

For the attention of:

Stella Kyriakides, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety

José Manuel Miñones, Spanish minister of Health, for the Presidency of the Council of the EU

Ministers of health represented in EPSCO

Brussels, 14 September 2023

Subject: NCDs prevalence reduction in the EU and mobilizing investment in prevention

Dear Commissioner Kyriakides, Dear Ministers,

Chronic non-communicable diseases have been a major health challenge for decades across Europe. No EU country is spared from the impact they have on citizens' health, national healthcare systems, societies and economies, as further shown by the COVID-19 pandemic. The prevalence of NCDs continues to grow, fuelled by under-investment in prevention and control.

It is high time to take adequate action to reverse this trend. The EU NCDs initiative "Healthier Together" and the efforts driven at EU level thanks to the Expert Group on Public Health are welcome. They represent significant steps to achieve this goal. Yet, much remains to be done to effectively address NCDs in the EU.

As we celebrate the [Global Week for Action on NCDs](#) (14-21 September), we are calling on you to:

- Mobilise resources for NCD prevention, notably by convening a **High-Level Forum on Sustainable NCDs prevention in the EU by 2025**.
- Initiate a process to establish a **holistic NCDs strategy for the EU, complemented by disease-specific plans** where necessary, with **clear targets for NCDs prevalence reduction in the EU by 2040** for all age groups (with intermediate targets for 2030).
 - > A strategic and long-term vision for the EU as a whole is key, that does not leave behind any NCD nor EU country, addressing inequities and the specific needs of more vulnerable groups, including children and the elderly (often multi-morbid).
 - > Aiming to reduce mortality from NCDs is not enough. Targets on reduced mortality are on track to be achieved in the EU, but people are living in a declining health condition.
- Commit to **act and allocate funds to improve NCD prevention and care in the EU in the next years**, for the benefit of the millions of citizens living with one or more chronic diseases and their families.
- **Address persisting data gaps in NCDs**, which undermine effective responses and result in a misevaluation of the prevalence of certain types of NCDs and their burden. This is critical to improve disease knowledge, assess the real impact of the diseases and the cost of inaction, inform prevention and management plans; and anticipate any future challenges.
- Setup an **EU Ambassador for NCDs and an official EU NCDs Awareness Day** (for instance, taking place during the Global Week) to stimulate greater knowledge-sharing and action.

We, undersigned signatories, count on your leadership and sustained work towards a European Union free from preventable NCDs in the next decade. It is of key importance to ensure a healthy future for EU citizens.

Thank you for your consideration. We are eager to continue the dialogue with you on these topics. Addressing NCDs deserves political dedication from the highest levels.

Sincerely,

Raymond Vanholder,

Chairman, European Chronic Disease Alliance



The European Chronic Disease Alliance (ECDA) is a Brussels-based coalition of 12 European health organizations representing major chronic diseases and sharing the same interests in combating preventable chronic diseases through European policies that impact health. Together, we represent millions of patients and over 200,000 health professionals. Members of the Alliance:

- > European Academy of Allergy & Clinical Immunology (EAACI)
- > European Academy of Neurology (EAN)
- > European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL)
- > European CanCer Organisation (ECCO)
- > European Heart Network (EHN)
- > European Kidney Health Alliance (EKHA)
- > European Respiratory Society (ERS)
- > European Society of Cardiology (ESC)
- > European Society of Hypertension (ESH)
- > European Society for Medical Oncology (ESMO)
- > International Diabetes Federation Europe (IDF Europe)
- > United European Gastroenterology (UEG)