

Investment needed from the EU budget into cardiovascular health

11 August, 2025 – The European Alliance for Cardiovascular Health (EACH) welcomes the European Commission’s recent publication of the proposal for the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2028–2034. The new budgetary framework presents a critical opportunity to strengthen the European Union’s commitment to addressing cardiovascular disease (CVD), the leading cause of death in Europe.

As a strategic instrument for delivering on the EU’s political priorities, the MFF is not merely a financial plan; it is a statement of intent. With the adoption of national and European cardiovascular health plans on the horizon, the MFF must now become a key vehicle to transform ambition into action. Robust, targeted investment across EU programmes is indispensable to reduce the societal and economic burden of CVD and to advance health equity across Europe.

While we welcome the recognition of health's contribution to Europe’s economic resilience and competitiveness, it is equally important not to lose sight of its foundational role in supporting the well-being of families and citizens. We urge a clear recognition of health as a standalone budgetary priority and call for the implementation of the MFF to reflect a balanced approach, one that values public health not only as an economic asset but as a cornerstone of a fair, inclusive, and sustainable society.

EACH calls for dedicated attention to cardiovascular health across all relevant MFF instruments, including a defined allocation of funding from Horizon Europe/FP10. Cohesion Policy Fund instruments such as the ERDF and ESF+ must also be leveraged to support cardiovascular health interventions, especially in regions with elevated mortality rates. Supporting innovation in prevention, early detection, digital health tools, and integrated care models across both hospital and community settings will be essential to meet the needs of ageing populations and the growing number of patients living with cardiovascular conditions, as well as their caregivers, and to promote a heart-healthy population.

Ensuring that EU funding mechanisms are aligned with Member States' efforts to implement national cardiovascular health plans will be critical to achieving coherence, scale, and sustainability in tackling CVD. The MFF must reflect the urgency of the cardiovascular health crisis and embed mechanisms to support evidence-based, measurable, and equitable interventions across Europe.

In the context of the EU's growing attention towards cardiovascular health, the engagement of civil society is essential. EACH, as a broad coalition of professional, research, patient, industry, and civil society organisations, brings deep expertise and a united voice to the development and implementation of cardiovascular policies.

By actively involving civil society actors in the MFF's implementation as well as ensure they receive appropriate funding and support, the EU can leverage this expertise to accelerate progress on cardiovascular health, ensuring that public investments are both impactful and responsive to real-world needs.

To ensure that the MFF becomes a true lever for improving cardiovascular outcomes across Europe, EACH urges EU institutions and Member States to:

- **Embed cardiovascular health as a strategic priority** across all relevant funding instruments to support prevention, research, care, innovation, and workforce development.
- **Actively facilitate the implementation** of national cardiovascular health plans and the forthcoming EU Cardiovascular Health Plan, by providing co-financing mechanisms and incentivising alignment across Member States.
- **Ensure equity is a guiding principle**, with dedicated investments to close the persistent gaps in cardiovascular care and outcomes, particularly those affecting women^[1], children, vulnerable populations, and countries with the highest mortality rates^[2]. No European should die prematurely from a preventable condition due to their social or economic position - Cardiovascular health must not depend on income, geography or gender.

[1] Bugiardini R. Tackling cardiovascular health inequalities in European countries. *Lancet Reg Health Eur.* 2023 Oct 4;33:100730. doi: 10.1016/j.lanepe.2023.100730. PMID: 37954003; PMCID: PMC10636278.

[2] Wang, L.Y.T., Chiang, G.S.H., Wee, C.F. et al. Preventing ischemic heart disease in women: a systematic review of global directives and policies. *npj Womens Health* 2, 36 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44294-024-00040-0>

- **Fully recognise and support civil society actors** as partners in the design, implementation, and evaluation of EU funding programmes, ensuring that interventions are grounded in real-world expertise and community needs.
- **Acknowledge that improving population cardiovascular health is vital** to achieve the European Union goals of a resilient and competitive society.

Together, these priorities form the foundation for an EU budget that delivers on its promise to protect the health of its citizens and build sustainable and future-ready health systems.

Note to the editors

CVD remains the single largest health challenge in Europe, accounting for approximately 1.7 million deaths in 2021, or 34%^[1] of all fatalities across the EU-27. With over 13 million new cases annually, including coronary heart disease, stroke, and heart failure, CVD profoundly affects quality of life, and carries heavy economic and societal implications. Economically, the toll is staggering: €282 billion per year^[2], alongside the highest burden of disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) of any disease group in Europe, presenting a significant challenge that undermines productivity and sustainability.

[1] Cardiovascular Realities 2025 [EU 27 Cardiovascular Realities 2025 by... - Flipsnack](#)

[2] Luengo-Fernandez et al., 2023, Economic burden of cardiovascular diseases in the European Union: a population-based cost study. <https://academic.oup.com/eurheartj/article/44/45/4752/7251239>

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