



## Editorial

### **Uniting Civil Society: A Collaborative Fight Against Commercial Determinants of Health**

In the ongoing battle against non-communicable diseases (NCDs), confronting the commercial determinants that adversely affect public health remains a significant challenge. These determinants are largely fuelled by industries that profit from products linked to NCDs and their main risk factors, including tobacco, alcohol, and unhealthy diets. Recognising the urgency of this issue, civil society organisations across the European Union, including EPHA, have intensified their advocacy efforts to mitigate these influences. This also includes substantial support from our dedicated members and allies, who have helped us refine our Working Plan for 2024 and set the Commercial Determinants of Health (CDoH) as a key priority for our policy and advocacy work.

#### **National Success Stories and Collective Efforts**

From Ireland's pioneering alcohol labelling laws, fostered by the invaluable work of Alcohol Action Ireland (AAI), to Slovenia's bold amendments in tobacco legislation, driven by the tireless efforts of the Lithuanian Tobacco and Alcohol Control Coalition (NTAKK), the fight against NCDs has seen remarkable victories at the national level. These successes have been made possible through the unwavering support and collaborative efforts of our members and allies, who are deeply rooted in their respective countries, advocating for public health, advocating for public health and supporting each other's work across countries for our common goal of improving public health in Europe from both EU and national perspectives.

For instance, Ireland's initiative, which mandates comprehensive health warnings on alcohol products by 2026, was propelled by strong civic engagement and support during the EU TRIS process, reflecting a broad consensus among the public and stakeholders. Similarly, the success in Slovenia was significantly bolstered by several national and international organisations, including EPHA and some of its members, who sent letters and demonstrated their support for this important initiative. More details will follow in this newsletter.

#### **Strategic Engagement and the European Perspective**

These national initiatives serve as potent examples of how localised actions can catalyse broader changes. These successes not only foster healthier environments within their respective countries but also set precedents that could potentially inspire similar legislative advancements across other nations and even lead to comprehensive European legislation.

Building on this grassroots momentum, EPHA, along with other international members and allies, is also tackling the issue from another angle by directly influencing policies at European institutions and international agencies. This includes our ongoing

collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO) on the upcoming report on commercial determinants of health, expected to be launched in June this year, as well as our engagement with the SANT sub-committee at the European Parliament, and the enhancement of its own-initiative (INI) [report on NCDs last year](#).

Additionally, our efforts have been significant in advocating against cuts to the health budget and being vocal and united against the impasse on several key files, such as the Sustainable Food Systems Framework (SFSF), the Food Information to Consumers (FIC), among others initiatives under the Farm to Fork strategy, as well as the long-awaited alcohol strategy. By advocating for a [blueprint directive aimed at protecting children from the marketing of unhealthy food products](#), written by Prof. Amandine Garde (University of Liverpool), EPHA is not just reacting to challenges but proactively shaping a healthier future for Europe's youngest citizens, promoting equity in health and shielding them from exploitative advertising.

### **A David vs. Goliath Battle for Systemic Change: Call to Unity**

As we look beyond individual campaigns, our focus shifts toward a systems-thinking approach that addresses the root causes of NCDs. This method promotes comprehensive policy changes aimed at tackling the broad social, economic, and environmental determinants of health. By moving the narrative from individual responsibility to systemic solutions, civil society is actively shaping a healthier future, rather than merely responding to crises.

In this classic David vs. Goliath battle, the unity of civil society organisations is more critical than ever. Together, we confront the giant (conflict of interest) to foster environments conducive to good health. The effectiveness of our efforts is amplified by the solidarity and collective resolve of our members across Europe, who are committed to putting public health ahead of commercial profits.

Our commitment to influencing legislative and policy frameworks that champion public health continues to be unwavering. Through persistent collaborative efforts and strategic advocacy, we are dismantling the barriers erected by commercial determinants of health. United, we are paving the way for a more equitable and healthier Europe for present and future generations.



**Alba Gill**

Policy Manager, EPHA



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Policy Manager, EPHA

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## **This Month's Top Stories**



Tailoring messages about healthy and sustainable eating to reach the most vulnerable

*By European Food Information Council (EUFIC)*

[READ MORE](#)



How Slovenia Managed to Ban Flavours in E-Cigarettes

*By Slovenian Coalition for Public Health, Environment and Tobacco Control*

[READ MORE](#)



The Open Food Conference under the Belgian Presidency

*By Sustainable Consumption and Green Economy, Government of Flanders & Nutrition and Health, Sciensano*

[READ MORE](#)



Advancing Health Equity and Sustainability: JACARDI's Journey to Reduce the Burden of Cardiovascular Diseases and Diabetes

*By Joint Action on CARdiovascular diseases and Diabetes (JACARDI)*

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EPHA's manifestos analysis: assessing the public health measures in the parties' manifestos

*By EPHA*

[READ MORE](#)



Why it's high time to put change on the menu

*By European Consumer Organisation (BEUC)*

[READ MORE](#)



Food deserts and swamps in Flanders - Belgium

*By Sciensano*

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## EPHA Updates



## Making Prepared Foods Healthier & More Sustainable

EU could slash 48 million tonnes of emissions and save €2.8 billion annually with healthier ready meals. The study unveils a path toward reducing diet-related diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, liver disease, and diabetes by aligning ready-made meals with health & sustainability guidelines.

Requiring large ready-made meal distributors in the EU to comply with health & sustainability standards would reduce the main diet-linked diseases, the cost of ingredients & the EU's greenhouse gas emissions by 1-2%!

[READ MORE](#)



## Appeal to EU Leaders to Prioritise A Fair and Inclusive Green Transition in the Next Political Mandate

Read this appeal to make a top political priority of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution given the devastating impacts and growing intensity and frequency of climate-related events for ecosystems, health, economies, social justice and cohesion.

[READ MORE](#)

## EU parties' manifestos: A critical analysis of health policy promises ahead of the 2024 EU Elections

The upcoming European elections will be decisive for the future of the European Union and its plans in facing and addressing the growing global challenges. EPHA carried out an analysis of political parties' manifestos to identify their plans and ambitions related to (public) health, especially in relation to the growing environmental challenges.

[READ MORE](#)

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## EPHA Events

## PRIORITISING HEALTH IN EUROPE'S MOBILITY PLANNING:

Transformative Pathways Beyond 2024

Thurs 30th May | 9:15 - 13:15 | COMET, Pl. Stéphanie 20



30 May 2024 | 9:15 - 1:15 CEST | Hybrid Event

Don't forget to sign up for our event exploring the crucial link between clean mobility policies and health outcomes. Join us to prioritise health in mobility planning for a sustainable, accessible, and healthy future for all. Register now!

[REGISTER HERE](#)

## ADVANCING PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY FOR CLEAN COOKING

Capacity Building Webinar

12 June 2024

10:30 - 12:00 CEST

ONLINE



12 June 2024 | 10:30 - 12:00 CEST | Online Event

We are excited to invite you to our upcoming capacity building activity on 12 June 2024.

This online event aims to catalyse change by bolstering the capacity of Clean Cooking for Public Health (CC4PH) community members to engage in effective advocacy around clean cooking, communicating the health impacts of gas cooking and poor indoor air quality to both policy makers and media outlets.

[REGISTER HERE](#)





Save the date: 26 & 27 June 2024 | 10:00 - 17:00 CEST | Hybrid Event

We are excited to announce an upcoming DisQo Stakeholder Network Conference. Co-organised by the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) and the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR), **this two-day event will take place on 26 and 27 June, 2024** and is the second in a series which started in November last year.

The event aims to foster meaningful dialogue and action towards advancing health equity for PAD communities. Through engaging discussions, collaborative sessions, and networking opportunities, we seek to develop concrete recommendations to feed into the EU Anti-racism Action Plan. Furthermore, we aim to advocate for institutional recognition of racism's impact on health, pushing for acknowledgment within institutional frameworks.

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## News From Members

### European Respiratory Society (ERS)

We are pleased to share with you a survey to national-level patient representatives on biosimilar medicines and information about them. We would like to hear what patient representatives think about existing [information materials](#) including the [statement on interchangeability of biosimilars](#), and whether there are any information gaps. Our goal is to improve how we explain biosimilar medicines to the public.

[SIGN THE SURVEY](#)

### Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL)



Join ECL's webinar to explore the evolving landscape of tobacco control, navigating through legislative challenges and industry-driven 'harm reduction' approaches. To mark World No Tobacco Day and close the European Week Against Cancer, ECL's Prevention and Early Detection (P&ED) Working Group will assess the advancements and discuss the challenges that lie ahead for Europe in the realm of regulation within the domain of tobacco control. By bringing together experts, policymakers, and stakeholders, E aim to foster a collaborative dialogue and shape the future trajectory of our collective efforts for effective tobacco control, ensuring the well-being of our communities and future generations.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



European Week Against Cancer (EWAC) is next week, each day focusing on a different aspect of the cancer control continuum. Every year the ECL organises this week, in collaboration with its member leagues and partners across Europe, during which, all public, private and non-profit organisations in the cancer community are encouraged to organise virtual events, promote relevant publications and projects.

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## Other News



## EU Parliament food systems scorecards

With 30 days until the European Parliament elections, EU citizens are weighing up their options. To help voters make informed decisions at the ballot box, participating organisations of the EU Food Policy Coalition (EU FPC) joined forces to shed light on the voting records of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) – and the political groups they belong to – over the last mandate (2019-2024).

[READ MORE](#)

## European Vegan Union

In Plant-based Politics: the 2024 EU Election Guide, the European Vegetarian Union has compiled the largest survey of its kind, collecting answers from over 50 political parties across Europe on where they stand on plant-based policy issues.

[READ MORE](#)



## Medics 4 Clean Air

### Voices on Healthcare Decarbonisation!

All five videos from the interview series with healthcare champions have been released. The videos are designed to inspire action, provide practical insights and resources into implementing sustainable practices at a local level and national level.

[WATCH THE VIDEOS](#)



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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