



MEDIA STATEMENT -- FOR IMMEDIATE USE

The EU must vote to create a health plan that tackles the biggest killer

Strasbourg, 8 December 2023 – Members of Parliament (MEPs) at 2023's ending plenary session, 11-14 December, are being urged to prioritise health and help defeat the continent's most pervasive health threat: cardiovascular disease (CVD). Leading the call is a grouping of 18 partners making up the [European Alliance for Cardiovascular Health](#) (EACH). They emphasise an EU-wide Cardiovascular Health Plan and 27 National Action Plans as the way forward.

CVD cost the EU an estimated €282 billion in 2021, topping the leaderboard as the cause of more than one-third of all deaths and impacting the lives of some 60 million people. Misperceptions plague CVD: it is often still regarded as a "man's disease" although women are more than twice as likely to die after a heart attack than men. Cardiovascular conditions also affect children and young adults.

In Strasbourg, EACH is unveiling the "Vote Cardiovascular Health 2024" exhibition, hosted by MEP Elżbieta Łukacijewska (Poland) and MEP Radka Maxová (Czech Republic), long-standing supporters of cardiovascular health. The exhibition highlights CVD's toll on the EU, country by country, while the online media campaign is calling on leaders to #VoteHealth2024.

"This is a decisive moment for our health. The numbers highlight the far-reaching impacts of cardiovascular disease. We need concrete action, and I stand with EACH in calling for an EU Cardiovascular Health Plan to safeguard the well-being of our citizens," said MEP Elżbieta Łukacijewska.

The current trio Presidency (Spain-Belgium-Hungary) took a historic step by addressing cardiovascular disease for the first time in the EU's 30-year history. Reducing the burden of CVD in Europe requires ongoing demonstration of leadership and unwavering commitment.

"Cardiovascular health knows no borders. We must seize this opportunity in Strasbourg to prioritise the health of fellow Europeans and work collectively towards a healthier, more resilient continent," said MEP Radka Maxová.

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