

A comprehensive strategy for promoting health in a post-Covid19 era through science, innovation & education

The Congress of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party convening in Dublin, Ireland, on 2-4 June 2022:

Acknowledges that:

- the spread of COVID-19 has tragically cost the lives of millions of people in Europe and the world, caused irreparable damage and has caused and is still causing, severe disruptions to healthcare systems;
- a harmonised, strong and fast answer is required to face current and future pandemics and major public health challenges;
- as part of building a European Health Union, the European Commission proposed on 11 November 2020 a new health security framework fit for future health challenges, based on lessons learnt from combatting the coronavirus;
- behavioural risks and lifestyle factors, such as smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, physical inactivity, obesity, and unhealthy food intake are added risk factors for severe outcomes of COVID-19 infections. Policies and actions aiming at reducing risky behaviours and promoting healthier ones can significantly prevent the development of Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer;
- the European Commission and subsequently the European Parliament, led by Renew Europe's Rapporteur Veronique Trillet-Lenoir, have adopted '*Europe's Beating Cancer Plan*' and the report on '*Strengthening Europe in the fight against cancer- towards a comprehensive and coordinated strategy*' bringing forward a set of actions to support, coordinate or supplement the Member States' efforts at every stage of the disease;
- Europe's Beating Cancer Plan is an important pillar of the European Health Union, focusing on the entire disease pathway. However, there is no specific cardiovascular health Plan yet at European-level;
- currently, approximately six million new cases of cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) are identified in Europe alone every year, with Eastern Europe presenting a significantly higher burden compared to the rest of the region. Overall, more than 49 million people in the EU live with CVDs, at an economic cost of around EUR 210 billion annually;
- non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are responsible for 80% of the disease burden in the EU countries and the leading causes of avoidable premature deaths and are the leading cause of mortality and disability in Europe;

Resolution:

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Year and Congress:

Dublin, June 2022

Category:

Agriculture,
Environment and
Energy

Page:

1

- Renew Europe's Priorities 2019-24 note that "We must support scientific excellence, strengthen collaboration between academia and industry and promote innovation as well as evidence-based policymaking."
- the EU has an important role to play in improving public health, preventing and managing diseases, mitigating sources of danger to human health, and harmonising health strategies between Member States.

Calls on the ALDE Party and its member organisations:

- continue working towards making possible for all citizens of Europe a decent life in a free society, as stipulated in ALDE's Stuttgart Declaration;
- to take responsibility for future generations, by prioritising science-based measures and supporting actions encouraging healthier lifestyles while also actions aiming at reducing the harm caused by modifiable risk factors;
- to follow the important progress made in public health with the adoption of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan by further developing a plan to address chronic diseases;
- to adopt as a priority the fight against NCDs by initiating the development of an integrated European chronic disease prevention plan which establishes evidence-based and risk-proportionate regulatory standards grounded on best practices, independent scientific expertise and guidance;
- to support the incorporation of chronic disease education into classroom learning and extra-curricular activities as an efficient way to help students acquire the skills and knowledge they need to prevent and manage chronic disease;
- to encourage independent scientific, medical and socio-economic research of the health risks associated with products and behaviours compared to risk mitigating options, as well as the evidence supporting the link between a number of different risk factors and disease and treatment outcomes;
- to encourage continuous dialogue between academia, industry, regulators, and civil society organisations which play an important role in providing financial support and technical assistance to the design and implementation of chronic disease programmes;
- to coordinate all activities within the EU4Health program and to allow all non-EU member countries to participate as Associated Partners.

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Agriculture,
Environment and
Energy

Page:

2