



fighting heart disease  
and stroke  
european heart network



## Use Heart to beat the increasing burden of cardiovascular disease in Europe

**Brussels, 29 September 2020:** The unprecedented pandemic of 2020 revealed gaps and deficiencies of our health systems and inherent inequalities in the EU. With the deadly link between COVID-19 and cardiovascular disease (CVD) being established, addressing the increasing burden of CVD is now more important than ever before.

Already before the pandemic, CVD was the number one cause of death in Europe and the EU. More than 60 million people live with CVD in the EU, and close to 13 million new cases of CVD are diagnosed every year. The pandemic is making this already gloomy scenario worse.

While national governments are responsible for the organisation and delivery of health care, the pandemic demonstrated that health action and coordination at the EU level can truly be a game changer for all Europeans.

On World Heart day, the European Heart Network calls for bold action by the EU to address the increasing burden of cardiovascular disease:

- Prioritise prevention of avoidable CVD by addressing societal determinants and risk factors.
- Invest in research and deployment of digital innovation for cardiovascular prevention, diagnosis, treatment, care, and management.
- Support the development of harmonised and interoperable patient registries in CVD, as well as the digital capability to enable the evidence generated within health systems to improve the speed and efficiency of randomised controlled trials.
- Establish a structured collaboration between academic clinical trialists, patients, regulators, and industry to modernise the International Council of Harmonisation (ICH), Good Clinical Practice (GCP), standards and make them fit for the digital era.
- Invest in research and analysis to understand the long-term effects of COVID-19 to CVD prevalence, mortality, and care.

[“Fighting cardiovascular disease – a blueprint for EU action”](#), jointly developed by the European Heart Network and the European Society of Cardiology, provides a range of concrete actions that EU institutions should incorporate in policies and programmes already in the pipeline, namely the European Green Deal, the EU’s Farm to Fork strategy, the EU’s Pharmaceutical Strategy, Horizon Europe and the EU4Health programme.

Use Heart to improve cardiovascular health in Europe!

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