medical and Healthcare Fair 2024!

Date:
16-18 May 2024 - Physical Fair
9-25 May 2024 - Click2Match (Online)
Physical Fair Venue: Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, 1 Expo Drive, Wan Chai, Hong Kong
Website: https://www.hktdc.com/event/hkmedicalfair/en
Buyer registration:
https://bit.ly/3vv9xaU

Calendar

Here our trade shows selection.
Discover all worldwide medical exhibitions
at www.infomedixinternational.com

Smart Medical Fair®

SMART MEDICAL FAIR 2024

01/01-31/12/2024

The International Virtual Medical Trade Fair

Italy

Organized by:
Infodent&Infomedix International
www.smartmedicalfair.com
Smart Medical Fair is an international virtual exhibition open all year round organized by categories.
The platform virtually connects manufacturers with a global audience.
For further information, visit Infodent & Infomedix Information Booth!

www.smartmedicalfair.com

FEBRUARY

01-03/02/2024

IMCAS 2024

Paris – France

IMCAS C/O Comexposium Healthcare

Address: 22 rue de Courcelles
75008 Paris, France
Phone: +33 1 40 73 82 82
Email: contact@imcas.com

Venue: Palais des Congrès
Paris
France

www.imcas.com/en

FEBRUARY

18-22/02/2024

SPIE Medical Imaging 2024

San Diego – USA

Organized by: SPIE
(International Society for Optical Engineering)
PO Box 10
1000 20th St.
Bellingham
WA 98225-6705
USA
Phone: +1 360 676 3290

Venue: Town and Country Resort
500 Hotel Circle North
San Diego, CA 92108
USA

www.spie.org/conferences-and-exhibitions

FEBRUARY

26-27/02/2024

RMD 2024

Brussels - Belgium

8th EAAR Annual Conference on New Medical Device Regulations

Organised by: BioEvents UK
US Phone: +1 857 400 0055
UK Phone: +44 203 051 4032
Email: info@bioevents-congress.com
Website: www.bioevents.net

Venue: Sheraton Brussels Airport Hotel
Brussels International Airport
1930, Brussels
Belgium

https://rmd2024.com/

FEBRUARY

28/02-03/03/2024

ECR 2024

Vienna - Austria

European Congress of Radiology

ESR OFFICE
Neutorgasse 9
1010 Vienna, Austria
Phone: +43 1 533 40 64 - 0
Fax: +43 1 533 40 64 - 448
Email: communications@myesr.org
Website: www.myesr.org

Venue: Austria Center Vienna
Bruno-Kreisky-Platz 1
1220 Vienna
Austria

www.myesr.org/congress/

MARCH

05-07/03/2024

Dubai Derma 2024

Dubai - United Arab Emirates

23rd Dubai World Dermatology and Laser Conference & Exhibition

Organised by:
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Road D-62, Opposite to Nad Al Hamar
P.O. Box: 13636, Dubai - UAE
Phone: +971 4 3624 717
Fax: +971 4 3624 718
Email: derma@index.ae
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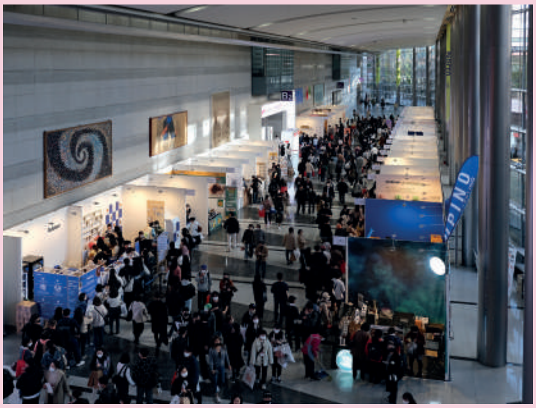

MARCH

14-17/03/2024

KIMES 2024

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Email: kimes@kimes.kr
Website: www.kimes.kr

Venue: COEX (Convention & Exhibition Center)
Add: 159 Samsung-dong, Gangnam-gu
Seoul
Korea

https://kimes.kr/eng/

MARCH

25-26/03/2024

Rare Diseases 2024

London - United Kingdom

International Conference on Rare Diseases and Orphan Drugs

Organizer: COALESCE RESEARCH GROUP
Address: 33 Market Point Dr,
Greenville,SC 29607,
USA
Email: rarediseases@conferenceinsights.org
rarediseases@speakersresearch.com
Phone: +1-718-543-9362
Whatsapp:+1-843-564-2296

Venue: Hyatt Place London Heathrow Airport
London
UK

www.rsna.org/Annual-Meeting

APRIL

11-14/04/2024

CMEF 2024
ICMD 2024

Shanghai - China

China International Medical Equipment Fair
International Component Manufacturing & Design Show

Organizer: Reed Sinopharm Exhibitions Co., Ltd.
Address: 15th Floor Tower B, Ping an International Finance Centre 1-3, Xinyuan South Road Chaoyang District, Beijing, China, 100027

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Venue: Shenzhen World Exhibition & Convention Center
Shenzhen
China

www.cmef.com.cn/en

APRIL

16-18/04/2024

TIHE 2024

Tashkent - Uzbekistan

28th Tashkent International Healthcare Exhibition

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59A, Mustakillik Ave.,
Tashkent, 100000, Uzbekistan.
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Email: post@ite-uzbekistan.uz
Website: www.ite-uzbekistan.uz

Event Director
Ms Juliya Evstifeeva
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Email: tihe@iteca.uz

Venue: Uzexpocentre NEC
Tashkent
Uzbekistan

www.tihe.uz/en

APRIL

18-20/04/2024

Beautycare Expo 2024

Hanoi - Vietnam

Vietnam International Exhibition on Products and Technology of Beautycare Expo

Organised by: ADPEX JOINT STOCK COMPANY
Head Office: Rm. G3, FOSCO Building, No. 6 Phung Khac Khoan, Dist. 1
Ho Chi Minh City
Vietnam
Phone: +84 28 3823 9052
Fax: +84 28 3823 9053
Email: beautycare@beautycarexpo.com
or adpex@adpex.vn
Web: www.beautycarexpo.com or www.adpex.vn

Venue: I.C.E. (Hanoi International Exhibition Center)
91 Tran Hung Dao Str.
Hanoi
Vietnam

www.beautycarexpo.com/en/

APRIL

25-27/04/2024

ExpoMED Eurasia 2024

Istanbul - Turkey

International Istanbul Medical Analysis, Diagnosis, Treatment, Rehabilitation, Laboratory Product, Device, System, Technology, Equipment and Hospital Fair

Organizer: Reed Tuyap Head Office
E5 Karayolu Uzeri,
Gurpinar Kavsagi
Buyukcekmece
Istanbul - Turkey
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Email: sales@tuyap.com.tr, marketing@tuyap.com.tr
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Venue: Tüyap Fair and Congress Center
Istanbul
Turkey

www.expointurkey.org/expomed-eurasia-2024

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Measles Cases in Europe and Central Asia Skyrocket by 3000 Per Cent This Year Compared to Last

UNICEF warns that the increase in measles cases is attributable to a backsliding of immunisation coverage among children across the region.

GENEVA, 14 December 2023 – There have been 30,601 confirmed cases of measles in Europe and Central Asia between January and 5 December 2023, up from 909 throughout 2022, marking a 3266 per cent increase in cases of the vaccine-preventable disease, warns UNICEF.

Data also point to a more recent worsening trend as the rate of measles cases in Europe and Central Asia nearly doubled between October and November 2023. Cases in the region are expected to rise further due to gaps in immunity.

"There is no clearer sign of a breakdown in immunisation coverage than an increase in cases of measles. Such a dramatic increase requires urgent attention and public health measures to protect children from this dangerous and deadly disease," said Regina De Dominicis, UNICEF Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia.

Measles has a devastating effect on children's health, with sometimes fatal consequences. It causes long-lasting weakening of children's immune systems, making them more vulnerable to other infectious diseases including pneumonia.

The highest rate of measles cases is reported in Kazakhstan with 69 cases per 100,000 population, amounting to 13,254 cases, according to latest available data. Kyrgyzstan has the second highest rate of measles cases with 58 cases per 100,000 population, amounting to 3,811 cases. Romania, which announced last week a national measles outbreak, has a reported rate of 9.6 cases per 100,000, amount to 1,855 cases.

The increase in measles cases is attributable to a decrease in immunisation coverage across the region. A decrease in vaccine demand – in part fuelled by misinformation and mistrust which worsened during and following the COVID-19 pandemic, disruption to health services and weak primary health care systems are some of the contributing factors.

Latest data show that an estimated 931,000 children in Europe and Central Asia missed out entirely or partially on routine immunization from 2019 to 2021. In Europe and Central Asia, the immunisation rate of the first dose against measles dropped from 96 per cent in 2019 to 93 per cent in 2022. As these children pass the age when vaccines are routinely given, it requires a dedicated effort to ensure that they catch up with their vaccinations.

To reach every child, UNICEF is urging countries across the region to:

- Urgently identify and reach all children, especially those who have missed vaccinations.
- Strengthen demand for vaccines, including by building confidence.
- Prioritise funding to immunization services and primary health care.
- Build resilient health systems through investment in health workers, innovation and local manufacturing.

UNICEF works with governments, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, WHO and other partners to generate evidence, identify zero-dose children and missed communities, understand the root causes of backsliding from demand and supply perspectives and assess context-specific causes and risk factors. UNICEF uses this evidence to develop and implement strategies to support governments in Europe and Central Asia to immunise every child.

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