

## JOINT LETTER

To:

Members of the European Parliament

Cc:

MEP Prof. Véronique Trillet-Lenoir, Rapporteur, Special Committee on Beating Cancer (BECA)

MEP Dr Peter Liese, MEP Nicolas Gonzalez Casares, MEP Michèle Rivasi, MEP Joëlle Mélin, MEP

Pietro Fiocchi, MEP Giorgos Georgiou, Shadow Rapporteurs

Brussels, 4 February 2022

**Subject: Please protect the strength of BECA's cross party consensus on cancer prevention during the plenary vote on the BECA report**

Dear Members of the European Parliament,

Today, on the occasion of the World Cancer Day, the undersigned organisations would like to:

- express again their **continued support to the report developed by the European Parliament's Special Committee on Beating Cancer (BECA)**; and
- call on you to **adopt the report during the plenary vote of February with no weakening of its recommendations on cancer prevention**. It is of long-term importance that the report maintain its level of ambition and strong language, in particular when it comes to the main, well-known and preventable risk factors of cancer and other major chronic diseases.

Every year in Europe, millions of deaths and lost years of "healthy" life are attributable to alcohol consumption, tobacco use, poor nutrition, lack of physical activity and air pollution, responsible for cancer and other major chronic diseases. **There is no safe level of alcohol consumption<sup>1</sup>, exposure to tobacco<sup>2</sup>, nor to poor air quality<sup>3</sup>**. It is our shared duty to put in place all measures to ensure that our current and future generations are protected from the dramatic impact of these modifiable risk factors, which present a considerable health and economic challenge; and underlie health inequalities.

One of the key learnings of the COVID-19 pandemic is that it is high time to efficiently promote and protect public health; and **put Europeans' health and wellbeing first and above commercial interests**.

Health is a fundamental right embedded in the EU treaties, specifically in article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and a collective responsibility within the European Union. It is the backbone of strong and sustainable economies and societies.

During the next plenary session, we therefore **count on you to adopt the BECA's report on "Strengthening Europe in the fight against cancer" without compromising its content**. The promise of the Europe's Beating Cancer Plan to reduce suffering caused by cancer and other chronic diseases - including cancer co-morbidities and complications - must not be compromised.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> Burton R., Sheron N. No level of alcohol consumption improves health. The Lancet. Volume 392, issue 10152, P987-988; 2018.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organisation. Factsheet. Tobacco. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/tobacco>

<sup>3</sup> WHO global air quality guidelines. Particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10), ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide. 2021.

Yours sincerely,

Tunde Koltai, Board Director, Association of European Coeliac Societies (AECS)  
Dr. Wendy Yared, Director, Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)  
Florence Berteletti, Secretary General, European Alcohol Policy Alliance (Eurocare)  
Prof. Em. Raymond Vanholder, Acting Chairman, European Chronic Disease Alliance (ECDA)  
Peggy Maguire, Director General, European Institute of Women's Health (EIWH)  
Dr Milka Sokolović, Director General, European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)  
Dineke Zeegers Paget, Executive Director, European Public Health Association (EUPHA)  
Caroline Costongs, Director, EuroHealthNet  
Anca Toma, Director, Smoke Free Partnership  
Floriana Cimmarusti, Secretary General, Safe Food Advocacy Europe (SAFE)  
Pricivel Carrera, Scientific Coordinator, Digital Cancer Prevention  
Dr Nigel Carter, Chief Executive, Oral Health Foundation

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**Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)** – ECL is a non-profit pan-European umbrella organisation that provides a unique platform to national and regional cancer leagues to achieve a cancer-free Europe. Active since 1980 and located in Brussels, ECL currently has 30 members from 25 countries in the European Region, covering 20 EU member states. ECL provides a voice and forum for cancer leagues to collaborate and share knowledge, primarily in the areas of cancer prevention, access to medicines and patient support, and creates opportunities to advocate for these issues at the EU level and beyond. [www.cancer.eu](http://www.cancer.eu)



European Alcohol Policy Alliance

**European Alcohol Policy Alliance (Eurocare)** – Eurocare is an alliance of non-governmental and public health organisations across Europe advocating for the prevention and reduction of alcohol-related harm. The mission of Eurocare is to promote policies to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harm. The message, in regard to alcohol consumption, is “less is better”. [www.eurocare.org](http://www.eurocare.org)



United to reverse the rise in chronic disease



**European Chronic Disease Alliance (ECDA)** – The European Chronic Disease Alliance (ECDA) is a Brussels-based coalition of 12 European health organizations representing major chronic diseases and sharing the same interests in combating preventable chronic diseases through European policies that impact health. Together, we represent over millions of patients and over 200,000 health professionals. ECDA plays a leading role in the prevention and reduction of chronic diseases by providing policy recommendations based on contemporary evidence. [www.alliancechronicdiseases.org](http://www.alliancechronicdiseases.org)



Eurohealth

**European Institute of Women's Health (EIWH)** – EIWH is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) that promotes gender equity in public health, research and social policies across Europe. Our main objective is to promote equitable, gender sensitive approaches in health policy, research, treatment and care for the benefit of all citizens. [www.eurohealth.ie](http://www.eurohealth.ie)



**European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)** - EPHA is a leading European civil society alliance in Brussels, made up of public health NGOs, patient groups, health professionals and disease groups, we work to improve health and strengthen the voice of public health in Europe. Our mission is to bring together the public health community to provide thought leadership and facilitate change; to build public health capacity to deliver equitable solutions to European public health challenges, to improve health and reduce health inequalities. Our vision is of a Europe with universal good health and well-being, where all have access to a sustainable and high quality health system: a Europe whose policies and practices contribute to health, both within and beyond its borders. Since its formal establishment in 1993, EPHA has built a solid network of over 70 members dedicated to ensuring better health for all. [www.ephapro.org](http://www.ephapro.org)



**European Public Health Association (EUPHA)** – EUPHA is a umbrella organisation for public health associations and institutes in Europe. Our vision is of improved health and well-being and narrowing health inequalities for all Europeans. Our mission is to facilitate and activate a strong voice of the public health network by enhancing visibility of the evidence and by strengthening the capacity of public health professionals. [www.eupha.org](http://www.eupha.org)



**EuroHealthNet** – EuroHealthNet is a not-for-profit partnership of organisations, institutes, and authorities working on public health, disease prevention, promoting health and wellbeing, and reducing inequalities. It aims to tackle health inequalities within and between European States through action on the social determinants of health.



**Safe Food Advocacy Europe (SAFE)** – SAFE is a Brussels-based independent organization aiming to ensure that consumer's health and concerns remain at the core of the EU's food legislation. SAFE strives to ensure safer food standards for consumers by monitoring the EU food legislation process and cooperating with EU stakeholders to draft comprehensive food regulations. SAFE notably supports the development of policies and awareness-raising actions which jointly address health, environment, food safety and sustainability, all-the-while being involved in several EU-funded projects aimed at reducing the environmental impact of the food sector, increasing sustainability and promoting healthier food environments for consumers.



**Smoke Free Partnership (SFP)** – The Smoke Free Partnership is a strategic, independent and flexible partnership which represents the shared interest of our partners in promoting tobacco control policies and research at EU and Member State level in collaboration with other EU health organisations and EU tobacco control networks. SFP's vision is a world free from the death and suffering caused by tobacco consumption. [www.smokefreepartnership.eu](http://www.smokefreepartnership.eu)



**Association of European Coeliac Societies (AOECS)** – AOECS is an independent, non-profit organisation representing people affected by coeliac disease or dermatitis herpetiformis (DH) across Europe and beyond. We are involved in several international initiatives to raise awareness of coeliac disease and encourage vital research into its diagnosis and management.



**Oral Health Foundation** – The Oral Health Foundation is an independent charity (not for profit) dedicated to improving oral health and wellbeing around the world. Our ambition is to help create a healthier population by reducing the prevalence of oral diseases across all communities. Our work aims to raise awareness and improve education about how to achieve good oral health.