

Civil Society Guide for a Healthy Europe

For Members of the European Parliament

2019-2024



HEALTH

DEVELOPMENT

AGRICULTURE & FOOD

ACCESS TO MEDICINES

EMPLOYMENT

TRADE

GLOBAL HEALTH

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

ENVIRONMENT

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Were you just elected as a Member of the European Parliament? Congratulations!

In this position, you will have the unique opportunity to take a strategic leadership role in putting people's physical and mental health and their well-being at the center of EU policy-making. By doing so, you will restore confidence in the European project at a crucial time of unprecedented change in political and public life. **In the last legislature, health and social justice issues significantly fell down the EU political agenda.** This resulted in missed opportunities to decrease health inequalities, to increase the years people spend in good health, and to reduce societal costs related to ill-health. 27 civil society organisations (CSOs) developed this guide on how you can improve people's health in Europe and beyond by ensuring the implementation of a Health in All Policies approach.

What can MEPs do to ensure health in all policies?

As the direct representation of European citizens in the EU, the European Parliament ensures that the voices of citizens are heard and their concerns are addressed. What follows are actions MEPs can take to shape EU policy so that it reflects people's priorities on health and well-being.

Make health a strategic priority in the next EU 2019-2024 strategic agenda and legislature by:

- Ensuring **health is prioritised across different portfolios and policy areas** through the European Parliament hearings for Commissioners designate
- **Advancing health equity and the right to health** on the agenda of the European Parliament and coordinating with relevant Parliamentary committees to avoid harmful health impacts of other policies
- Asking for the development of a comprehensive **Global Health Strategy** with a long-term vision of the EU's role in achieving universal and equitable access to health

Support strong governance to ensure the implementation of health in all policies by:

- Supporting the creation of the role of **Health Commissioner and a strong Health Directorate General (DG)** that would be ambitiously staffed and financed, with a dedicated structure for inter-sectoral coordination to implement "Health in All Policies"
- Encouraging the development of a **civil society engagement mechanism**, such as a CSO body attached to the proposed Health DG Cabinet
- Adopting clear internal procedures to **avoid the risk of conflicts of interest** in public health policy-making

Introduce a health impact assessment mechanism to evaluate the potential impact of new policies and proposals on health as well as relevant monitoring mechanisms

Ensure a high level of health protection and promotion in all EU policies (examples below)

HEALTH

Adopt effective EU-level policies to create enabling environments for physical and mental health for the prevention of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and obesity

GLOBAL HEALTH

Support the development of effective prevention strategies and treatments for neglected tropical diseases (NTDs)

SEXUAL & REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Ensure the EU lives up to its commitments on the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights for everyone

RESEARCH & INNOVATION (R&I)

Support the development of accessible, affordable, effective and needs-driven biomedical R&I

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Adopt a lifecourse approach when designing social policies to ensure no one is left behind

DEVELOPMENT

Hold the European Commission accountable for its commitment to spend 20% of its official development aid (ODA) on Human Development (including health) and to support Universal Health Coverage worldwide

EMPLOYMENT

Combat discrimination in employment and promote fair working conditions in the labour market with full social protection for all

CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT

Amplify environmental protection as a key lever for health equity and disease prevention and health promotion policies that reduce daily exposure to harmful air, transport and chemical pollution

AGRICULTURE & FOOD SYSTEMS

Align agricultural and other policies affecting food systems with health priorities in the framework of an integrated EU food policy

TRANSPORT

Facilitate the transition to zero- and low-emission mobility with increased physical activity, investments in public transport and sound urban design systems

ENERGY

Promote clean energy policies, making human health a central priority while ending the use and promotion of fossil fuels

TRADE

Repeal Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Plus (TRIPS-plus) and investment protection provisions from trade agreements

PUBLIC SERVICES

Exclude commercial, for-profit operators from service provision for health and well-being, applying strict rules on quality and accessibility to ensure the right to health for all

For more detailed expertise and recommendations on what you can do to ensure that the EU improves human health and well-being across policy areas, you can contact the civil society organisations and individuals on the pages overleaf. They will be able to provide you with advice and evidence or connect you with experts, including at national level.

Area of expertise	Organisation	Contact details
Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and obesity prevention	European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)	Nikolai Pushkarev nikolai@epha.org +32 2 233 38 76
	European Chronic Disease Alliance (ECDA)	Bénédicte Faure info@alliancechronicdiseases.org +32 2 213 13 42
	EuroHealthNet	Dorota Sienkiewicz d.sienkiewicz@eurohealthnet.eu +32 2 235 03 21
	Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)	David Ritchie David@europeancancerleagues.org +32 2 256 2000
Communicable diseases and vaccinations	EuroHealthNet	Alison Maassen a.maassen@eurohealthnet.eu +32 2 235 03 26
	Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi)	Michelle Childs & Spring Gombe mchilds@dndi.org • sgombe@dndi.org +41 22 907 78 88
	Global Health Advocates (GHA)	Marine Ejuryan mejuryan@ghadvocates.org +32 2 669 42 56
Mental Health	Mental Health Europe (MHE)	Marcin Rodzinka marcin.rodzinka@mhe-sme.org +32 2 227 27 08
Alcohol	European Alcohol Policy Alliance (Eurocare)	Aleksandra Kaczmarek aleksandra.kaczmarek@eurocare.org +32 2 732 67 82
	Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)	David Ritchie David@europeancancerleagues.org +32 2 256 2000
Food, food environments, healthy & sustainable diets	European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)	Nikolai Pushkarev nikolai@epha.org +32 2 233 38 76
	European Heart Network (EHN)	Marleen Kestens mkestens@ehnheart.org +32 2 502 15 41
	Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)	Yannick Vicaire yannick@env-health.org
	EuroHealthNet	Dorota Sienkiewicz d.sienkiewicz@eurohealthnet.eu +32 2 235 03 21
	Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)	David Ritchie David@europeancancerleagues.org
Physical activity	EuroHealthNet	Maria Romeo-Velilla m.romeo-velilla@eurohealthnet.eu +32 2 235 03 29

Area of expertise	Organisation	Contact details
Tobacco	Smoke Free Partnership (SFP)	Anca Toma anca.toma@smokefreepartnership.eu +32 2 430 73 58
	European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention (ENSP)	Cornel Radu-Loghin cornel.radu@ensp.org +32 2 230 65 15
	Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)	Luk Joossens luk@europeancancerleagues.org
	European Respiratory Society (ERS)	Brian Ward brian.ward@ersnet.org +32 2 238 53 60
Antimicrobial resistance	European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)	Ann Marie Borg ann-marie@epha.org +32 2 233 3877
	European Alliance for Responsible R&D and Affordable Medicines	Viviana Galli viviana@medicinesalliance.eu +32 2 23 33 881
	WaterAid	Sophie Aujean sophieaujean@wateraid.org +32-470-17-24-46
	Health Action International (HA)	Jaume Vidal jaume@haiweb.org +31 628318884
	Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi)	Michelle Childs & Spring Gombe mchilds@dndi.org • sgombe@dndi.org +41 22 907 78 88
	ReAct - Action on Antibiotic Resistance	Andreas Sandgren andreas.sandgren@medsci.uu.se +46 730 485586
Digital health and (digital) health literacy	European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)	Sascha Marschang sascha@epha.org +32 2 233 38 83
	EuroHealthNet	Andrew Barnfield a.barnfield@eurohealthnet.eu +32 2 235 03 29
	European Health Management Association (EHMA)	Michele Calabro Michele.Calabro@ehma.org
Public and not-for-profit health services	European Network against the Privatization and Commercialization of Health and Social Protection	Sarah Melsens sarah.melsens@gezondheid-solidariteit.be +32 499 42 44 48
Health inequalities and vulnerable groups	EuroHealthNet	Dorota Sienkiewicz d.sienkiewicz@eurohealthnet.eu +32 2 235 03 21
Health Systems reforms and financing for health, EU funds for health	EuroHealthNet	Dorota Sienkiewicz d.sienkiewicz@eurohealthnet.eu +32 2 235 03 21

Area of expertise	Organisation	Contact details
Patient safety, quality of medicines, Regulatory approvals/European Medicines Agency, Health Technology Assessment	European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)	Yannis Natsis yannis@epha.org +32 2 233 38 86
	European Alliance for Responsible R&D and Affordable Medicines	Viviana Galli viviana@medicinesalliance.eu +32 2 23 33 881
	Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)	Anna Prokupkova Anna@europeanoncancerleagues.org +32 473 408 903
Intellectual Property (IP) rights: Patents and IP-related incentives	Médecins sans Frontières Access Campaign (MSF)	Dimitri Eynikel dimitri.eynikel@msf.org +32 2 474 75 24
	European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)	Yannis Natsis yannis@epha.org +32 2 233 38 86
	European Alliance for Responsible R&D and Affordable Medicines	Viviana Galli viviana@medicinesalliance.eu +32 2 23 33 881
	Aidsfonds	Arben Fetai afetai@aidsfonds.nl +32 2 235 09 11
	Health Action International (HAI)	Jaume Vidal jaume@haiweb.org +31 0628 318 884
Affordability – Prices, pricing and reimbursement of pharmaceuticals	European Alliance for Responsible R&D and Affordable Medicines	Viviana Galli viviana@medicinesalliance.eu +32 2 23 33 881
	European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)	Yannis Natsis yannis@epha.org +32 2 233 38 86
	Médecins sans Frontières Access Campaign (MSF)	Dimitri Eynikel dimitri.eynikel@msf.org +32 2 474 75 24
	Health Action International (HAI)	Jaume Vidal jaume@haiweb.org + 31 0628 318 884
	Prescrire	Rita Kessler rkessler@prescrire.org +32 495 214 293
	Aidsfonds	Arben Fetai afetai@aidsfonds.nl +32 2 235 09 11
	Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)	Anna Prokupkova Anna@europeanoncancerleagues.org +32 473 408 903
Shortages of medicines	France Assos Santé	Charlotte Roffiaen europe@france-assos-sante.org +39 3929510998

Area of expertise	Organisation	Contact details
Competition	Dutch Pharmaceutical Accountability Foundation	Wilbert Bannenberg wilbert.bannenberg@gmail.com
Global policy on access to medicines: WHO, WTO, WIPO, UN, OECD, G7, G20, etc.	Médecins sans Frontières Access Campaign (MSF)	Dimitri Eynikel dimitri.eynikel@msf.org +32 2 474 75 24
	Health Action International (HAI)	Jaume Vidal jaume@haiweb.org + 31 0628 318 884
	European Alliance for Responsible R&D and Affordable Medicines	Viviana Galli viviana@medicinesalliance.eu +32 2 23 33 881
Public funding (Global/EU/national) – Biomedical R&D and Innovation	European Alliance for Responsible R&D and Affordable Medicines	Viviana Galli viviana@medicinesalliance.eu +32 2 23 33 881
	Global Health Advocates (GHA)	Jill McArdle jmcardle@ghadvocates.org +32 2 669 42 56
	Health Action International (HAI)	Jaume Vidal jaume@haiweb.org +31 0628 318 884
	Médecins sans Frontières Access Campaign (MSF)	Dimitri Eynikel dimitri.eynikel@msf.org +32 2 474 75 24
	Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW)	Lisa Goerlitz & Agustin Martin lisa.goerlitz@dsw.org agustin.martin@dsw.org +32 2 504 90 60
	EuroHealthNet	Maria Romeo-Velilla m.romeo-velilla@eurohealthnet.eu +32 2 235 03 29
	Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi)	Michelle Childs & Spring Gombe mchilds@dndi.org • sgombe@dndi.org +41 22 907 78 88

Area of expertise	Organisation	Contact details
Global health	Save the Children International	Alva Finn alva.finn@savethechildren.org +32 2 2500906
	WaterAid (on the role of water, sanitation and hygiene)	Sophie Aujean sophieaujean@wateraid.org +32 470 17 24 46
	Aidsfonds (on health inequities, SRHR, community-led responses, UHC)	Kasia Lemanska klemanska@aidsfonds.nl +32 2 235 09 12
	Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW) (on poverty-related and neglected diseases)	Lisa Goerlitz & Agustin Martin lisa.goerlitz@dsw.org agustin.martin@dsw.org +32 2 504 90 60
	Médecins sans Frontières Access Campaign (MSF)	Dimitri Eynikel dimitri.eynikel@msf.org +32 2 474 75 24
	Health Action International (HAI)	Jaume Vidal jaume@haiweb.org +31 0628 318 884
	Global Health Advocates (GHA)	Chantelle Boduel cboduel@ghadvocates.org +32 2 669 42 56
Sexual and Reproductive Health	Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW)	Gian Marco Grindatto & Steffie Neyens gianmarco.grindatto@dsw.org +32 2 504 9064 steffie.neyens@dsw.org +32 2 504 90 65
	Aidsfonds	Kasia Lemanska klemanska@aidsfonds.nl +32 2 235 09 12
Development policy	Save the Children International	Alva Finn alva.finn@savethechildren.org +32 2 2500906
	Aidsfonds	Kasia Lemanska klemanska@aidsfonds.nl +32 2 235 09 12
	Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (DSW)	Gian Marco Grindatto & Steffie Neyens gianmarco.grindatto@dsw.org +32 2 504 9064 steffie.neyens@dsw.org +32 2 504 90 65
	WaterAid	Sophie Aujean sophieaujean@wateraid.org +32 470 17 24 46
	Global Health Advocates (GHA)	Chantelle Boduel cboduel@ghadvocates.org +32 2 669 42 56

	Area of expertise	Organisation	Contact details
EMPLOYMENT	Working conditions and mental health at work, the right to work for people with disabilities and mental health problems	Mental Health Europe (MHE)	Laura Marchetti laura.marchetti@mhe-sme.org +32 2 227 27 08
	Working standards and social protection of health workers	European Network against the Privatization and Commercialization of Health and Social Protection	Sarah Melsens sarah.melsens@gezondheid-solidariteit.be +32 499 42 44 48
	Working with cancer and chronic conditions	Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)	Anna Prokupkova Anna@europeanccancerleagues.org +32 473 408 903
	Health and safety in the future of work, digital transformation of work	EuroHealthNet	Dorota Sienkiewicz d.sienkiewicz@eurohealthnet.eu +32 2 235 03 21
SOCIAL AFFAIRS	Social inclusion, deinstitutionalisation, European Semester and the European Pillar of Social Rights	Mental Health Europe (MHE)	Laura Marchetti laura.marchetti@mhe-sme.org +32 2 227 27 08
		European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)	Sascha Marschang sascha@epha.org +32 2 233 38 83
	Social Inclusion, fighting poverty and inequalities, European Semester and the European Pillar of Social Rights	EuroHealthNet	Dorota Sienkiewicz d.sienkiewicz@eurohealthnet.eu +32 2 235 03 21
AGRICULTURE & FOOD	Agriculture & food systems	European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)	Nikolai Pushkarev nikolai@epha.org +32 2 233 38 76
		International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPES-Food)	Francesco Ajena francesco.ajena@ipes-food.org +32 484 46 13 14
		Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)	Yannick Vicaire yannick@env-health.org +32 2 234 36 43
		EuroHealthNet	Ingrid Stegeman i.stegeman@eurohealthnet.eu +32 2 235 03 27
	Food safety	Safe Food Advocacy Europe (SAFE)	Floriana Cimmarusti floriana.cimmarusti@safefoodadvocacy.eu +322.8931058
Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)		Sophie Perroud sophie@env-health.org +32 2 234 36 43	

Area of expertise	Organisation	Contact details	
Trade policy	European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)	Zoltán Massay-Kosubek zoltan@epha.org +32 2 233 38 72	TRADE
	Médecins sans Frontières Access Campaign (MSF)	Dimitri Eynikel dimitri.eynikel@msf.org +32 2 474 75 24	
	Health Action International (HAI)	Jaume Vidal jaume@haiweb.org +31 0628318884	
Air, chemicals, pesticides, climate, energy, mobility, sustainability	Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)	Sophie Perroud sophie@env-health.org +32 2 234 36 43	ENVIRONMENT
	EuroHealthNet	Ingrid Stegeman i.stegeman@eurohealthnet.eu +32 2 235 03 27	
Transport and air pollution	European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)	Zoltán Massay-Kosubek zoltan@epha.org +32 2 233 38 72	
	European Respiratory Society (ERS)	Brian Ward brian.ward@ersnet.org +32 2 238 53 60	

What is good health and why health in all policies?

Good health is not just the absence of disease, but a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being. Health is universally recognised as a basic human right and a key precondition for sustainable development and inclusive and equitable societies.

The pursuit of well-being is one of the EU's core aims. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) requires the EU to ensure that health is protected in all its policies. Health is also prominently featured in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in 2016 the EU committed to help Member States to reach SDG 3 targets which aim to ensure good health for all at all ages.

Moreover, the EU plays an important role as a top aid donor and a global health actor as the TFEU also states that the EU and Member States shall foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the sphere of public health.

Europeans want the EU to do more for health, and the Eurobarometer reflects this. It is the duty of the EU and its Member States to realise this right without discrimination and ensure a high level of human health protection in all EU policies.

Many of the determinants of health and health inequities have social, environmental, economic and commercial origins that extend beyond the direct influence of the health sector and health policies. This is why a Health in All Policies approach is critical: the health impacts of all policies and decisions on which the Parliament will take action must be taken into account.

Please note the organisations listed as contacts are not all authors of this briefing

Briefing published by
Global Health Advocates
Contact: **Marine Ejuryan**
mejuryan@ghadvocates.org
+32 2 669 42 56
Design: **James Adams**

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