



Brussels, 1 December 2022

“Although COVID is the most visible pandemic of our lifetime, it is neither the deadliest nor the most preventable. Cardiovascular disease has killed five times as many people. We have the public health tools to tackle it. The question is, can we muster the social and political will to use them?” -WHO Europe 2022.

On 17 November 2022, the European Alliance for Cardiovascular Health sent the message that strong social and political will is needed to build in cardiovascular health in all policies if the largest burden of disease in the EU and globally is to be reduced.

The Members of 17 Members of EACH however see that is still a long way to go.

We see it in gender policy where 41% of women wait more than 12 hours to seek help after experiencing chest pain despite being almost twice as likely to die from cardiovascular disease as every cancer combined.

We note its absence in employment policy where “cardio-hazardous” is a term that cannot be found in any health and safety policy despite the number of work-related deaths each year due to cardiovascular disease.

We experience it in agricultural policy where the EU taxpayer is set to fund tobacco farming to the tune of 100 million euro from 2023-2027.

Despite having emerged from a pandemic where cardiovascular disease was the key driver of COVID deaths, the impact of cardiovascular disease is being felt everywhere, except in policy.

The case for an EU Cardiovascular Health Plan can be justified on any number of policy grounds to promote and facilitate coordinated and appropriate actions, ranging from prevention and early-detection to treatment and rehabilitation, to ensure good and healthy quality of life for all people across the Member States. The European Alliance for Cardiovascular Health is calling for such an EU Cardiovascular Health Plan to be on the agenda for European Commission 2024 new mandate. But today and every day, EACH is calling for cardiovascular health to be a feature of all policies just as it is a feature in all of our lives.

We thank Members of the European Parliament Mr Brando Benifei, Mr Vlad-Marius Botoș, Mr Antonius Manders, Ms Radka Maxová, Mr Tomislav Sokol, and Mr Tomáš Zdechovský for recognising the importance of an EU Cardiovascular Health Plan, and we are especially grateful for your support of our call to make the European plan for Cardiovascular Health a concrete priority for the European Commission in 2024

We were honoured that you attended and grateful for the support you provided at the meeting on November 17 at the European Parliament.