

VareseNews

Lombardy allocates an extra €500 million for Health

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An extra €500 million for the “health” sector, without increasing the tax burden for the people
This is what **President Roberto Maroni** announced as he explained the budget for the next three years. “And this is despite the €280 million cut by the Government in Rome,” he said. “Thanks to the system of earmarking carefully implemented by Councillor Garavaglia in past years, and with savings in running the council organisation.”

It is the health care system where the greatest efforts are going to be made. “The main sectors that the money of the special plan will be invested in will be new machinery and technological innovation, hospital construction, reducing waiting lists, hiring new staff, and a further reduction in medical service charges,” Maroni declared.

COMMITMENTS HONoured ALSO IN OTHER SECTORS – Commitments have also been honoured in **transport and infrastructure**, where **€410 million** will continue to be invested. The same is true for the **security and territory sectors** (€60 million, in 2017) and the **environment sector**. Funds have also been guaranteed for **economic development and tourism** (€40 million, in 2017) and for **support to companies and research**. Investments will also continue in the **sectors of sport and culture** (€10 and €15 million, respectively), and a lot is being staked on **vocational training and active employment policies** (€155 million in 2017).

THE EXTRA €500 MILLION FOR THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM– “With the €500 million allocated for the special health care plan,” the **councillor for welfare, Giulio Gallera** explained, “we will **accomplish our health care reform**. We will complete the local hospital centres and the local social health units, which are the group of out-patient clinics where chronic patients can be taken to carry out all medical examinations and tests in the same place, without going from one place to another. Some of the money allocated will be spent on purchasing new innovative machinery, which will be necessary to guarantee checks that are increasingly precise, and will inevitably contribute to reducing the waiting lists. The special plan also includes further reductions in medical service charges, the hiring of new staff, investments in hospital construction and in telemedicine, which will allow us to make best use of community and mountain health units.”

Below are **the main points of Lombardy Region’s 2017-2019 budget**, which was approved this morning by the Regional Council.

NO TAX INCREASES – STRATEGIC EXPENDITURE GUARANTEED

Despite the cuts of €280 million by central government, the Region will not increase the tax burden and will guarantee the “strategic expenditure” for policies considered essential, in a sector that still feels the effects of the economic crisis, to support people in difficulty in a number of ways.

HEALTH CARE – This is the main item, also in this 2017-2019 budget, to which, on the one hand, **€18.3 million is guaranteed for each of the three years** and, on the other, a **Special Investment Plan of €500 million** is destined; the money will be spent on:

- new machinery and technological innovation;
- building hospitals;
- reducing waiting lists;
- hiring staff;
- a further reduction in medical service charges.

MAIN POLICIES FUNDED – The main policies funded in 2017 and overall during the period 2017-2019, include: the social health system; transport and infrastructure; education, training and employment; territory and security; economic development and tourism; sport and culture.

SOCIAL HEALTH SYSTEM – In 2017 alone, almost €2 billion will be invested in the social health system, as follows:

- Social health fund: €1713 million in 2017 (€5139 million over the three years);
- Social regional fund: €54 million in 2017 (€142 million over the three years);
- Support to people in vulnerable situations – independence income (for example, free kindergarten): €31.5 million in 2017 (€94.5 over the three years);
- Support to families and people for housing: €25 million in 2017 (€59.5 million over the three years);
- Support to families in hardship, and family-work conciliation: €3.5 million in 2017 (€9.1 million over the three years).

TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE – For 2017, the budget of Lombardy Region allocates €410 million, as follows:

- investments in the railway network, price integration, renewal of automobile rolling stock, work on the regional road network, inland navigation and underground lines: €26.8 million in 2017 (around €99 million over the three years);
- regional resources to integrate the fund underestimated by the government for rail service contracts (€170.4 million in 2017 – around €500 million over the three years) and contributions for the local public transport service (€189 million in 2017 – around €619 million over the three years);

- issuing of cheap tickets: €21.7 million in 2017 (€53 million over the three years).

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT – In 2017, €155 million will be allocated to the sectors of educational, training and employment, as follows:

- school vouchers: €24 million in 2017 (€68 million over the three years);
- 3-year training and education courses: €102 million in 2017 (€275 million over the three years);
- the right to university education: €21 million in 2017 (€63 million over the three years);
- primary schools: €8 million in 2017 (€24 million over the three years).

TERRITORY AND SECURITY – The allocation for territory and security in 2017 amounts to more than €60 million, as follows:

- water projects: €8 million in 2017 (€14.2 million over the three years);
- reclaiming contaminated sites: €2.9 million in 2017 (€8.7 million over the three years);
- parks, protected areas and forestation: €10.7 million in 2017 (€36.5 million over the three years);
- specialities of Sondrio Province: €10.8 million in 2017 (€32.4 million over the three years);
- environmental programmes, waste: €5 million in 2017 (€14.3 million over the three years);
- current and capital interventions on public waterways: €7 million in 2017 (€21 million over the three years);
- urban security and ICT system projects: €7.6 million in 2017;
- emergency assistance and interventions following disasters: €2 million in 2017;
- civil protection system: €7.2 million in 2017 (€23 over the three years).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM – In 2017 alone, more than €40 million is being allocated to:

- the 2014-2020 rural development plan: €22 million in 2017 (€83 million over the three years);
- aid to farms, to make the access to credit easier: €2 million in 2017;
- interventions and investments for upgrading the tourist system: €3.8 million in 2017 (€11.8 million over the three years);
- competition of commercial businesses: €1 million in 2017 (€3 million over the three years);
- incentives and support to companies: €8.3 million in 2017 (€20.3 million over the three years);
- research initiatives and programmes: €4 million in 2017 (€11.4 million over the three years).

SPORT AND CULTURE – In 2017, €25 million will be allocated to these sectors, as follows:

- cultural interventions (for cinemas, show business, museums, libraries, etc.): €15 million in 2017 (€35.5 million over the three years);
- sports: €7 million in current account in 2017 (€15 million over the three years) and €2.7 million in capital in 2017, to renovate and to enlarge sports facilities.

di Translated by Elli & Reseli (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)