

November 2023

Manfred Weber
EPP Group Chair
European Parliament, Brussels

Dear Mr. Weber,

On behalf of the European Society of Cardiology representing over 100,000 medical professionals in cardiology, we are writing to request that cardiovascular health form part of the EPP manifesto in the 2024 European Parliament elections.

The beating cancer plan which you and the EPP have spearheaded has acted as an inspiration to all health advocates in the EU subverting expectations of what is possible as a community.

We urge you not to let the beating cancer plan represent the limit of your ambition but instead urge the EPP group to see what next health challenge we can address as a Union. For the European Society of Cardiology and indeed the 16 other Members of the European Alliance for Cardiovascular Health, the next challenge to address could not be clearer.

Neglect and a lack of public investment in cardiovascular health threatens to undo hard fought trends in reducing mortality in cardiovascular disease. Today cardiovascular disease represents not only the biggest cause of death in the EU but is reflective of deep inequalities and inequities that we see across the Union:

- We see these inequalities in gender, where cardiovascular disease is still seen as a “men’s issue” despite the fact that more women than men in the EU will die from CVD.
- We see them reflected in geography, where Western and Nordic Member States have considerably better outcomes in cardiovascular care with little EU investment in Central and Eastern Member States.
- We see it in our demographics, where cardiovascular disease remains the number one cause of death of infants under the age of one, of those between 15-49 and the elderly alike.

From environment to employment, from climate change to demographic change, from infrastructure to research investment, the impact of cardiovascular disease can be felt everywhere except in policy.

“Although COVID is the most visible pandemic of our lifetime, it is neither the deadliest nor the most preventable. Cardiovascular disease has killed five times as many people. We have the public health tools to tackle it. The question is, can we muster the social and political will to use them?” - *WHO Europe 2022.*

Our mission: to reduce the burden of cardiovascular disease.

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This question posed by WHO Europe last year we now pose to you as a challenge:

Will you let the beating cancer plan be the end of the EPP efforts in tackling public health problems or will you heed the call of medical professionals, patients, foundations and citizens to make action on Europe's biggest killer a part of your election programme?

Should you accept this challenge, our expert volunteers and staff in the ESC stand ready to meet it with you.

Thank you for your time and we look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,



Prof. Franz Weidinger, FESC

President of the European Society of Cardiology

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