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Editorial

Wind Of Change: Clean Air at the Centre of EU's Attention

Since the World Health Organisation's Air Quality Guidelines' publication in September 2021, the environmental and health communities have been active to explain why these guidelines are so important. They not only identify the levels of air quality necessary to protect public health worldwide, but also focus on the classical pollutants: particulate matter, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and carbon monoxide. Any action taken to reduce these pollutants has a direct impact on other pollutants and therefore leads to additional benefits for health.

With the current EU air quality standards allowing for levels of pollution that are known to be unsafe for human health, EPHA welcomes the upcoming revision of the Ambient Air Quality Directives. The European Commission legislative proposal is due to be published on 26 October 2022, and EPHA and its [members](#) urge the full alignment of EU's air quality standards with the 2021 [WHO Global Air Quality Guidelines](#) by 2030.

To highlight a further nuance in the air quality conversation, not all gases produced as a result of human activity have a direct impact on health, but instead they accelerate climate change, which is a great threat to human health globally. [Fluorinated gases \(F-gases\)](#) represent such an example, with an upcoming EU legislation discussion on this topic, and particular relevance for health, as F-gases are also used for asthma inhalers.

Slowly but surely, the European institutions have identified air pollution as a key topic for our environment, our climate, and our health. EPHA is glad that after years of advocacy, the European Parliament voted on 8 June 2022 to stop the sale of new diesel and petrol road vehicles by 2035 and, on 28 June, EU governments confirmed the 2035 end date. Similarly, thanks to [the work of a coalition of NGOs](#), including EPHA and the European Respiratory Society, the release of the European Commission's proposal on the upcoming Euro 7/VII vehicle pollution emission standards is anticipated for 12 October. The publication of the proposal has been expected since 2021, and the Commission was considering further delaying it to 30 November. This legislation will be crucial for improving air quality in our cities and every delayed month amounts to an extra million more polluting cars on our roads.

A new study commissioned by EPHA [demonstrates that we indeed need to move faster](#) and accelerate the transition to electric vehicles, hand in hand with promoting active mobility, such as walking and cycling and public transport. At the same time, the implementation at national and local levels of existing legislation remains crucial, as proven by [recent developments in Bulgaria](#).

Heated debates are to be expected on all these legislative proposals, especially with some Member States that are more reluctant to act on air pollution. Thanks to our members' support, EPHA will play a major role in these debates. Our new Healthy Environment Cluster is the place where all the members of EPHA that want to be active in clean air can participate in the discussion and help improve air quality in Europe.



Matteo Barisione
Junior Policy Manager for
Global Public Health



Cristina Pricop
Junior Policy Manager for
Global Public Health

This Month's Top Stories



By EPHA

When open letters work: publication of the EU proposal on pollution emission standards for vehicles

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By European Respiratory Society

Fluorinated gases regulation and climate warming

[READ MORE](#)



By Association of Doctors for the Environment (Italy)

The WHO Air Quality Guidelines should be used to set air pollution reduction targets in our cities

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By Bulgarian Association for Patients' Defense

Health costs from air pollution: Bulgarian civil society to close a polluting thermal power plant

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Upcoming Events



EUROPEAN HEALTH FORUM GASTEIN

Since its foundation in 1998 the European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) has developed into a key policy platform, bringing together politicians, senior decision-makers, community members, and experts in the field of health and beyond. Join the hybrid conference to help chart a bold course for realising a true European Health Union!

26-29 September | Bad Hofgastein, Austria & Online

[REGISTER HERE](#)

A moonshot for a true European Health Union?

What does this vision of a moonshot for a Health Union involve? Is a European Health Union the bold new approach needed to help restore the equity, solidarity and trust that of late has been repeatedly called into question?

EPHA Director-General - Milka Sokolovic will join the panel discussion.

29 September 2022 | 13:15-14:45

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



Take a deep breath on indoor air quality: What role for the EU?

What do we know about the quality of the air Europeans breathe every day when indoors, and how does it compare to WHO guidelines? What are some significant sources of air pollution indoors? Should policy focus on regulating these sources or setting emission standards?

Organised by EPHA & the European Climate Foundation

29 September 2022 | 09:00-10:30

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EPHA Updates



The Oslo Declaration – a time for united action on Alcohol in the EU

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Tackling immunoglobulins shortages through a multi-stakeholder approach

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News From Members



AGE Platform Europe

Bay of Biscay, Bay of Care - Developing the Long-Term Care Empowerment Model

Launch and discussion of report.

8 September, 14:30 - 16:30 | Brussels

[REGISTER HERE](#)



Eurochild

Introducing the EU Care Strategy

Webinar held in response to the launch of the European Commission's new EU Care Strategy on 7 of September.

9 September, 11:00 - 13:00 CEST

[REGISTER HERE](#)

European Society for Organ Transplantation

A level playing field for transplant patients: Spurring action across Europe

Building upon the EU Action Plan on Organ Donation and Transplantation (2009-2015), this session will explore what needs to be done, and by whom, to facilitate equity, efficiency, quality, and safety for all patients so nobody is left behind. An EU-wide data framework, patient literacy, national policies, and clinical practice guidelines can help ensure a successful transplantation journey.

27 September 2022 | 17:00-18:30

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

Association of European Cancer Leagues

Webinar: Championing the Paediatric Regulation in the future revision of EU pharmaceutical legislation

Gold September is a universally recognised occasion to raise awareness of childhood cancer and 'shine the light' on young patients and their specific needs.

29 September 2022 | 12:00 – 13:30 CEST

[REGISTER HERE](#)

European Cancer Organisation

Roundtable event on cancer care needs in the community setting, seeking to provide a spotlight to a range of policy needs inherent to meeting this goal. This Roundtable invites policy makers, healthcare professionals, patient advocates and all interested stakeholders to join us for the debate.

04 October 2022 | 14:30 - 17:00 CEST

[REGISTER HERE](#)





Join leading oncology experts and discuss key issues in reducing the burden of cancer, saving, and improving the lives of patients and the public.

16-17 November 2022
Brussels (hybrid)

[REGISTER HERE](#)



European AIDS Treatment Group

Civil society organisations criticise the new call for drug policy grant proposals that focuses on law enforcement and excludes harm reduction.

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Malta Health Network

Patients and their relatives should not bear the burden of suffering from industrial actions and disputes.

[READ MORE](#)



Alcohol Action Ireland

The slow creep of 'alibi' marketing: is alcohol brand promotion circumventing the law?

[READ MORE](#)

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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