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Editorial

Access to affordable medicines remains a crucial (and incomplete) ambition in the EU

Our June newsletter is dedicated to the window of opportunity offered by the [ongoing revision of the EU's pharmaceutical legislation](#) to improve access to effective and affordable medicines for everyone. Contrary to what the pharmaceutical industry claims, high prices of medicines (especially for cancer treatment) and the lack of obligations for the industry to place their products in the market are driving unequal access to medicines across the Union. As explained by the European Consumer Association (BEUC), **both issues can be addressed through the revision of the EU pharmaceutical legislation.**

For fair price – one that reflects the value of medicines while providing reasonable compensation for the costs of bringing new medicines into the market – to become a reality, the EU needs to take a few bold steps. To begin with, EU pharmaceutical policies need to **shine light into the black box of research and development (R&D) costs**, as argued by the European Cancer Leagues (ECL). The Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe recognised the need for transparency, and the EU pharmaceutical legislation should now operationalise this.

When it comes to affordability, the EU pharmaceutical legislation can (and should) address it by ensuring that pharmaceutical **incentives are proportionate and linked to actual access to products across Europe**. To get there, the legislator can start by reversing the burden of proof: extended exclusivities granted to industry in areas of low commercial return, should only be possible if there is an evidence-based justification on a lack of return on investment.

The EU pharmaceutical legislation should also provide concrete solutions to the **increasing problem of shortages of medicines**. As argued by France Assos Santé, *'a bold patient-centred set of rules on the prevention and management of medicine shortages'* should be included in the revised pharmaceutical legislation. This patient-centric approach requires a balanced dialogue with all parties and there is much that we can learn from the shortcomings of the Structured Dialogue on the security of medicine supply.

EPHA's longstanding advocacy in the access to medicines area has contributed to crucial steps, such as the inclusion of access to affordable medicines in the mandate of the current Health Commissioner, as a key pillar of the pharmaceutical strategy for Europe and as an ambition of the revision of the EU pharmaceutical legislation. Along with our members and other partners, we have also [produced recommendations](#) to address shortages of medicines at EU level. It is due time to move from ambitions into concrete actions.

The impacts of the EU pharmaceutical legislation will be felt for decades. And as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and emerging monkeypox outbreak have reminded us, no country is an island. The EU pharmaceutical legislation is likely to [spill over into other parts of the world](#) via free trade agreements. By placing the public interest and access to affordable medicines at the forefront, the EU will once again set up the best standards for the rest of the world.



Dr Rosa Castro

Policy Manager for Healthcare Delivery, EPHA

This Month's Top Stories



By Health Action International

After the storm: Lessons, teachings and possibilities of the TRIPS waivers proposal

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By The European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)

On monkeypox vaccines, solidarity, and self-interest

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By France Assos Santé

Why patients cannot access to medicines they need in Europe

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By Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)

Cancer patients can't wait any longer for action on access to affordable medicines

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By The European Consumer Organisation (BEUC)

Fairer access to medicines: what needs to change in the revised EU pharma legislation

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By EPHA

Restoring the balance in EU health policies: lessons learned from the Structured Dialogue on the security of medicines supply

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EPHA Updates



Monkeypox: viruses do not discriminate, people do

Infectious diseases, epidemic preparedness, and lessons learned previous health threats.

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Why Europe needs a health-oriented food policy | Position paper

Policy recommendations for an ambitious and equitable EU Farm to Fork Strategy.

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Strengthening nutrition and physical activity policies across Europe

Launch of a set of toolkits that provide policy options concerning childhood obesity.

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EPHA joins call to the European Commission for a EU Civil Society Strategy

Open letter signed by over 300 organisations.

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EPHA Events

Healthier Together: The Commissions launches €156 million initiative on non-communicable diseases in Europe

In the presence of Stella Kyriakides, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, the EC presented the initiative covering five key areas, and a guidance and implementation toolkit. EPHA President – Alice Chapman-Hatchett – took part in the panel discussion.

22 June 2022

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News From Members



Eurochild

Ukraine crisis reveals the weaknesses of national child protection systems in the EU

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EFFO

The NOC is an annual event, hosted in rotation by the Nordic national osteopathic associations.

24 – 25 September

[REGISTER HERE](#)



Health Action International

Call for Action: High Time to Prioritise Health in the EU Artificial Intelligence Act

[WATCH HERE](#)

European Cancer Organisation

The European Cancer Summit brings together leading oncology experts, experienced patient advocates, key opinion leaders, policy makers and politicians.

16-17 November 2022, Brussels (hybrid)

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IDF Europe

WEBINAR:

Delivering Value through Innovation in Diabetes Care Delivery

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FEANTSA

WEBINAR:

Asylum Seekers in Europe: how to improve living conditions whilst waiting for international protection?

[WATCH HERE](#)

Safe Food Advocacy Europe

MEP calls on the European Commission to reinforce health education in schools to tackle obesity

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Other News



EPHA (AISBL) is the European Platform bringing together public health organisations representing health professionals, patients groups, health promotion and disease specific NGOs, academic groupings and other health associations. The European Public Health Alliance has received funding under an operating grant from the European Union's EU4Health Programme (2021-2027). The content of this email represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility; it cannot be considered to reflect the views of the European Commission and/or the European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA) or any other body of the European Union. The European Commission and the Agency do not accept any responsibility for use that may be made of the information it contains. Transparency Register Number: [18941013532-08](#)

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