



**Fondazione RiES**  
Fondazione per la Ricerca Economica e Sociale ETS

# **New proportions** synergies for health in a transformed world



Health  
Wellbeing  
and Resilience  
Observatory



3rd Report - 2024

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



# ABOUT US

## THE FOUNDATION

The Foundation for Economic and Social Research ETS is dedicated exclusively to scientific and cultural objectives in the legal, economic-social, and historical-political fields. Specifically, in pursuit of these objectives, the Foundation supports, promotes, designs, and implements research programs on business, markets, labor, the environment, the economic-social context, and nonprofit institutions. It organizes conferences, seminars, symposia, and debates; supports scientific and professional training for researchers through scholarships and research grants; publishes and promotes editorial initiatives; and contributes to the design of training and professional development courses.

To achieve its mission, the Foundation collaborates with Luiss Guido Carli University.

## THE OBSERVATORY

The Health Wellbeing and Resilience Observatory operates within the framework of the strategic goals outlined in the **2030 UN Agenda** and conducts research and analysis in a multi-year perspective, encompassing all components of the national health system and European and national programs and funds (such as the National Recovery and Resilience Plan). The Observatory works with a view to **bringing 'health' closer to the person**.

The Observatory formulates policy recommendations and promotes specific initiatives concerning health and wellbeing. This work is aimed at institutions, institutional and social operators and civil society. Guided by the principles of **stewardship** and **partnership**, the Observatory views this synergy as a pivotal instrument of fostering **preparedness** and **resilience** for the Country, which is of fundamental importance in this historical phase.

The aim of the research and analysis activities is the identification and investigation of social, economic, cultural, health, and demographic phenomena related to health. The ultimate purpose of this work is the production of an **annual Report, publicly available**, which contains an integrated interpretation of the phenomena detected, which are described through the calculation of a synthetic index: the Health Nearness Index.



# THE ANNUAL REPORT

## NEW PROPORTIONS: SYNERGIES FOR HEALTH IN A TRANSFORMED WORLD

The third Report of the Observatory, titled "*New Proportions: Synergies for Health in a Transformed World*", centers around the update of the Health Nearness Index for the year 2024.

The Report analyzes the evolving challenges in ensuring population health within a **profoundly transformed global and national context**, emphasizing the need to implement effective synergies among health system stakeholders to address ongoing transitions and shape the future structure of our health system.

The Report highlights how the impact of the pandemic has brought a structural transformation of the system, making the return to previous conditions impossible and necessitating a rethinking of roles, functions, and strategies.

A holistic approach becomes essential, integrating the **One Health perspective** with the social determinants of health. The climate crisis, demographic shifts, and geopolitical tensions call for a revision of healthcare and welfare policies to ensure long-term equity and sustainability.

Among the key challenges, the Report underscores the need for investments in infrastructure and **supply chains** to secure water supply, food security, and energy resilience. The **shortage of healthcare professionals** requires a redefinition of the skills of caregivers and social-healthcare assistants. **Geopolitical changes** impact the economy and healthcare policies, affecting resource availability. **Global warming and extreme weather events** exacerbate health conditions, making mitigation strategies essential. Innovation and governance play a crucial role, with digital health yet to fully realize its potential and the need for stronger national governance.

As with previous editions, the Report serves as a **guiding tool** for identifying priorities to ensure "Health Nearness" for citizens.

**Health represents a necessary cost** that must be addressed through the development of the economic and productive system, while **well-being is an essential investment** for the growth of both individuals and communities.

Addressing the "new proportions" requires **synergy among all health system stakeholders**, adopting a vision based on interconnections and shared responsibility.



# THE RESEARCH

## HOW TO MEASURE HEALTH NEARNESS

The **Health Nearness Index** is the operational tool enabling the measurement and presentation of results in both quantitative and graphical form regarding Health Nearness. The performance of the Index is positively correlated with Health Nearness: increasing values of the Index or its components correspond to an increase in Health Nearness.

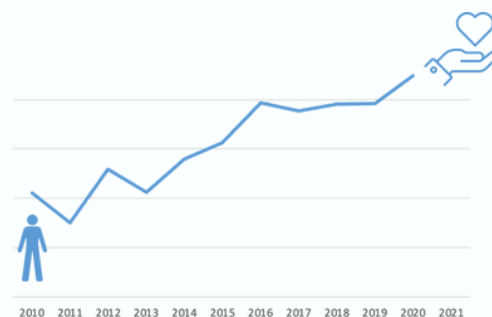
The construction of the composite Index is based on the adoption of a complex and **innovative theoretical framework**, that considers the interdependence of multiple multidimensional and multilevel phenomena and determinants influencing citizens' health and well-being.

The Index consists of 72 indicators, all publicly accessible and characterized by the availability of time series spanning at least a decade. These indicators are organized into Contexts and Domains, supplemented by an additional 9 indicators used to describe phenomena of significant relevance but not included in the Index.

## THE 3 CONTEXTS

The Index is structured into Contexts that relate to three dimensions of investigation:

1. **Individual and social relations**, characterized as the set of areas of interest and intervention that are closest to the people themselves, as they belong to the sphere of the human being and his social relationships.
2. **Organizational system**, representing a more external level compared to the individual sphere, and referring to the organizational structure and various actors within the healthcare system.
3. **Living places and environment**, which is the most external of all dimensions, and pertains to living environments changes and phenomena, and environmental and weather-climatic factors.



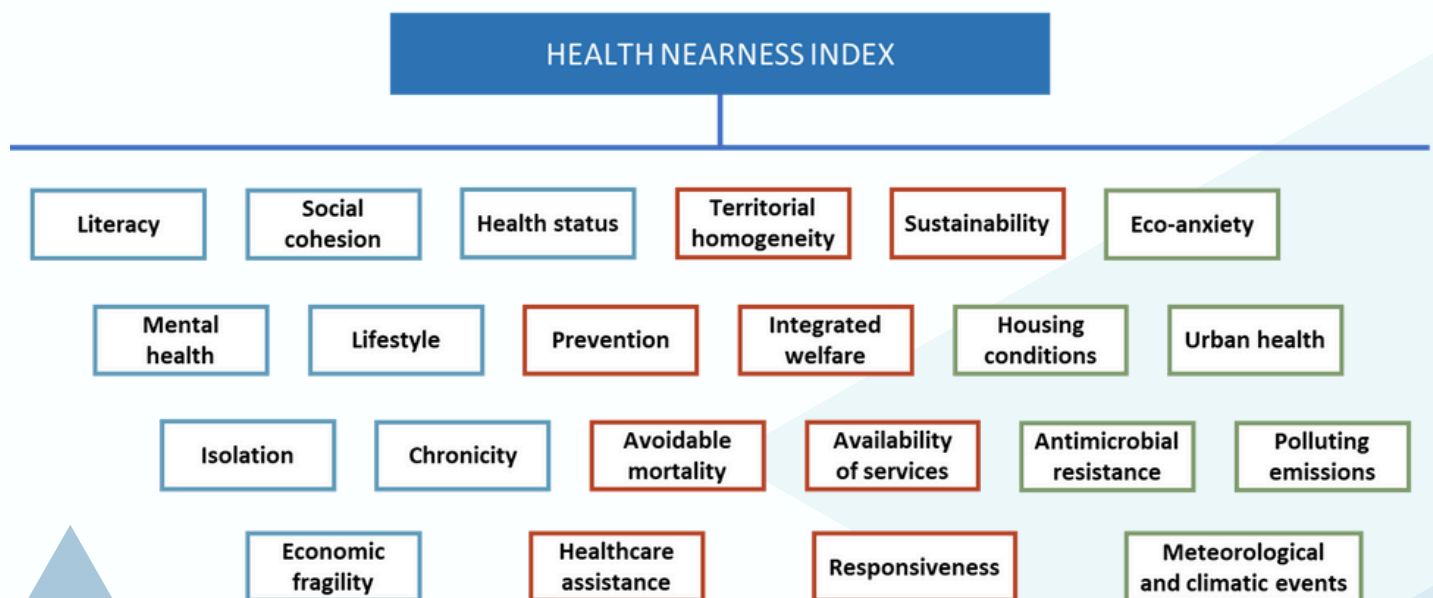


# THE RESEARCH

## THE 22 DOMAINS

Each Context is divided into several Domains, each of which contains some Indicators. With a total of **22 Domains**, each one investigates and analyses a specific phenomenon, which is visualized through graphs. Collectively, the Domains provide a comprehensive description of the health system and the diverse factors influencing Health Nearness.

1. The **Context "Individual and social relations"** consists of: Health status; Literacy; Lifestyle; Mental Health; Chronicity; Isolation; Social cohesion; Economic fragility.
2. The **Context "Organizational system"** consists of: Prevention; Healthcare; (Avoidable) Preventable mortality; Availability of services; Responsiveness; Social and corporate welfare; Sustainability; Territorial cohesion.
3. The **Context "Living places and environment"** is composed of: Housing; Urban Health; Pollutant Emissions; Antibiotic Resistance; Weather Events; Ecoanxiety.





# THE RESEARCH

## THE INDEX TAXONOMY AND NRRP

The Index Taxonomy includes 22 Domains, with each phenomenon examined being strongly interconnected with the dimensions outlined in the Italian National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP), particularly aligned with **Missions 5, 6 and 2**, as well as the last Mission 7 within the newly established **ReactPowerEU framework**.



## ANALYSIS

The performance of the Health Nearness Index and its Contexts is determined by the performance of the Domains belonging to each Contexts.

**It is possible to examine the specific trends within each Domain**, which helps in elucidating on specific phenomena that contribute to increase or decrease of the Health Nearness and **facilitates the development of pertinent policy proposals**. The trends within each Context consequently mirror those within their respective Domains. This approach allows to highlight contrasting trends, thereby **focusing on priority issues**.

## POLICY ACTIONS

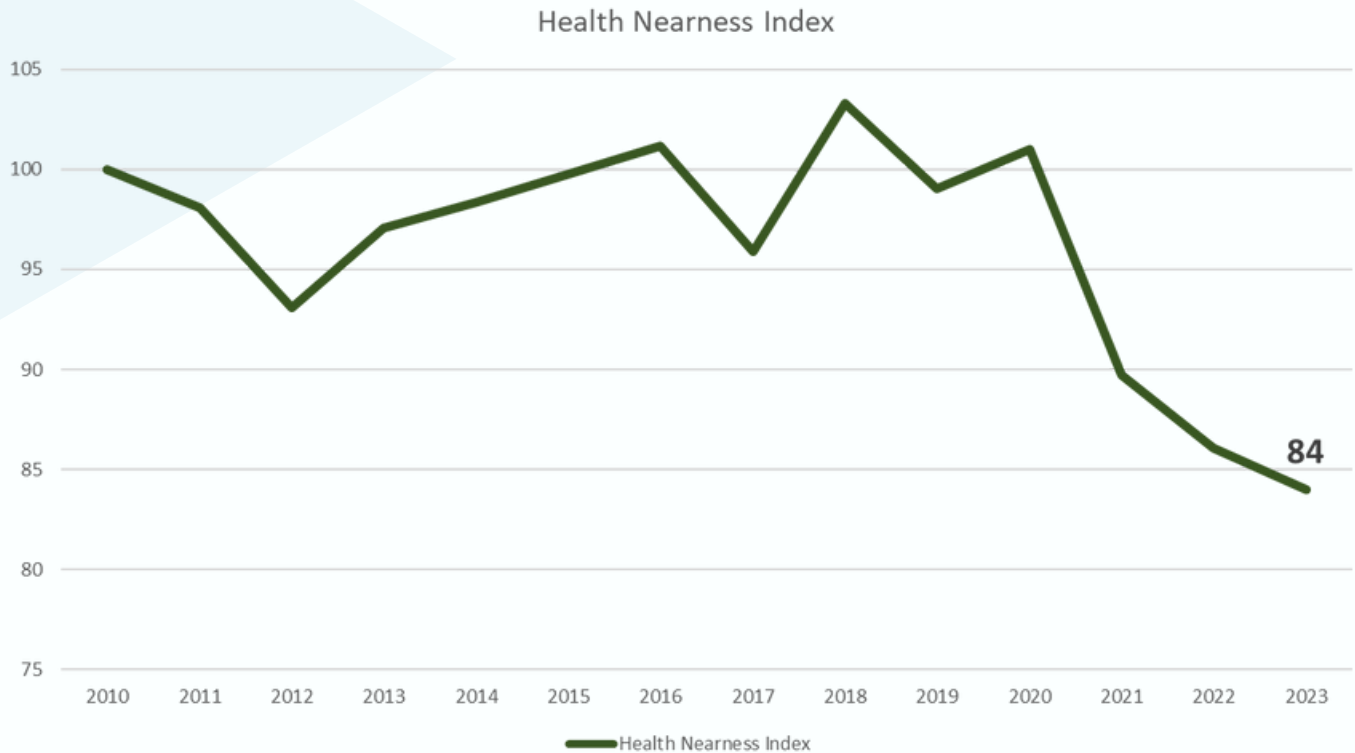
The Contexts and Domains' analysis, through the observation of variations in their values over the considered timeframe, allows us to focus on phenomena that represent critical aspects to address, as well as those that may represent elements to enhance in order to bring health closer to people.



# THE 2024 RESULTS

## HEALTH NEARNESS INDEX 2024

The Health Nearness Index is a **composite measure** designated to assess the enabling conditions to access “health”, and, conversely, to identify gaps and delays that distance the availability and the accessibility of “health” from people.



The Health Nearness Index does not follow a linear trend but is subject to significant fluctuations over the years, **reflecting the dynamics and various shifts within the heterogeneous social, economic, and environmental contexts.**

This fully aligns with the inherent logic of the One Health approach, in which every internal or external factor—whether within the individual sphere or beyond personal control—has significant repercussions on people's lives, ultimately influencing health accessibility either positively or negatively.

Measured since 2010 (with this year serving as the baseline, set at 100 points), the Health Nearness Index initially experienced a sharp decline during the sovereign debt crisis (2011–2012), followed by a steady and continuous upward trend until 2016.

However, **the last three years have shown a marked decline, bringing the index back to a historical low.**

In this regard, the **impact of the pandemic** is evident at all levels, as its effects did not dissipate in 2021 but instead further exacerbated the overall situation, highlighting the **potential for a structural transformation.** The recovery remains sluggish, and the resilience of the system is yet to be fully assessed.

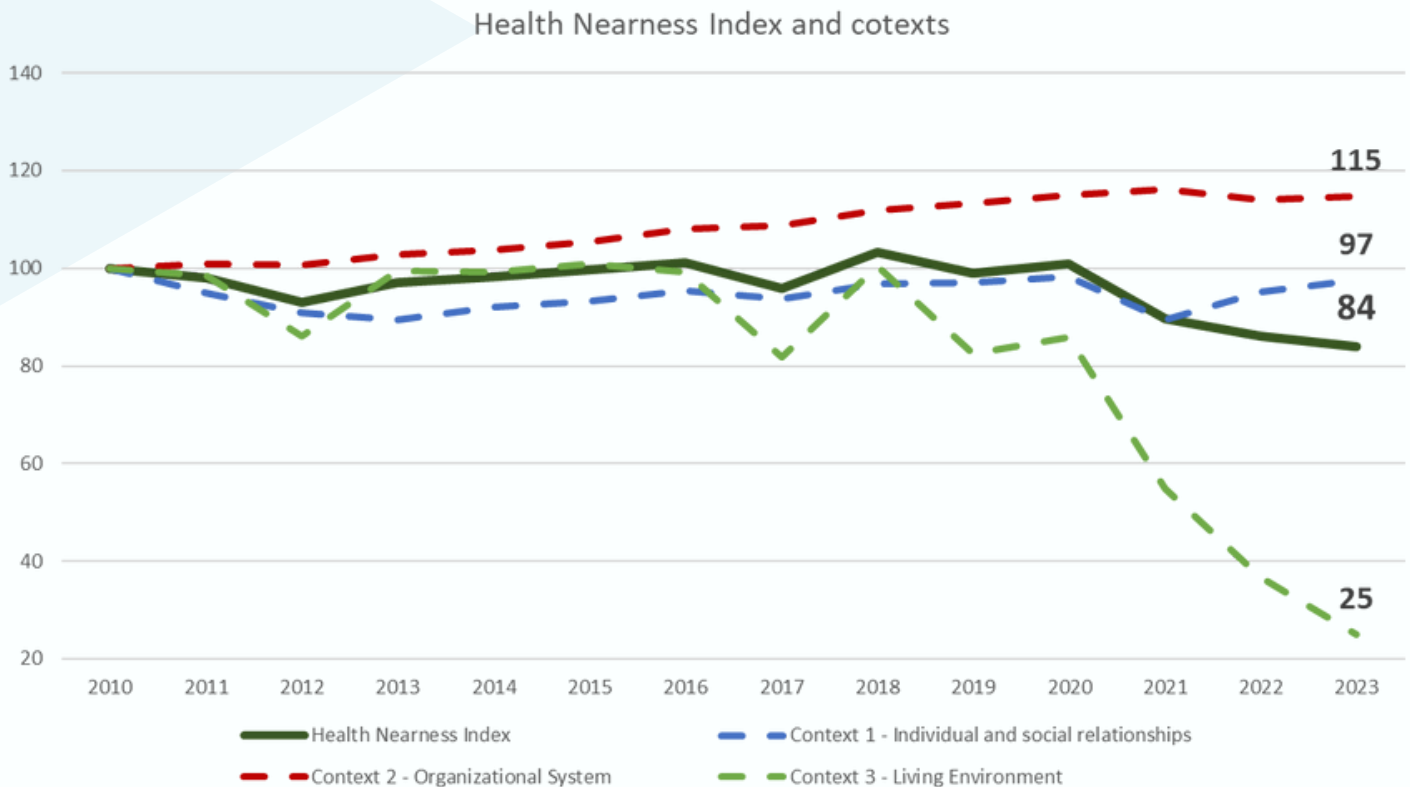


# THE 2024 RESULTS

## CONTEXT ANALYSIS

**The Index trend represents a summary of the three Contexts.**

A more detailed analysis highlights which contexts have contributed to increasing Health Nearness and conversely which have shown critical dynamics.



- The “Individual and Social Relationships” context, after being affected by the restrictions imposed during the pandemic, has resumed growth over the past year. However, it has not yet bridged the gap with the pre-pandemic level of 2019, with significant criticalities persisting in the domains of Isolation, Social Cohesion, and Economic Vulnerability.
- The “Organizational System” context has reversed its historically upward trend, reaching a general plateau, yet showing negative developments and critical issues in the domains of Sustainability and Territorial Homogeneity.
- The “Living Environment” context has continued to decline, significantly impacted by the intensifying effects of climate change. Particular concern arises from trends in the domains of Extreme Weather Events and Antibiotic Resistance.

**For a comprehensive analysis of the trends in individual Contexts and Domains, please refer to the full version of the 2024 Report, available at:**

[www.osservatoriosalute.it/rapporto-2024](http://www.osservatoriosalute.it/rapporto-2024)





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