



**EU HEALTH
COALITION**

Recognise health & the life science sector as a central strategic pillar for Europe to ensure Europeans live healthier and more prosperous lives and the region regains its place at the forefront of innovation

Our Manifesto for a Healthier Europe





JOIN US in reminding European policymakers that keeping the health sector high on the political agenda is in the best interest of European citizens and economies, and of our planet!

WHY IS ACTING FOR HEALTH IMPORTANT NOW?

The time is now for health and the life science sector to be recognized as a strategic pillar for Europe, complementing and reinforcing the green and digital transitions.

On the heels of the most severe pandemic in decades, European healthcare systems are facing a perfect storm of ageing populations, growing prevalence of chronic diseases, significant health workforce shortages, and the unfolding energy, climate, cost of living, and geopolitical crises.¹

Take the devastating war waged against Ukraine. Millions of Ukrainians who fled into neighboring countries are in need of healthcare. At the

same time, assistance is also needed to support the Ukrainian healthcare system, severely disrupted by the war.

But we are also living in a new era of rapidly advancing science and breakthrough innovation that, from genomics to data analytics, is pushing the boundaries for better health and creating new opportunities to meet unmet health needs, including for underserved populations, and create better health for future generations.

At stake are Europeans' health and wellbeing and the continent's economic resilience, prosperity, strategic autonomy, and ability to stay at the forefront of science and research.

With the 2024 European Parliament elections, we can spotlight the need for a robust and integrated strategy for health policy at the European level, building on a "One Health" approach. We believe that this is becoming increasingly critical to our people, our prosperity, and our planet.



WHY HEALTH AND THE LIFE SCIENCES?

Health is not only important for the individual person; people's health and well-being are also drivers of economic prosperity.

Reduced mortality is calculated to have contributed

 **11%**
of economic growth

in low- and middle income countries in recent years

Avoidable health inequities across the majority of EU countries are estimated to lead to welfare losses of

 **€980 billion**
a year.²

Mental health problems costs EU countries



4% of GDP,
or around EUR 600 billion³

The public and private healthcare sectors are also themselves a major employer of high-skilled workers in the EU, while working to keep the entire society healthy and prosperous. On average in the EU, the health sector accounts for 5.3% of the economically active population.⁴

The research-based biopharmaceutical industry alone directly employs 840,000 people in Europe⁵ and another 800,000 people are employed in the MedTech sector.⁶

When the worst pandemic in decades hit Europe, the continent's footprint in health made a significant difference. It also highlighted the societal risks of underinvesting in health and health systems.

The COVID-19 crisis demonstrated that:

- health is fundamental to the well-being of individuals and families but also to our societies and economies;
- having a strong health research & innovation ecosystem in Europe means that our region can meet a health security crisis without being dependent on other regions in the world; and that
- meaningful public-private collaborations in Research & Development (R&D) and in the deployment of vaccination campaigns enable all stakeholders to respond together to major crises.

Ensuring that health and life sciences are given the right recognition at European level means ensuring that your constituents' voices are heard, and their most pressing concerns are acted upon.

European citizens⁷ identified health and the economy as top priorities and issues of concern, with health in particular a key issue at national level. And the two – health and the economy – are interdependent with healthy, productive populations powering economic growth and development.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE IN PRACTICE?

To deliver this vision, the EU Health Coalition proposes the following recommendations to EU policymakers. We believe these are practical and balanced, bold yet achievable.



Make European health systems truly integrated and people-centred.

European policies and instruments can be set up to support Member States, including at regional and local level, in putting people and patients at the centre of health systems. This means increasing patient involvement in decision-making at all levels, improving patient safety and implementing measures for patient-relevant outcomes of care and investing in health and digital health literacy.⁸



Invest in upskilling the European health workforce, with a strong focus on sustainable digital infrastructure and data. The European public and private health sector are driven by people, and they can only meet the challenges and opportunities of the future with the right skill set. Deploying digital tools and upskilling and reskilling the healthcare workforce, including through skill mixing, will make European health systems more resilient and enable the digital transformation of the health sector. The private life science industries also have a continuous need for a skilled local workforce, including in biotechnology, data, and regulatory sciences.



Reframe healthcare expenditure as an investment, not a cost.

Some necessary investments in health systems, from prevention to care, are hampered by current accounting rules which do not consider the long-term value in terms of health outcomes and future cost-savings.

The European System of Accounts should be reviewed to enable the classification of certain health expenditure as investments rather than operational costs.



Create the basis for Europe as a true research and innovation hub, including by:

- 1) robust funding through the MFF of fundamental research and early discovery into unmet health needs,
- 2) establishing the right European financial instruments to scale up capital for start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises, and making sure that scientific discoveries can be developed in Europe, and
- 3) ensuring a competitive and predictable environment for innovation and investment in Research & Development in Europe.



Create a health and life science office in the European Commission, reporting to a Vice President, to spearhead a coherent European strategy for this sector, building a bridge between relevant Commission services including DG SANTE, DG HERA, DG RTD, DG CNECT and DG GROW. Only by linking EU policies for public health, research and industrial policy can Europe deliver a coherent vision, strategy and policies for a vibrant end-to-end health research and care eco-system.

WHO ARE WE?

The EU Health Coalition is made of 47 partners from different sectors of civil society and from all over Europe dedicated to driving change for a healthier Europe.

We are patient organisations, EU research-oriented medical societies, industry organisations, healthcare providers, regional and local health authorities, foundations and other relevant stakeholders. We all share the vision of a Europe where health and care systems are centred on people, science and innovation.

Our work is founded on four pillars – advancing digital transformation, boosting research and innovation, accelerating access to innovation, and fostering health systems integration – with the aim of ensuring that health remains a political priority and to champion the changes required for future-proof and resilient health systems.

**TOGETHER, WE ARE SHAPING
THE FUTURE OF HEALTHCARE!**

References

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- ⁵ EFPIA, The Pharmaceutical Industry in Figures. Key Data 2022, available here: <https://www.efpia.eu/media/637143/the-pharmaceutical-industry-in-figures-2022.pdf>
- ⁶ The European Medical Technology Industry in figures 2022.
- ⁷ Standard Eurobarometer 95 – Spring 2021, available here: <https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2532>.
- ⁸ See also the Coalition's proposal for EU action in the EU4health program: <https://www.euhealthcoalition.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/ROADMAP-FOR-PEOPLE-AND-PATIENT-CENTERED-HEALTH-SYSTEMS.pdf>



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