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Health sovereignty

with Dr Yannick Saintigny and Renaud Laffourcade

Talking *points*

Knowledge

1. What is health sovereignty?
2. What is the Technological Sovereignty Index (TSI) that Yannick and Renaud have developed?

Comprehension

3. Why is health sovereignty important for protecting public health?
4. How did the COVID-19 pandemic reveal the risks of relying on international supply chains for essential medical products?
5. How can defence research benefit civilian healthcare?

Application

6. Imagine your country faces a shortage of essential medicines during a health emergency. What steps could the government take to reduce dependence on international suppliers, and what challenges might they face?
7. How could the TSI help European policymakers decide which medical technologies need more investment?

Analysis

8. Why might a country have the freedom to make healthcare decisions but still struggle to put them into practice?
9. How could international collaboration benefit healthcare and defence innovation while also creating challenges for sovereignty?

Evaluation

10. To what extent do you think Europe should prioritise producing its own medical and defence technologies, even if importing them may be cheaper? Why?

Activity

Yannick and Renaud's research highlights the importance of health sovereignty and Europe's ability to access essential medical products during a crisis. However, strengthening European production may require significant investment, and international supply chains can offer economic benefits.

Imagine you are advising the European Commission on how to strengthen Europe's health sovereignty.

Research the current challenges facing Europe's healthcare supply chains:

- Which essential medicines or medical products does Europe depend on other countries to supply?
- What problems could arise if these supplies were disrupted?
- How are governments and organisations trying to strengthen European medical production?
- Can you find examples of countries investing in healthcare technologies or preparing for future health emergencies?

Develop your recommendations:

- Which medical products or technologies should Europe prioritise producing locally, and why?
- How could the Technological Sovereignty Index help policymakers identify weaknesses?
- How could defence research and dual-use innovation benefit civilian healthcare?
- What challenges might Europe face, including costs, limited resources and reliance on international expertise?

Present your recommendations as a short policy proposal, explaining how your ideas could improve Europe's preparedness for future health emergencies.

Reflection questions:

1. Should countries prioritise self-sufficiency or international cooperation in healthcare? Why?
2. How can research tools like the TSI help governments make better-informed decisions?
3. How important will health sovereignty be in protecting public health in the future?

More *resources*

Visit Yannick and Renaud's Futurum webpage to read their article in French: **futurumcareers.com/how-can-europe-strengthen-its-health-sovereignty**