



Why we exist

Air pollution remains the top environmental risk to health in Europe, resulting in hundreds of thousands of premature deaths and hundreds of billions of euros of costs annually. Everyone is vulnerable to harm caused by air pollution and our level of vulnerability is outside of individual control, as it evolves with age, health condition, socio-economic status, as well as where we live, study, or work.

There is a large body of evidence showing that air pollution is a cause for all major non-communicable diseases, including cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, stroke, diabetes, dementia, and lung cancer, as well as acute respiratory infections, with growing evidence on adverse impacts on mental and neurological health. Global, European, national and local decision-makers have the unique power to prevent these health impacts, and to protect those most vulnerable – pregnant women, children, the elderly, those with pre-existing health conditions or facing socio-economic health inequities.

Despite the huge disease burden caused by air pollution, most of the health and economic impacts of air pollution are preventable: through a comprehensive policy framework to urgently prevent air pollution at its sources and improve air quality for all. Air pollution and climate change are interlinked: the burning of fossil fuels leads to substantial emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases. Recent evidence highlights that air pollution worsens the health impacts of heatwaves on respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. At the same time, prolonged heatwaves lead to higher air pollution. Measures to improve air quality can be a win-win both for health and climate mitigation and adaptation.

The EU Healthy Air Coalition (EUHAC) stands for urgently needed science-based policy change in the EU that prioritises prevention: prevention of lives lost, new cases of disease, health care costs, prevention of increasing socio-economic inequalities. Our Coalition envisages a near future where the EU becomes a global leader in tackling air pollution, becoming the first region to reach air quality as recommended by the 2021 WHO air quality guidelines through strong, inclusive clean air policies. These policies will result in immediate and long-lasting health improvements, for everyone, especially those most vulnerable.

Who we are

The EUHAC brings together non-profit health expert voices in the EU to advocate for better health for all through clean air. Our founding members are Brussels-based organisations representing diverse constituencies of the health sector, including doctors and other health care professionals, scientists, public health experts and groups, respiratory or cancer patients and health insurance funds.

EUHAC founding members are the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME), the Association of European Cancer Leagues (ECL), the European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients' Associations (EFA), the European Lung Foundation (ELF), the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA), the European Respiratory Society (ERS), the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) and Independent Health Insurance Funds (Mutualités Libres).

Our members act as multipliers for engagement, communication, and advocacy for their respective (national) member organisations, strengthening the synergies between advocacy at EU and national level. The Coalition is coordinated by HEAL.

How you can join us

Non-profit health, medical and scientific organisations across the EU that share our goal of urgently preventing air pollution at source to protect health are warmly welcome to join our Coalition.

Do get in touch!