

# ENOUGH NOW IS THE TIME FOR EU ACTION ON NCDs

In light of the third United Nations High-level Meeting (HLM) on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), taking place on 27 September 2018, the European Chronic Disease Alliance (ECDA) and the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) urge the European Union Institutions to:

## 1. Show political leadership at the Meeting, through:

- a leading contribution of the EU delegation to the discussions;
- a high-level EU participation, with the active presence of EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Dr Andriukaitis

## 2. Encourage EU Member States' Heads of State/Government to attend the meeting and to work towards a meaningful Outcome Document which commits to the following six key priorities:



### **3. Support EU Member States to fulfil their commitments, by initiating a series of achievable steps to advance action on the prevention and control of NCDs, through:**

#### **Pursuing a positive contribution to the global NCD reduction agenda**

By including public health protection and promotion in EU trade and investment agreements; dropping tobacco as an offensive interest in trade treaties and policy; phasing-out EU support for the promotion of alcoholic drinks in third countries

#### **Leveraging national NCD prevention efforts and supporting the implementation of the “WHO Best Buys”**

By focusing the Steering Group on Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Management of NCDs on systematically supporting the national implementation of the WHO ‘Best Buys’, including through funding; helping Member States to put in place effective health systems to address NCDs via the Country Specific Recommendations in the EU Semester Process, with a special focus on ensuring health for all

#### **Providing EU-level leadership in the response to NCDs**

By proposing an EU-wide legislative limit to industrially produced trans-fats in food; ensuring renewal of the EU Action Plan on Childhood Obesity post-2020; phasing-in Health Impact Assessment (HIA) with a special focus on policies’ impacts on NCDs

#### **Creating an enabling institutional environment**

By dedicating the necessary human and financial resources at European Commission level to achieve the health objectives of Article 168 TFEU; including a Vice-President for Health in the next Commission and ensuring an effective Directorates General structure to address public health issues, while putting health promotion and NCD prevention high on the agenda of relevant other Commission services (including agriculture, trade, environment, employment, social affairs and research)

#### **Strengthening the social dimension of Europe with people-centred policies**

By pursuing a rights-based approach to people’s health throughout the life course; enhancing labour opportunities and ensuring the sustainable employability of people with chronic diseases in the EU

We call on the Austrian Government, who will coordinate the EU position on the UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs as part of the Austrian EU Council Presidency (July-December 2018), and the Italian Government, acting as co-facilitator of the High Level Meeting, to commit to these recommendations and work with the European Commission and other EU Member States towards the above-mentioned goals.

The **European Chronic Disease Alliance (ECDA)** is a coalition of European health organisations sharing the same interests in combating preventable chronic diseases through European policies that impact health. ECDA represents millions of chronic disease patients and over 200 000 health professionals in Europe. | [www.alliancechronicdiseases.org](http://www.alliancechronicdiseases.org)

The **European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)** is a change agent – Europe’s leading NGO alliance advocating for better health. We are a dynamic member-led organisation, made up of around 90 public health NGOs, patient groups, health professionals, and disease groups working together to improve health and strengthen the voice of public health in Europe. | [www.epha.org](http://www.epha.org)

The European Public Health Alliance has received funding under an operating grant from the European Union’s Health Programme (2014-2020). The content of this document represents the views of the author only and is his/her sole responsibility.