

MEP Heart Group

MEPs call to prioritise cardiovascular unmet needs in EU funding programmes

Topics: Cardiovascular disease, EU funding, COVID-19, health policy, digital health, research & innovation

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Brussels, 28 June 2021: EU funding instruments must prioritise unmet needs in cardiovascular disease. This is what the Members of the European Parliament (MEP) Heart Group will call for during an event in the presence of the European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education, and Youth and the Deputy Director General of DG SANTE today.

Despite a period of decline in cardiovascular mortality, cardiovascular disease remains the leading cause of death in the EU and a major societal burden.

Cardiovascular disease is not always preventable. It impacts people of all ages and contributes substantially to premature death in the EU (around 20% before the age of 65).¹ Many conditions are inherited, some may be caused or worsened by other chronic conditions or their treatments, and others may be incurred or exacerbated due to ageing. As most cardiac conditions cannot be cured, understanding their molecular causes and developing personalised approaches will provide new treatment pathways for the many patients affected. Very few innovative cardiovascular therapies have been developed in recent years despite the many unmet patient needs.² The pandemic has further aggravated the burden of CVD, leaving many people with new cardiovascular conditions after recovering from COVID-19.

In its statement **'The EU funding landscape: promoting research and innovation for cardiovascular health'** the MEP Heart Group calls on the European Commission and the Programme Committees of Horizon Europe and EU4Health to:

- Support cardiovascular research, from basic to translational clinical research, for new discoveries that can improve the lives of millions of people in the EU and beyond.
- Design a public private research partnership on cardiovascular disease focusing on the complete patient pathway.
- Support the building of digital infrastructure systems to ensure that high-quality, standardised cardiovascular data can be used effectively to support personalised clinical decision-making.
- Integrate cardiovascular registries, such as EuroHeart³, as use cases under the European Health Data Space initiative.

¹ ESC & EHN. Fighting cardiovascular disease – a blueprint for EU action, 2020. <https://mepheartgroup.eu/facts-figures/>

² Substantial gaps remain in pharmaceutical treatments for cardiovascular disease. Only 3 out of 55 new medicines approved by EMA in 2020 to help fight CVD. 4% of clinical trials started in 2020 relate to #CVD. Read more EFPIA Pipeline Review Report <https://www.efpia.eu/news-events/the-efpia-view/blog-articles/a-healthy-pipeline-will-new-innovations-deliver-for-patients/>

³EuroHeart: European Unified Registries on Heart Care Evaluation and Randomized Trials, <https://academic.oup.com/eurheartj/article/40/33/2745/5556633>

- Encourage Member States' joint actions on early detection of cardiovascular disease aimed at setting effective policy interventions in the continuum of care to reduce the incidence of cardiovascular disease.
- Leverage the potential of the Pharmaceutical Strategy to accelerate innovation in the development of high quality, safe and effective cardiovascular medicines, harnessing the benefits of digital technologies.

The Group's full statement is available [here](#)

Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education, and Youth, says:

"Our new Research and Innovation programme Horizon Europe will contribute to a healthier Europe. Support to cardiovascular research and innovation is one of our priorities and we hope this will bring new clinical discoveries that can have a significant impact on the lives of millions of European people."

Today's event will gather participants from across the health sector, including EU decision-makers, scientists, healthcare providers, health insurance, patients, and the healthcare industry.

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Note to editor:

The meeting is organised by the Members of the European Parliament (MEP) Heart Group, which is coordinated by the European Heart Network (EHN) and the European Society of Cardiology (ESC).

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[About the MEP Heart Group](#)

The Members of the European Parliament (MEP) Heart Group is a forum which provides MEPs with an opportunity to generate dialogue, outreach and activities at EU and Member State level. It is composed of MEPs who have an interest in promoting measures that will help reduce the burden of cardiovascular diseases (CVD) in Europe and raise CVD as a priority on the EU political agenda.

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[About the European Heart Network](#)

The European Heart Network (EHN) is a Brussels-based alliance of foundations and associations dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke and representing patients throughout Europe.

[About the European Society of Cardiology](#)

The European Society of Cardiology brings together health care professionals from more than 150 countries, working to advance cardiovascular medicine and help people lead longer, healthier lives.