

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002905/26
to the Commission
Kathleen Funchion (The Left)
(14 July 2026)**

Subject: European Care Deal

The Commission has announced that a European Care Deal will be published in 2027, but a genuine timeline is absent. A European Care Deal has the potential to improve care for vulnerable members of our communities across the EU. Particularly in Ireland, where the health service is faced with what is essentially an annual trolley crisis. Such crises are often exacerbated by a lack of public care services outside of a hospital setting.

1. Can the Commission outline its timeline for the European Care Deal?
2. Will the Commission's Care Deal seek to address capacity challenges such as the annual trolley crisis in Ireland?

Submitted: 14.7.2026

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Mînzatu on behalf of the European Commission
(3 September 2026)**

The European Care Deal will lay out a comprehensive set of measures to address the challenges of the care sector, including working conditions and career development opportunities to address workforce shortages and improving the affordability, accessibility and quality of care and it will be announced in 2027.

It will build on a collective effort between the EU, Member States, regions and local authorities, social partners, care providers and civil society to strengthen care systems across the life course.

Ireland has a hospital centric model. Therefore, the Council Recommendation on the economic, social, employment, structural and budgetary policies of Ireland⁽¹⁾ urged for continued efforts in implementing cost effectiveness measures in the health system while accelerating the transition towards universal and accessible primary healthcare.

Reforms and investments in the health system are expected to improve the integration of health and long-term care, thereby reducing capacity pressures across both sectors.

Ireland's National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) includes a suite of e-Health projects aimed at supporting the digitalisation of the Irish healthcare system (Investment 2.6 of the RRP)⁽²⁾.

Community Health Networks in Ireland integrate hospital and community care for timely patient support. With support from the Recovery and Resilience Facility, 96 Community Health Networks for primary care were created in recent years. These reforms and investments can help improve the capacity, resilience and responsiveness of care systems.

Preparatory work on the European Care Deal initiative is underway and will benefit of stakeholders input including as regards its scope.

⁽¹⁾ <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-10943-2026-REV-2/en/pdf>.

⁽²⁾ https://reforms-investments.ec.europa.eu/recovery-and-resilience-facility-1/country-pages/irelands-recovery-and-resilience-plan_en.