

New EU Global Health Strategy - Public Consultation

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

There have been major changes since the 2010 EU global health strategy, and so a review is now necessary.

In the past decade, we have understood, more than ever, **the many related factors affecting health** and the need to address them in a comprehensive, joined-up way. This would also enable the EU to better tackle health inequalities and fend off global threats, all based on its commitments to human rights and health equity.

Climate change and the destruction of natural habitats have increased the risk of animal viruses, which can cause pandemics. This brings the close links between the environment, animal and plant health, and human health sharply into focus (the 'One Health' approach).

There is also a better understanding of the complexity of gender's effect on health and of the link between lifestyle and nutrition; or between non-communicable diseases and mental health.

The **COVID-19 pandemic** has underlined the importance of effectively preparing for and reacting to emergencies. At the same time, it has slowed down or even reversed progress in meeting the international community's health goals set out in 2015 (the UN's Sustainable Development Goals). Most of all, it has been a call to reflect on how other EU policies, described below, can help fight global health threats.

- Health systems must be strengthened to withstand threats, and existing gaps in **international cooperation** must be closed to ensure the right to healthcare for everyone.
- A **new approach to pharmaceuticals and technologies** is necessary to ensure access for everyone to safe, high-quality, affordable and effective treatments, while boosting innovation to deal with neglected needs and diseases.
- **Digitalisation** is a powerful tool with huge potential to facilitate access to health and deal with global health needs. **Research** is an essential enabler as more powerful technologies become available.
- **Social protection, education and skills** are essential to make universal health coverage a reality and curb inequalities so that everyone has access to health services.

Finally, **the global landscape has changed** in the following two ways.

1. In a more geopolitical world, health has inevitably acquired a geopolitical dimension, linking with other policies such as trade or security. This confirms the need for a 'health in all policies' approach.
2. Many private and public players and initiatives have emerged, helping to tackle threats but making it more challenging to achieve an effective and coordinated approach.

As we advance our European Health Union, our international approach has been adapting to the fundamental changes outlined above. It is necessary now to set out **a strategy that builds on the experience from the last decade and provides guidelines** for the coming years in a complex environment. This will ensure, beyond pandemics, that the EU and its Member States can effectively improve the health of citizens, reduce health inequalities, protect against threats, and consolidate EU global leadership in health.

The new strategy should be considered together with the parallel communication on pandemic preparedness and response, which is also in preparation.

As confirmed by Eurobarometer surveys, **health is one of the topics for which EU citizens** see the greatest legitimacy for EU global action. This strategy should therefore reflect the views and concerns of the public and organisations concerned.

To provide guidelines for an updated global health strategy, this open consultation asks what policies and measures should the EU focus on and how this should be done. Each section starts with a summary of the current state of reflection in the Commission (which are not necessarily Commission positions).

Respondents can then comment on these reflections and complement them.

About you

* Language of my contribution

- Bulgarian
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* I am giving my contribution as

- Academic/research institution
- Business association
- Company/business organisation
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- Non-governmental organisation (NGO)
- Public authority
- Trade union
- Other

If you selected 'Other' in the previous question, please specify below

- Professional health organisation
- Health professional
- Civil society organisation
- International organisation
- Governmental/multilateral organisation

* First name

Dorota

* Surname

Sienkiewicz

* Email (this won't be published)

D.Sienkiewicz@eurohealthnet.eu

* Organisation name

255 character(s) maximum

* Organisation size

- Micro (1 to 9 employees)
- Small (10 to 49 employees)
- Medium (50 to 249 employees)
- Large (250 or more)

Organisation budget (please specify what percentage is of public funds if relevant)

Transparency register number

255 character(s) maximum

Check if your organisation is on the [transparency register](#). It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making.

48562122691-12

* Country of origin

Please add your country of origin, or that of your organisation.

This list does not represent the official position of the European institutions with regard to the legal status or policy of the entities mentioned. It is a harmonisation of often divergent lists and practices.

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- Yemen
- Zambia

- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Lesotho
- Saint Helena
- Ascension and Tristan da Cunha
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Zimbabwe
- Denmark
- Liberia
- Saint Lucia

* My organisation is from/I work in (if different from country of origin)

- EU member state
- Europe region (non EU)
- Middle East
- Asia
- Oceania
- Northern Africa
- Sub-Saharan Africa
- North America
- Latin America and the Caribbean

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The Commission will publish the responses to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would like your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

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Only organisation details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published as received. Your name will not be published. Please do not include any personal data in the contribution itself if you want to remain anonymous.
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Part 1. Stakeholder input

The EU strategy should provide more structural and effective channels of dialogue with the public and stakeholders to ensure their views are fully considered and help adapt to a fast-changing environment. The annual Global Health Policy Forum (held on 21 June 2022 as part of the European Development Days) is an opportunity to collect input for this consultation and follow up the strategy's implementation after it has been adopted.

1. What are your ideas to improve stakeholder input and their channels to follow up the strategy's implementation?

1000 character(s) maximum

- Make it easier to engage with the strategy, particularly in digital spaces, and make information about meetings easier to find (EU Login is an important barrier for some actors)
- Cast a wider net in terms of who is being approached for their input and make this list transparent
- Make sure it builds on the discussions that are already being held elsewhere (e.g., the work of the special COVI committee on lessons learned from COVID, the Pandemic Preparedness Treaty)
- Open thematic working groups on various strands of the strategy's implementation and build synergies between Global and European Health, highlighting mutual benefits (what's in it for me?)
- Facilitate a dedicated Global Health platform/space where MS and stakeholders discuss and exchange information on the strategy implementation, with EC focal point in charge
- Encourage better collaboration between stakeholders and their respective national contact points (where applicable) for the strategy

Part 2. Defining priorities

Considering the diverse issues outlined above, the EU global health strategy must identify a manageable number of key priorities. The priorities described below are interconnected at times, reflecting the complex nature of the issues addressed. However, each priority deserves individual attention.

Beyond the importance of ensuring proper pandemic prevention, preparedness and emergency response, four priority areas appear key to structure our strategy.

- Effective and resilient health systems are essential to tackle health inequalities, being prepared for health threats and responding to them effectively. This requires investment in the health workforce, community health systems, inclusive and quality services, and public health capacities. Effective and resilient health systems also need to leverage digitalisation and give timely access to affordable and innovative pharmaceuticals and other medical countermeasures.
Countries are generally more resilient to health threats when the overall population is in good health.

This means stepping up efforts to achieve the health-related UN Sustainable Development Goals. Universal health coverage is a critical objective in this regard.

- A multi-sectoral, evidence-based 'One Health' approach is essential to mitigate the main risks from interactions between humans, animals and the environment, including the threat of antimicrobial resistance.
- Health issues have links with and are affected by many other policy areas. This means health has to be part of those policies (e.g. trade, global supply chain resilience, strategic autonomy) that are essential in helping achieve health policy objectives. The EU should map all single market and external tools that could be activated to help meet its global health goals and set out the conditions for their use.

For a definition of health systems, see [WHO/Europe | Health systems](#).

For Sustainable Development Goals see [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDG 3\) | United Nations Western Europe \(unric.org\)](#).

2. What priority should be given to the areas described above?

| | Low | Medium | High |
|---|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Improve pandemic prevention, preparedness and response | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Strengthen health systems | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Accelerate progress in achieving the health-related UN Sustainable Development Goals, in particular universal health coverage | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Apply the 'One Health' approach comprehensively | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Ensure global health is part of all policies, including mapping and activating policies and tools that can contribute to health goals | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |

3. Name five policies that have the most important impact on health goals in your view, and explain why.

1000 character(s) maximum

1. Trade policies, which are defining the commercial determinants of health, including advertising and marketing of unhealthy commodities especially to vulnerable consumers. This also covers pricing and taxation policies, as well as considerations for governance of data ownership and privacy.
2. Climate change and environmental policy, again linked to Planetary/One Health and unequally distributed among populations.
3. Economic and employment policy (move towards 'Wellbeing Economy' and 'beyond-GDP' approaches for measuring progress on global human development).
4. Healthy and sustainable food and nutrition systems and food environments. This includes the implementation of a Planetary/One Health approach in NCDs prevention.
5. Education across lifecourse, including (digital) health literacy, skills and competences, up- and reskilling, relevant for general population, disadvantaged groups, and health and social care sectors workforce (including health workforce migration).

4. What other priorities are more important than those described above? Why?

Which of the issues above should be de-prioritised as a result?

1000 character(s) maximum

Priorities listed in question 3 are all important and urgent issues, and, rather than arguing for de-prioritisation, we encourage fostering better synergies across them to effectively use finite resources to address issues such as food insecurity, climate change, educational inequalities, enhancing regulation and governance of emerging digital and biological technologies (e.g., gene editing), and the imbalance of commercial interests which negatively impact consumer health and contribute to the rising burden of NCDs. Another critical issue which has become more prominent since the last global health strategy is increased global forced migration, whether due to conflict and violence, climate change and natural disasters, or oppression and lack of economic opportunity. This global health strategy would benefit from additional consideration of the complexities of ensuring the best possible access to essential health and services for those entering the EU due to forced migration.

5. What are the main obstacles to achieving these priorities? What measures need to be taken to overcome these obstacles?

1000 character(s) maximum

Main obstacles lay in persistent socio-economic inequalities in health, health emergency and crises preparedness (or lack thereof), power imbalances between public and private interests, poor application of health impacts assessments and foresight tools, lack of co-creative processes that encourage participatory and inclusive governance, and limited successful investment cases for public health. The Strategy can be a vehicle for promoting wellbeing-based solutions, by focusing discussion on sensitive topics around improving health and wellbeing outcomes, and, in so doing, (re-)defining the global health architecture to go beyond a biomedical interpretation and one that develops governing tools/approaches that promote a transformation in systems-thinking. Other measures include performing a systematic analysis of the previous health strategy, building on existing 'best buys', fostering an environment of accountability and leadership, and embedding its implementation in key EU processes.

Part 3. Ensuring robust governance

EU leadership has played a major role in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic in the EU and beyond, especially through the Team Europe approach. However, the EU's global impact can be boosted further, not least given its substantial financial contributions to global health. EU leadership should be strengthened in three ways, together with more effective communication.

The first way, which could have a big impact, is to lead by example and apply an effective and comprehensive health policy within our own borders. Showing we meet our own responsibilities is essential to be credible in our external action—where we ask partners to make significant efforts. There are areas where we could improve and boost its credibility. Examples include: (i) better measures against antimicrobial resistance; (ii) stepping up efforts to ensure universal access to safe, accessible, affordable and innovative pharmaceuticals and technologies to tackle infections and non-communicable diseases (including neglected diseases); (iii) an improved pandemic prevention, preparedness and response framework; and (iv) increasing digitalisation.

6. The importance of leading by example in each of these areas is...?

| | Low | Medium | High |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Universal access to health care | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |

| | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Pandemic prevention, preparedness and response | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Vaccination levels | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Anti-microbial resistance | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Safe, affordable, accessible and innovative pharmaceuticals | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Digitalisation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| Following robust bioethics principles | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |

7. In what other areas should the EU lead by example? Why? Give a maximum of three areas.

500 character(s) maximum

- Recognising health as an essential component of economic growth and reflected in all domestic and foreign policies of the EU
- Addressing physical and mental health inequalities, social determinants of health, gender equality and children's rights. Here, priority should be given to health promotion and disease prevention measures
- Ensuring strong regulation and governance of emerging digital and biological technologies (in line with bioethics principles)

The second way to strengthen EU leadership is to improve coordination so as to speak with one voice— together with Member States, the European Parliament and stakeholders – at global, national and regional level.

8. How could this coordination be strengthened?

1000 character(s) maximum

More coordination amongst EU Member States for global health policy could be achieved through greater alignment across various, relevant sectors with the EU's competence, such as trade and economic policy, but also through enhancing coordination in sectors under Member State competence, including health, education and social policies. Tools such as the European Semester (with its links to the SDGs and RRP) should be utilized to enhance alignment with larger and long-term priorities and bridge across areas of competency. Opportunities for exchange of good practice in health - both between EU Member States as well as international governments – should be encouraged and supported with sufficient resources. Proactive and strategic use of tools such as foresight exercises and health and environmental impact assessments should be expanded. Close engagement between policymakers and technical experts – as well as with the WHO European Regional Office - would also enhance coordination.

The third way to strengthen EU leadership is by ensuring the appropriate and full participation of the EU in international forums and initiatives, including in decision-making. This builds on the EU's commitment to multilateralism.

9. Do you agree or disagree that the EU needs to fully participate in international forums and initiatives?

- Disagree
- Neutral

• Agree

10. How should the EU participate? In what forums and initiatives?

1000 character(s) maximum

The EU should continue contributing to existing multilateral initiatives, with an aim to offer European collective experience and knowledge and commit financial and other resources, in order to improve the efficiency, capacity, and overall impact of such initiatives. Specific examples include agencies and bodies of the United Nations, as well as the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria and GAVI. More should be done to ensure open communication and, when appropriate, alignment with leading private foundations, such as the Gates Foundation and Wellcome Trust. EU participation should illustrate EU added-value, in particular when communicating back progress and achievements to EU citizens. It should recognise the value of international cooperation and the global and interconnected nature of health threats which only can be addressed by strong collaboration, political buy-in and pooling of resources.

Global health requires a strong multilateral approach. This approach must be further strengthened by making the WHO and global health initiatives more efficient, with effective governance and adequate financing, and ensuring full capacity for implementation. This includes a binding pandemic instrument and strengthened international health laws. An improved multilateral approach should ensure transparency, accountability, effectiveness—as well as enforceability of rules.

11. How can the EU support multilateralism with the WHO at its centre? (1000 characters maximum)

1000 character(s) maximum

As has been demonstrated by the COVID-19 pandemic, strong global leadership is imperative for ensuring an aligned, equitable, and effective response to emerging global health threats. The EU has much to contribute to a strong multilateral approach with WHO at its centre. As one of the largest contributors of political and financial support to the WHO – and the United Nations as a whole – the EU can call for effective and robust governance within the WHO and ensuring adequate financing and capacity for implementation of programming. Just as critical, it can align its own global health strategy (and elements of EU health strategy) with WHO priorities, including the Sustainable Development Goals and the European Programme of Work 2020-2025. In order to do so, regular and transparent channels of communication should be established and utilised at the highest levels and routine opportunities for exchanging on implementation and strategy across relevant departments encouraged.

To further support multilateral work, the new strategy should strengthen bilateral cooperation (with non-EU countries) and plurilateral cooperation (with groups of countries, including the G7, G20 and OECD, and develop strategic health partnerships with other regions in the world). This cooperation should be based on mutual responsibility and effectiveness. Cooperation with the US and the EU-African Union Summit of February 2022 have both laid the foundation for improved partnerships in health.

12. How can we best engage bilateral and plurilateral partners? Who are the key partners?

1000 character(s) maximum

The EU should engage bilateral and plurilateral partners on a regular basis, in order to assess progress made towards common targets and ensure global commitments to health are upheld. The EU should also

encourage greater alignment between key health goals and other commitments, including towards addressing climate change or global economic development. Key partners in this include the WHO (HQ and Euro offices), UN agencies, the World Bank, OCED, the IMF, and also key civil society actors at international and European levels (e.g., MSF, IRC, GAVI, the Global Fund). The EU should regularly assess the implementation of its domestic agenda against global commitments, as well, to ensure that efforts are aligned with and complementary. Where possible, the EU could offer its resources and support to take the initiative on gaps in the global health agenda, or to increase its contributions (e.g., SDG3). The EU should continue to offer opportunities for consultation to EU actors to provide input

Global philanthropic organisations take an increasing place in the dialogue on global health discussions, providing more funding than many countries do. A wide range of private and public players and global health initiatives have also emerged. The new strategy should ensure that EU and global efforts complement each other and avoid fragmentation and duplication.

13. How can we ensure efficiency and effectiveness when working with philanthropic organisations and other private and public players and initiatives?

1000 character(s) maximum

Work on the basis of existing initiatives like the SDGs and the Global Immunisation Agenda (amongst many others) to ensure that all are striving towards the same targets and goals. Regular coordination (in multilateral fora as well as in bilateral meetings as described above) to ensure that there are not critical gaps in terms of focus and that efforts are not duplicative.

The EU should apply the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in the collaboration with the private sector, as also concluded by the latest Lancet Commission: <https://www.thelancet.com/commissions/covid19>, as well as the work by the EP Special Committee on Covid-19. It is crucial that principles of transparency, equity, 'do no harm', and conflict of interest are featured prominently in any type of such collaborations, and that private interests are not given precedence over the public interest.

Part 4. Financing our strategy effectively and efficiently

Considerable financing is clearly necessary to address health challenges and problems – an issue unto itself given the resource context in the EU and abroad. The EU should improve coordinating and monitoring its spending to ensure transparency, consistency, proportionality and effectiveness in delivering its health policy goals.

14. Do you agree or disagree that there should be a more comprehensive mapping of all actors and finance strands in the EU and its Member States to monitor financial efforts and results?

- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree

15. Do you agree or disagree that there should be a mapping of all global health players and investments, their goals, results and other details, such as thematic or geographic goals?

- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree

16. Please let us know what other suggestions you have to improve transparency, consistency, proportionality and effectiveness in delivering our health policy goals.

1000 character(s) maximum

- Build a common strategic framework via the global health strategy, complemented with necessary legislation if and where appropriate evidence calls for it. In terms of consistency, it must be ensured that this strategy is 'crisis-proof', and that Member States are given the tools needed to ensure that emergency measures do not divert attention from the core health policy goals;
- In line with recent WHO Europe Regional Director's call for a 'dual-track' approach, the global health strategy should ensure adequate emergency response and preparedness, while also supporting sufficient invest in regular, everyday, essential health programmes and services;
- Centralise the information and resources collected in the process of developing and eventually implementing the strategy;
- Establish sustained structures and mechanisms that bring together key stakeholders to exchange knowledge and good practices, and encourage ambitious, integrated actions at ground level.

Part 5. Other comments and ideas

17. Please share any other comments or ideas

2000 character(s) maximum

The EU needs to be more active in defining the overarching global health architecture in an often 'turbulent' geopolitical environment. The EU must advocate that the priorities of the global health strategy 'guide' the political priorities (and financing priorities) of international governance structures (e.g., the G7/G20) and encourage a shift from traditional biomedical approaches to health to those which incorporate the impacts of and policy responses needed to address many global challenges (inflation/food insecurity/energy poverty /climate/humanitarian crises/emerging and unregulated biological and information technology). The WHO should lead this guidance, as the normative health agency, but the EU can fortify it with political action and go a step beyond where needed (e.g., supporting growth of 'economies of wellbeing'). International coordination and giving health a permanent seat at the table is essential to ensure that attaining the best health outcomes remains a key priority and that financing is committed accordingly.

Considering the vast resources Europe has (economic, political, etc.) relative to most world regions, we would consider that Europe should be making an effort to lead by example in ALL of the proposed areas (as well as climate/environment, health equity, and workforce). However, this is not to say that Europe will necessarily BE the example to follow - we need to be receptive to learning from and respecting the experience/expertise that comes from other regions. An important 'advantage' that can be leveraged in implementing the global health strategy is the experience many countries in the Global South have had 'leapfrogging' in sectors like finance and telecommunications, or regulations - and already somewhat in health service provision. But key to making this long-term sustainable, equitable and acceptable will be having good governance structures to support further growth of innovative solutions.

Contact

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