



fighting heart disease
and stroke
european heart network

Statement by the European Heart Network (EHN) made at the sixty-second session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe, Malta, 10-13 September 2012 on *Health 2020: a European policy framework supporting action across government and society for health and well-being.*

August 2012

STATEMENT

EHN applauds the WHO Regional Office for Europe for the proposed policy framework for health and well-being. The policy framework is an impressive description and analysis of the health burden in Europe, Europe's demography and epidemiology and the social, technical and economic situation necessitating a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach to laying and backing the ground rules for improving health for all and reducing health inequalities.

*EHN supports **Health 2020's*** vision, goals, strategic objectives and priorities.

EHN offers its active involvement in and support of the implementation of **Health 2020**. For decades, EHN has cooperated with the WHO Regional Office for Europe. The two organisations share information and research and work together in projects, particularly on the prevention of cardiovascular diseases. WHO is a supporter of the European Heart Health Charter and is currently represented in the advisory board of an EHN-led pan-European project "EuroHeart II" (co-funded by the EU).

EHN takes note of and specifically welcomes

- **Health 2020's** strong focus on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases. Cardiovascular diseases account for nearly 50% of deaths from NCDs; they represent the highest disease burden (DALYs) and impose a significant burden on European economies.
- **Health 2020's** attention to governance and the consideration and examination of developments to increase governance performance as well as its admonitions with respect to partnerships.
- **Health 2020's** emphasis on the need for standardisation, international comparability and quality of health data and for compiling, interpreting, disseminating and granting easy access to both health data and research evidence.

EHN calls on European Ministers of Health

- To endorse the WHO's proposed global targets on: **alcohol, fat intake, obesity, physical inactivity, raised blood pressure, raised blood cholesterol, salt/sodium intake, tobacco, drug therapy to prevent heart attacks and stroke and essential NCD medicines and basic technologies to treat major NCDs** in support of the overarching mortality target of a **25% reduction of premature deaths due to NCDs by 2025** as adopted by the World Health Assembly (decision WHA65(8)) in May 2012. The targets are included in the discussion paper on *A comprehensive global monitoring framework, including indicators, and a set of voluntary global targets for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases* (version dated 25 July 2012).

THE EUROPEAN HEART NETWORK, ITS ACTIVITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

The European Heart Network plays a leading role in the prevention and reduction of cardiovascular diseases, in particular heart disease and stroke, through advocacy, networking, education and patient support, so that they are no longer a major cause of premature death and disability throughout Europe.

The European Heart Network (EHN) is a Brussels-based alliance linking national heart foundations and other national non-governmental organisations committed to the prevention of cardiovascular diseases, in particular coronary heart disease and stroke, in 26 countries across Europe.

EHN is engaged and has expertise in **advocacy** to harness support for heart health-promoting policies in the EU. EHN engages with policy and decision makers in the EU, for example through the MEP Heart Group, and through publishing and disseminating data and research relevant to prevention of cardiovascular diseases. Some examples are below.



To access **EHN research and publications**:

- <http://www.ehnheart.org/cvd-statistics.html>
- <http://www.ehnheart.org/publications/publications.html>

EHN engages in **lobbying on specific regulatory measures** notably related to food, nutrition and tobacco. For example, EHN works on health and nutrition claims and nutrient profiles, nutrition labelling and the revision of the EU tobacco products directive as well as legislation on patients-related topics.

EHN papers:

- <http://www.ehnheart.org/publications/position-papers.html>

EHN works closely with its members - and members with each other - to allow effective sharing of experience and knowhow and increase their capacity to interact productively with their policy makers.

EHN members:

- <http://www.ehnheart.org/members/members.html>

Partnerships: EHN joins forces with many organisations to advance health and health in all policies in the EU. Brussels-based organisations include: *European Public Health Alliance* (EPHA), *European Chronic Disease Alliance* (ECDA), *Smoke Free Partnership* (SFP) and *European Public Health & Agriculture Consortium* (EPHAC).

For more information about EHN:

- <http://www.ehnheart.org/>

