

LYON CONSOLIDATED DECLARATION FOR A EUROPEAN HEALTH UNION

“TAKE GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITIES - THINK HEALTH GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY”

February 8th Lyon - France

The Lyon Declaration for a European Health Union occurs on the occasion of the European Ministers of Health and Foreign Affairs meeting in Lyon on February 9th, the meeting of European Health Ministers in Grenoble on February 10th and the virtual meeting of the European city’s mayors.

This European Civil Society Joint Initiative for Health aims to bundle the voices and positions from a diversity of professional organizations in Europe. The “One Sustainable Health Forum” from Lyon-France, has thus consolidated the corresponding key recommendations from several entities’ representatives of civil society in Europe¹

The ongoing pandemic has made it blatantly clear that with ever-increasing global interconnectedness we can no longer view our health in isolation. We need to implement a One Health framework that recognizes the interrelatedness and interdependencies of all living things and acknowledge health as a tightly intertwined global common. Overcome centrism at any level become an urgent necessity to build European Health Union for the European population and for our contributions to Global Health

ESSENTIALS

1- TAKE LONG-TERM COMMITMENT NOW FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

- ✓ Take long-term action and support sustainable perspectives across current and future generations to further One Health approaches which recognize that human, animal, plant, fungi, environmental health are interdependent.
- ✓ One Health includes, amongst others: pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, combatting antimicrobial resistance and addressing the unmet needs of non-communicable and rare diseases, including mental health.
- ✓ Focus on long-term inter-sectoral investments to close the equity, technology, and digital divide within the EU and globally while strengthening universal health coverage across scales from cities, regions to countries and beyond.
- ✓ Education, employment, training as well as working conditions of healthcare professionals are paramount for the success of European Health strategy and Universal Health Coverage.
- ✓ Converging on health as a global integrative common should be a shared denominator for the EU’s green and digital transformations.

2- ACT LOCALLY WHILE THINKING GLOBAL

- ✓ We commend the EU Commission for putting global cooperation and multilateralism on the agenda when increased protectionism and distrust compromise global cooperation in health and other fields.
- ✓ In the face of the interlinked global crises climate change, biodiversity loss, and inequities the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of transparent communication and rapid and effective sharing of knowledge and solutions across scales and administrative boundaries.
- ✓ Health Policies must be evidence-driven, coordinated, and aligned across cities, regions, Europe, and globally.

¹The Lancet One Health Commission; The Pan-European Commission on Health and Sustainable Development; European Global Health Research Institutes Network (EGRIN); The Horizon 2020 Scientific Panel for Health; M8 Alliance; The European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies; The European Health Union initiative’s facilitated by the European Health Forum Gastein(Manifesto for a European Health Union); The World Health Summit; Philea; Global Health Advocates; Santé Mondiale 2030; EURORDIS; BioMed Alliance etc.

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3- TOGETHER IN EQUITY AND SOLIDARITY

- ✓ Support participatory, sustainable and equitable health approaches, as pandemic prevention, preparedness and response, is only possible in solidarity with the more and most vulnerable (considering wealth, gender, age, minorities, Indigenous peoples, migrants, and those with chronic underlying health conditions).
- ✓ Mental health must have the same priority as somatic health, as should non-communicable, chronic, rare, and non-rare diseases and infectious diseases, with equal access to quality care for the entire EU population and beyond.
- ✓ Treat and prevent emerging infectious and neglected tropical diseases, which primarily affect underprivileged populations, needs high-quality and well-funded research. Critical to achieving these steps are collaborative and open academic channels when commercial and diplomatic channels are under national and geopolitical stress.
- ✓ Recognize chronic health conditions that impact community resilience in the face of emerging infectious diseases and address these with a One Health framework.
- ✓ Adopt an EU-common position on WTO's IP rights negotiations.

4- LIMIT SILOS WITH MORE INTER-SECTORAL COOPERATION

- ✓ Integrate One Health approaches across sectors and all policies. The pandemic has painfully shown how socio-economic, political, environmental, agricultural, scientific, technological, and commercial sectors are intimately entwined and dynamically connected to health.
- ✓ An inter-sectoral and sustainable approach requires multilevel governance (community, regional, national and global) where power can be elastically ceded from one level to another depending on the nature and seriousness of the crisis at hand. A convergence on health recognizes the need for systems thinking and trans-sectoral action.
- ✓ One Health and trans-sectoral stakeholder platforms are needed to holistically address and realize the co-benefits of strengthening human physical and mental health while recovering and conserving biodiversity and mitigating climate change.
- ✓ One Health stakeholder platforms and points of contact need to be implemented at multiple scales ranging from cities to regions and national governments in order to bridge agency and administrative agendas.
- ✓ Seamless, rapid, and transparent communication across the multiple implementation scales must be comprehensively planned and guaranteed. The Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA) could potentially take on this role on an EU level. Alternatively, the Global Health Policy Forum could be revived.

5- GOVERNANCE FOR EUROPEAN HEALTH UNION

- ✓ Take a global leadership role in driving One Health and supporting sustainable health research and practice integration across international treaties, agreements, and conventions while addressing critical planetary issues such as climate change and biodiversity loss.
- ✓ Adapt and strengthen the EU global health policy strategy to better align with the SDGs while also rethinking international cooperation. The updated strategy should enable an integrated and complementary decision process by member states and multilateral organizations like the WHO. A post-Covid Europe must be focused on health of all and must speak with one voice on Global governance for health.
- ✓ Existing initiatives like ECDC, EDCTP, EMA, HERA, WHO Hub for Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence in Berlin, WHO Lyon Academy, and transnational initiatives such as PREZODE, must be transparently coordinated, included in the EU budget. This will require reporting with joint external evaluations and improved coordination of international funding.
- ✓ The creation of a European Council for Health Research (Eu-CHR) as a coordination body should be considered.

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Preamble

1. The pandemic has painfully shown how social, economic, environmental, agricultural, political, scientific, technological and commercial sectors are intimately and dynamically connected to health, **underlining the need to integrate the One Health approach across all sectors and policies**. The value of individual and societal health is widely supported, and care for our planet earth is a top priority for European citizens.

1. It is acknowledged that major efforts have been made by member states, by the European Parliament and by the European Commission to improve collaboration across borders and national interests, however, in the intense COVID-19 spotlight, European Union (EU) health policy weaknesses are still starkly apparent. **This crisis has been a wake-up call and both, immediate and long-term strategic action is needed.**

2. **European policies are fragmented through lack of continuity and coordination, within the EU and between EU and its member states.** This threatens health research, health care, prevention, crisis responsiveness and EU health innovation competitiveness. Siloed programs have created boundaries between basic research and innovation, obstructing implementation in treatment, diagnosis, and prevention, evaluating cost-effectiveness, and ensuring an affordable health care system across Europe. Today 54% of cross-border donations of public benefit foundations in Europe are directed to health. We call on the EU to remove barriers for cross-border donations to unlock the full potential of philanthropy effectively addressing the health crisis, that does not stop at country borders.

3. Although the new initiatives of the European Commission under EU4Health, Horizon Europe and HERA are encouraging steps towards **a better alignment and communication across European Commission directorates and with member states**, more is needed. The new EU policies under discussion should look beyond crisis management and threats of infectious diseases. An increase in funding within a fragmented system is not effective. **A coordinated approach, based on an ambitious vision, a comprehensive strategy and identifiable leadership, inspired by learnings from the pandemic, integrating the different facets of “Health is urgently required.**

4. **“One Health”** is based on the premise that, beyond targeted responses to individual health challenges, a holistic approach is needed to address these global issues. This necessarily encompasses human health, but also animal and environmental health, while considering the pressures from collective human behaviors and practices including amongst others pollution, global warming, deforestation, wildlife trade and others. It intends to articulate three complementary dimensions convincingly, across regions, regardless of wealth, specific interests, and cross-cultural disparities:

- a) **put health at the core of the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** (see the schematic figure at the end of the document) through its key role at many of the nexuses of problems requiring solutions to promote concrete changes that support a sustainable future.
- b) to facilitate convergence between the various preexisting approaches that **take into account the continuum between ecosystems, animal and human health, and societies as a whole.**
- c) **to facilitate dialogue between public and private actors**, academia, civil society, politics and industry in order to translate “One Sustainable Health” into practical and feasible programs, interventions and policies to the **one noble and humanistic common goal: Good Health and Wellbeing for All!**

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Consolidated recommendations

Health is at the crossroad of many issues and must be at the top of EU priorities. Investing in health and sustainable development is key for the safety and wellbeing of EU citizens and their partners around the world. We call upon the EU ministers who will meet on February 9th in Lyon-France **to take global responsibility and make health a central priority for future EU actions. Think health globally!**

A- **CARING FOR PEOPLE AND THEIR ENVIRONMENT!**

GOVERNANCE

1. Affirm the European Union’s explicit competence to take global responsibilities and action on health policy
2. Develop strong health innovation systems that can attenuate the weaknesses that left so many people vulnerable
3. Strengthen coordinating mechanisms with solidarity principles between members states

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

4. Drive forward a Framework Convention/Treaty for Pandemic Preparedness and Response
5. Optimize investment in prevention of health threats, preparedness, and response, especially in the European Health Emergency preparedness and Response Authority (HERA)
6. Develop more robust country-reporting mechanisms that take into account the One Health concept

ONE SUSTAINABLE HEALTH

7. Promote One Sustainable Health to align the One Health concept with the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG’s).
8. Implement widespread joint external evaluations based on a One Health approach aligned with SDG’s.
9. Develop a One Health framework that, amongst others supports investments into green infrastructure, limits endocrine disruptors in the environment, improves access to non-toxic consumables and high-quality nutrition.
10. EU policies on stopping global and imported deforestation need to be strengthened and legislation that recognizes and gives legal personality to the ecosystem services and foundational health benefits of the environment have to be explored.

MANUFACTURING AND LOGISTICS

11. Strengthen the EU’s role in the regulation and distribution of medical and pharmaceutical products to ensure that such products are readily available to all Member States.
12. Improve global supply chains, production capacity and stockpiling with specific mechanisms to procure adequate supplies in emergencies.

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13. Sustain investment in infrastructure and in the workforce to ensure that health services become more resilient in the face of changing health needs and future threats.

B- EUROPE EMBRACING GLOBAL HEALTH RESPONSIBILITIES!

GOVERNANCE

1. Define an EU Global Health Strategy and action plan aligned with the SDGs.
2. Prioritize measures to link Global Health with the One Sustainable Health approach.
3. Invest in strong, resilient, and inclusive health systems with appropriate workforce guaranteeing universal health coverage and reducing out-of-pocket payments below 15% of total health expenditures in all EU countries.
4. Improve coordination of international funding for core capacities and global actions to support investment in health.
5. Propose a new policy framework across sectors, across countries, in contribution to SDGs for mutually beneficial innovative R&D.
6. Adopt a common position of the EU regarding WTO ongoing negotiations about IP rights to remove all existing barriers to the universal and fair access to medical products in the context of a global health common and threat.

CLIMATE – BIODIVERSITY - HEALTH NEXUS

7. Link healthcare performance to SDGs and strengthen the EU’s role in fighting climate change also in view of the many co-benefits for health.
8. Reinforce the Water-Energy-Food-Health Nexus and the Climate-Biodiversity-Health Nexus an integral part of the G7 and G20 agenda.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

9. Re-frame health as a central area of EU-African Union partnership and establish a Team Europe Initiative (TEI) to strengthen health systems and health research in Africa.
10. Enhance EU and its member states contribution to the global efforts to tackle global health threats (Covid pandemic - ACT-A; Global Fund, GAVI, etc.).
11. Support capacity bridging and reinforce on-site training of human resources in the One Sustainable Health approach in developing countries.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

12. Facilitate sharing of pathogens, biological samples, genomic data and development of timely medical solutions
13. Increase laboratory and surveillance capacity to identify animal diseases and emerging pathogens in all countries

INEQUITIES

14. Promote women's health, maternal and child health, and gender equality
15. Promote Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and equal access to medicines, within and between communities, regions and cultures across the globe, “leaving no one behind”.

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C- EMPOWERING WAYS TO BUILD EUROPEAN HEALTH UNION!

GOVERNANCE

1. Improve communication and information by public authorities to citizens & *vice versa*
2. Develop health democracy with a balance governance including society, political decision makers, guided by scientific evidence and leadership for a better understanding and trust
3. Encourage and operationalize the One Sustainable Health approach at all levels within the EU Commission that assimilates the silos while promoting more transversal integration
4. Evolve HERA into a multistakeholder platform
5. Establish a European Health Insurance Fund to cover rare diseases

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

6. Build a European industrial base for vaccines, medicines, diagnostics, and other strategic health products
7. Establish a Pan-European Network for Disease Control and a Pan-European Health Threats Council
8. Develop digital health capacity and data management in respect of the EU Charter of Human Right.

DIGITALISATION AND DATA

9. Define common minimum standards for interoperability of data systems (e.g., European Health Data Hub) that could be used for rapid sharing and publication of harmonized health data.
10. Harmonize vaccination protocols and official / legal certification
11. Develop robust national surveillance and country-reporting mechanisms that take into account the One Health concept.
12. Counter the threat from “fake news” by furthering transdisciplinary research and communication mechanisms for rapid generation, translation and sharing of accurate and trusted science-based evidence from research to implementation.
13. Strengthen cooperation between the EU and Africa on digital health to promote mutual learnings, stimulate the development of innovation, and enable co-investments. A strong cooperation between CDC Europe and CDC Africa can advance the agenda in data sharing agreements and improve cross-border disease surveillance

HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS

14. Address the unequal distribution of health human resources in Europe, providing support to regions that have difficulties in attracting health professionals
15. Promote training and education of health professionals to common standards and foster learning health systems
16. Implement measures to safeguard the rights of health professionals, including those from other parts of the world

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RESEARCH

17. Develop a globally coordinated approach to discovering, developing, and delivering effective and safe medical solutions
18. Ramp up the European Reference Networks for Rare Diseases (ERN) and extend their model to other complex diseases.
19. Set out a comprehensive strategy for health and health research with a structure that create synergies between existing structures and both performance: addressing fragmentation, providing continuity, supported by society and with strong visionary leadership.
20. The creation of a European Council for Health Research (Eu-COHR) as a coordination body, will be an important and crucial step to implement the **LYON CONSOLIDATED DECLARATION FOR A EUROPEAN HEALTH UNION** and to overcome siloes and fragmentation in the health sector.



Main documents and reports used for the consolidated recommendations:

- 1- “Manifesto for a European Health Union” - by the European Health Forum Gastein (2021)
- 2- “Drawing light from the pandemic, a new strategy for health and sustainable development” – by the European Observatory for Health
- 3- “The European Union and the negotiation of the international pandemic treaty: interests at stake and potential contribution” - Elisabet Ruiz Cairó - GLOBAL HEALTH CENTRE POLICY BRIEF I 2022
- 4- Note d’éclairage « Présidence Française de l’Union Européenne : Quels enjeux dans le domaine de la santé ?- Santé Mondiale 2030, janvier 2022. <http://santemondiale2030.fr/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/PFUE-éclairage-Santé-mondiale-2030.pdf>
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- 7- <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/screen/expert-groups/consult?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=3279&NewSearch=1>
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