



2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT

A HEALTHY PLANET FOR HEALTHY PEOPLE



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To achieve a strong Europe, we need leaders unafraid to prioritise health

BY GÉNON K. JENSEN, FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The scientific evidence on how climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss threaten and already impact people's health across the European Union has steadily increased and underlines the need for urgent action to prevent further suffering. The health of children, the elderly, those living with disease, and those experiencing socio-economic hardships and health inequalities is particularly at risk. While our alliance has secured significant progress on several key files in 2023-2024, swift, decisive measures are still urgently needed at the EU level to protect people's health.

For over 20 years now, I have seen scientific evidence amass showing how pollution, from a cocktail of substances, impacts everyone's health – whether the pollutants are in the air we breathe, in the water we drink, in the food we eat or in the products that surround us. Negative health impacts, such as cancer, infertility, and impaired immune, hormonal and reproductive systems can result even from low levels of exposure to environmental pollution.

The economic and societal costs of pollution are huge. For example, we know that in EEA countries, exposure to PFAS – also known as “forever chemicals” – costs €52-84bn every single year and removing PFAS from water comes at a whopping cost of €238bn annually. Beyond its economic costs, we must remember that PFAS pollution directly affects people and entire communities across Europe. This is why HEAL launched a campaign to shed light on the real-life consequences of PFAS pollution and why we are calling for a ban on those chemicals. If we continue to have a system in which pollutants are not properly regulated, they will continue to wreak havoc on our health. As they increase in our environment and in our bodies, so will the costs.



And we have the support of people across Europe for EU action to prevent pollution. A recent Eurobarometer survey found that more than three-quarters of Europeans (78%) agree that the environment has a direct effect on their daily life and their health and support EU action to protect it.

Thankfully, we had significant successes over the past year. For example:

- Together with our partners in the health sector, we have secured a more health-protective Ambient Air Quality Directive (AAQD) revision. This is a major step towards clean air across Europe.
- The introduction of hazard classes for endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) in the legislation on the classification, labelling and packaging of chemical substances (CLP) is also a significant win for HEAL and the EDC-Free Europe campaign coalition HEAL hosts.
- Ministers and representatives from the WHO European Region signed the Budapest Declaration on Environment and Health at the 7th Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health. The declaration, which HEAL helped shape, aims to accelerate the just transition towards resilient, healthy, equitable and sustainable societies, and prioritise action on health challenges related to climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss.

It is important to take the time to celebrate our achievements – and we do, with our team, our members and our partners – but we cannot rest on our laurels. If we are serious about preventing diseases and promoting longer, healthier lives, we need the European Union to stick to the health protection and goals set out in the Green Deal Commitment, the Zero Pollution Action Plan and the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability. We need an updated and robust REACH regulation that truly protects people’s health. We need an EU-wide PFAS restriction and a commitment to diminish the use of harmful pesticides. If political leaders ignore health and fail to address the health impacts of climate change, biodiversity and pollution, the results will be dire: higher mortality rates, unbearable health costs, negative impacts on reproduction, pollution that cannot be cleared, diminishing fertile land and freshwater reserves.

We can prevent this grim future, but to achieve a strong Europe, we need leaders who are unafraid to prioritise health – leaders who are ready to walk the talk. As a new European policy cycle begins, HEAL will continue to act as a watchdog, and as a partner in building a more health-protective approach for our communities today and tomorrow.



An alliance of organisations

HEAL is the leading not-for-profit organisation addressing how the environment affects human health in the European Union (EU) and beyond. We work to shape laws and policies that promote planetary and human health and protect those most affected by pollution, and to raise awareness on the benefits of environmental action for health.

As an alliance, we bring independent and expert evidence from the health community to EU and global decision-making processes to inspire disease prevention and to promote a toxic-free, low-carbon, fair and healthy future. We work closely with scientists, including through research projects, to translate independent science to policy and promote health protective regulations.

HEAL is made up of a network of member organisations, who meet in person once a year at an annual general meeting in Brussels. This is known as the Annual General Assembly during which HEAL members determine and endorse the broad policy guidelines of the organisation, and fulfil their governance duties such as approving the audited annual accounts and reviewing membership applications.

Every four years, the General Assembly also elects HEAL's board, the Executive Committee. This body is responsible for setting priorities, overseeing the implementation of HEAL's annual work programme, and enlisting the support of its members.

The HEAL secretariat feeds policy information from the European scene to the membership, advising on interventions as political opportunities arise. It monitors policy developments, channels members' input into draft legislation, and advocates key messages to the EU institutions through thematic campaigns.



Our members

Today, HEAL has over 80 member organisations representing health professionals, not-for-profit health insurers, doctors, nurses, patient groups, citizens, women's groups, youth groups, environmental NGOs, scientists and public health institutes.

Members include international and Europe-wide organisations, as well as national and local groups, and together, we amplify the voices of over 200 million people across the 53 countries of the European region. In 2023, we welcomed two new members.

Our members are deeply engaged on HEAL advocacy files, depending on their areas of interest and expertise. Having a committed membership base that is informed, engaged and well represented is at the core of HEAL's ability to succeed.

For a full list of current HEAL members and their activities, go to members.env-health.org.



ABOUT HEAL

Our vision

A world in which today's and future generations can benefit from a clean environment to enjoy long and healthy lives. A world that is free of health-harming chemicals, where the air we breathe and food we eat are health promoting; and a future in which we have transitioned in a just way to a toxic free, de-carbonised, climate resilient and sustainable economy and way of life.

Our mission

We work to ensure that health evidence and health voices are heard by politicians and policymakers in Europe and beyond. The aim is to protect those most harmed, most at risk by pollution, such as the foetus, children, pregnant women and the elderly, and those with existing health problems or living in especially exposed environments, and facing health inequalities.

We have strong relationships with our European members and we partner with organisations around the world to raise awareness and share evidence, change laws, and defend and improve people's health and wellbeing.

We help shape laws on chemicals, pesticides, air quality, climate change and energy by sharing real life stories on the health harm of pollution, and making the economic case for environments that promote health and a just transition for all.

We focus particularly on building knowledge about the opportunities for reducing cancer, lung and heart disease, allergies and asthma, diabetes, obesity, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, autism and ADHD, genital birth defects, premature puberty and infertility.

Our strategic goals leading up to 2030

1 PREVENT: Target priorities

We advocate for the integration of health prevention into environment, climate policies and sustainable development by informing people and policymakers about the benefits to health of reducing environmental pollution.

Globally, HEAL supports the 17 goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including for health, energy, chemicals and climate change.

Our action contributes to ensuring that Europe continues to lead by example. The target areas foster leadership for health promoting environments worldwide and aim to raise awareness and reduce the transboundary nature of pollution.

2 UNITE: Bridge global and local action

We focus on developing HEAL into a global collaborative network of partners with fully engaged members representing all aspects of public health. To do this, we will build strong grassroots capacity, create synergies and facilitate links with cutting edge scientific expertise.

HEAL's role as a watchdog on environmental issues affecting health and as a catalyst for all levels of environmental, climate health action in Europe and beyond is achieved by widely sharing scientific, medical, health and economic evidence through effective advocacy.

3 COMMUNICATE: Mobilise for healthy people and a healthy planet

We want to inspire action by raising awareness of the health and economic benefits of strong new health friendly and sustainable environmental policies.

By communicating the health and economic benefits of global, EU and national policy developments agreements on mercury, chemicals, air quality, energy and climate, our network has become an international hub for health and environmental information, science and policy development.

Our messages reach global health experts and practitioners as well as individuals and communities. They stimulate thinking and mobilise action on pollution prevention for public and planetary health and a just transition.

In Europe, HEAL's targets to protect and promote health include:

2030

- A toxics-free environment, free of hazardous chemicals
- An 80% reduction of synthetic pesticides in the EU
- Air quality in line with WHO recommendations
- A coal power generation phase out
- A reduction of greenhouse gases of at least 65%

2035

- The end of use of synthetic pesticides
- A fossil-free power sector

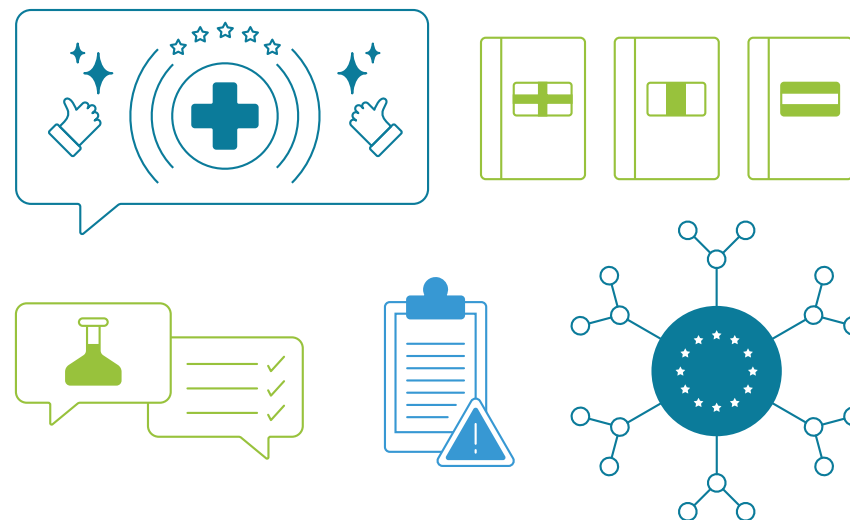
2040

- A climate neutral Europe



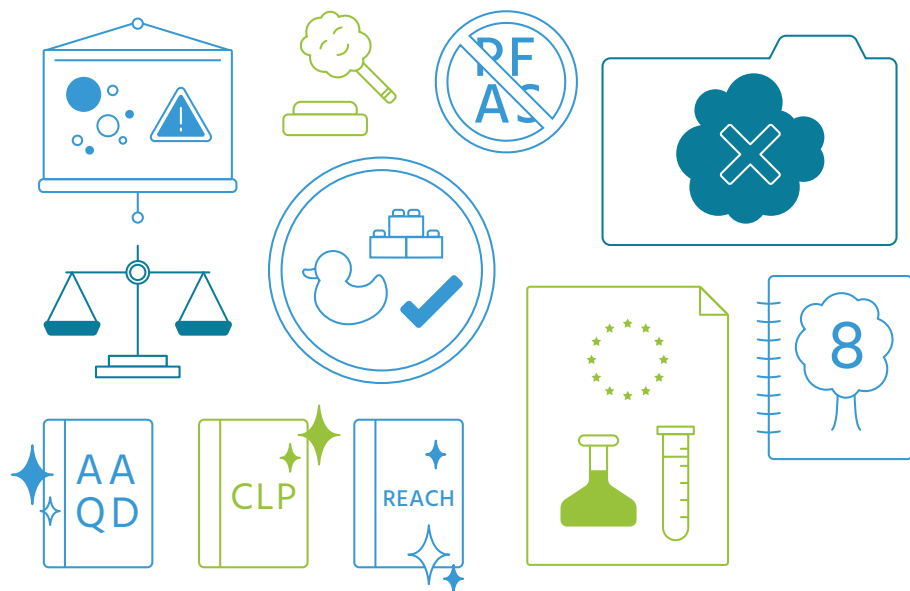
A year of strategic advocacy and expanded engagement

HEAL has seen a year of significant growth and impactful advocacy, leveraging a diverse set of tools and platforms to shape policy and engage the public across Europe. Our work in 2023-2024 exemplifies our commitment to ensuring that health is at the forefront of environmental policy discussions, particularly in the context of climate change, air quality, and chemical and pesticides safety.



Through our communications activities, we aim to give visibility to HEAL's core advocacy demands. To do so, we:

- Translate the science for policy deliberations
- Communicate through members, partners and coalitions for a Europe-wide multiplier effect
- Make our content available in multiple languages
- Communicate the urgency to act based on scientific facts



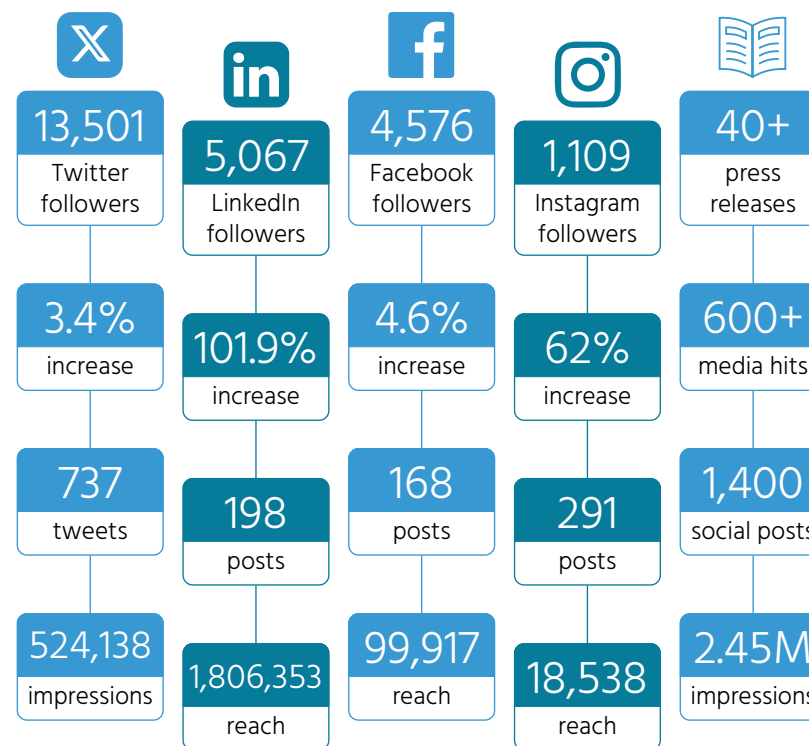
Overall, we were active on 16 EU policy files and helped advance five legislative proposal and decisions, including:

- The revision of the Ambient Air Quality Directive (AAQD) as well as two national level clean air files in Poland relating to AAQD implementation
- The EU legislation on the classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals (CLP)
- The REACH legislation, which sets out how the European Union registers, evaluates, authorises and restricts chemicals
- Endocrine disruptor hazard classes
- The restriction of PFAS, and other harmful chemicals (e.g. PFHxA)
- The 8th Environment Action Programme
- The Nature Restoration Law
- The Toy Safety Directive
- The Zero Pollution Action Plan
- The EU Court of Justice decision to keep the ban of chlorpyrifos-methyl
- Phase-out of five endocrine-disrupting pesticides

Expanding reach and impact through media and social platforms

In 2023-2024, HEAL’s visibility and reach were markedly enhanced through strategic and proactive media engagement. We published 42 press releases and notes, and achieved over 600 media hits across Europe, reflecting our increased capacity to shape public discourse on critical environmental health issues. This media coverage spanned a range of topics, from air pollution to the revision of the EU chemicals regulation REACH, and was amplified by our Polish office’s strong regional presence.

Our social media activities also yielded substantial results. We published 1,394 posts, not counting shares or retweets, which resulted in 2,448,946 impressions or number of times HEAL’s content was viewed. Recognising LinkedIn’s potential for professional networking and advocacy, we invested more capacity into this platform, which paid off with increased and meaningful engagement. These efforts allowed us to reach new audiences, including policymakers, health professionals, and environmental advocates, ensuring our messages resonated widely and effectively.

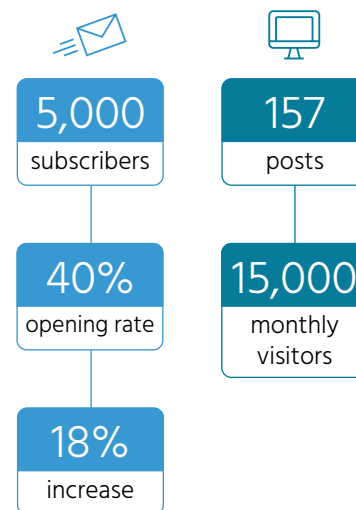




Engaging stakeholders through webinars and educational content

In line with our mission to build capacity and disseminate scientific knowledge, HEAL hosted 34 webinars in 2023-2024. These webinars covered a wide array of topics, including air pollution, the health impacts of EDCs and the urgent need for climate action. Each session served as a platform for knowledge exchange, empowering participants with the latest science and advocacy strategies. The webinars also facilitated dialogue between stakeholders at the EU and national levels, fostering a more unified approach to environmental health challenges.

Our commitment to clear, accessible communication is also reflected in the production of 33 reports, briefings, videos and infographics. Often available in multiple languages, they were designed to distil complex information into easily understandable formats, aiding our advocacy efforts across different regions and topics. Infographics played a crucial role in our campaigns, such as those advocating for the revision of the AAQD, by visually demonstrating the health impacts of air pollution and the economic benefits of stricter air quality standards.



Strengthening direct communication through newsletters and website engagement

HEAL's newsletters have long been a cornerstone of our communications efforts. In 2023-2024, we grew the total subscriber number to 5,000 people receiving the various newsletter options that HEAL offers. This growth, coupled with an 18% increase in opening rates to just under 40%, is a testament to the effectiveness of our refined newsletter strategy. By being more strategic about when and how frequently we send out news and press notes, we ensured that our messages were not only received but also acted upon. This direct line of communication with our audience has been critical in mobilising support for key initiatives, such as our campaigns on clean air and chemical safety.

Our website, a vital resource for both the public and policymakers, featured 157 posts in 2023-2024. Monthly visits averaged 15,000 over the period. The most visited pages reflected the public's growing interest in actionable advice, with our "10 ways to protect health and the environment" page consistently ranking at the top. Following the European elections in May 2024, our newly launched elections campaign page quickly became a focal point for visitors, highlighting the importance of health-focused environmental policies in the new EU policy cycle.

Celebrating 20 years of HEAL

Founded in 2003 by Executive Director Génon K. Jensen, HEAL turned 20 in 2023. Together with our members and partners, we took advantage of our Annual General Assembly in October to mark this special occasion – to celebrate our achievements in protecting people’s health against pollution and climate change over the past 20 years, and to look ahead.

In front of a packed audience, Elena Montani, Member of Cabinet of EU Environment Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius, and Evelyne Decoster, Environment Advisor to the Belgian Federal Minister of Climate, the Environment, Sustainable Development and Green Deal, gave speeches, highlighting the importance of HEAL’s advocacy for better health protection.

A panel discussion with Dr Barbara Hoffmann, Professor of Environmental Epidemiology at the University of Düsseldorf and ERS Advocacy Council chair, Laura Sullivan, Executive Director of WeMove Europe, and Stéphane Horel, investigative journalist at Le Monde, further honed in on how they are addressing health threats from environmental pollution and climate change in their work, and how to better connect across communities. The common theme in the discussion was prevention, both in policymaking, primary care and environmental health research.

Dr Barbara Hoffmann pointed out: **“As a medical doctor, I want to make health better, and where I see my role is not necessarily curing single patients but preventing it through reducing environmental pollution.”** She also discussed the general knowledge gap on the impact of pollution: **“People cannot protect themselves, they in most cases don’t even know about pollution in their environment. That is why we need strong legislation.”**



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ELENA MONTANI, STÉPHANE HOREL, BARBARA HOFFMANN, EVELYNE DECOSTER AND LAURA SULLIVAN

Stéphane Horel, who worked on the regulation of endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs), co-authored the 'Monsanto Papers', and took part in the Forever Pollution Project on PFAS discussed the importance of awareness raising: "People don't have a choice in what is happening – that is my main drive, the issue of absence of consent when it comes to environmental health."

Collaboration with members and partners is essential to achieving HEAL's vision of a healthy planet for healthy people. We will continue ensuring that EU policies take into account health-centred and science-based information, and that HEAL's members are informed and empowered to drive the environmental health agenda on a national level.

"We have made an impact in putting health considerations more firmly in major environmental and climate policies over the past two decades. But our work is far from done. Health professionals are among the most trusted voices in society, and this voice is needed more than ever today. This is why the continued engagement of the HEAL network is essential."

GÉNON K. JENSEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



HEAL SECRETARIAT AND MEMBERS AT 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY
PHOTO CREDITS: ANTOINE RASSART

Partnering with the World Health Organization

HEAL participates in several expert groups and networks, including at World Health Organization (WHO) level. As a member of the WHO European Environment and Health Task Force, serving on its steering committee, we actively contribute our expertise and policy analysis to shape environmental health policy direction within the WHO European region. 2023 marked a significant year for HEAL in that regard.

As part of its 20th anniversary celebrations, HEAL hosted the [European Environment and Health Task Force \(EHTF\)](#) in its Brussels office in April 2023. The EHTF leads the implementation and monitoring of the [WHO European Environment and Health Process \(EHP\)](#) which ensures environmental and health issues are high on the political agenda, and supports the preparation of the Ministerial Conferences on Environment and Health. It was the first time ever that a EHTF meeting was hosted by a civil society organisation.

In July 2024, a delegation of HEAL team members together with over 10 HEAL member organisations took part in the 7th Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, organised by the WHO Regional Office for Europe in Budapest, Hungary. This ensured that health, patient, environmental and other civil society groups were able to give input into the future health agenda for the WHO European region, in view of the triple crises of environmental pollution, climate change, and biodiversity loss.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: INTERVENTION BY HEAL DEPUTY DIRECTOR ANNE STAUFFER, HEAL DELEGATION AT THE WHO 7TH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH, SIDE-EVENT PANNELLISTS AND HEAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR G NOL JENSEN PRESENTING.

20 YEARS OF HEAL

Invited to participate in a high-level panel, HEAL Executive Director Génon K. Jensen emphasised the urgency to speed up national and European-wide political action to make zero pollution a reality in Europe: **“The health effects of pollution are compounding. We need zero harm from pollution, zero money for pollution and zero delay in stopping pollution. The polluters need to bear the costs of their actions. HEAL calls for ministers to step up by banning harmful chemicals, ensuring people have clean air and by cleaning up existing pollution.”**

As part of the conference, HEAL hosted a session with the European Commission’s Directorate-General (DG) for Research and Innovation, DG Environment, and the European Environment Agency (EEA) on the contribution of pan-European research collaboration to evidence-based zero pollution and health policy. HEAL was also invited to host an exhibition booth during the conference.

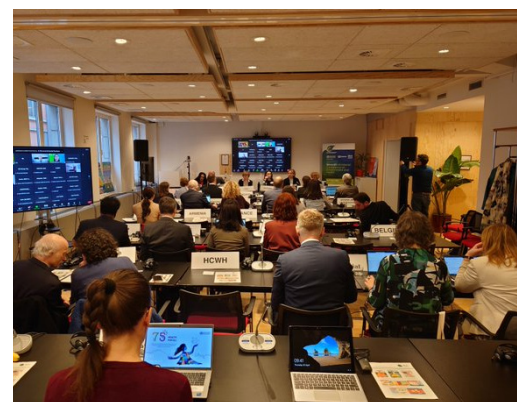
The adoption of the [Budapest Declaration](#) on Environment and Health, to which HEAL provided expertise as a member of the EHTF, was signed by ministers and representatives from the WHO European Region, with only Russia withdrawing. The declaration aims to accelerate the just transition towards resilient, healthy, equitable and sustainable societies, and prioritise action on health challenges related to climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. A major outcome of the declaration are the “EHP Partnerships” as a new mechanism to accelerate these efforts by bringing together countries and other partners. Four partnerships were launched on human biomonitoring, health sector and climate action synergies, healthy mobility and youth collaboration.

HEAL [welcomes](#) the clear diagnosis of health threats and the commitment expressed in the Budapest Declaration. However, it is crucial that health and environment ministers now walk the talk, and establish time-bound and tangible goals to set the actions outlined in motion. They should also step up in the implementation of the Budapest Declaration by taking action to phase out fossil fuels and to prevent pollution particularly on air, chemicals and pesticides, for everyone, but especially for those most vulnerable.

As a trusted member of the WHO EHTF, HEAL is in a unique position to monitor the decisions policymakers make and call on them to meet the commitment they have made.

HEAL delegation to the ministerial conference

- European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients’ Associations
- International Society of Doctors for Environment Italy
- INCHES network
- Réseau Environnement Santé
- Women Engage for a Common Future International
- European Respiratory Society
- European Public Health Alliance
- London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
- Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment
- Institute of Public Health of Serbia
- Clean Air Action Group Hungary (Levegő Munkacsoport)
- Slovenian Institute for Health and Environment
- HEAL Secretariat



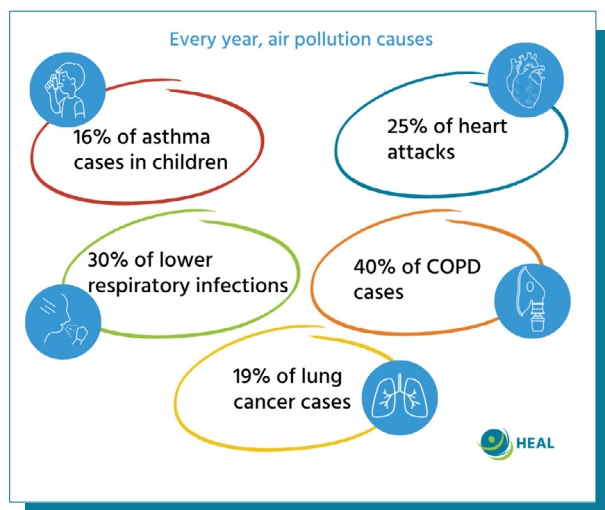
HEAL HOSTED THE 13TH EHTF MEETING ON 20 APRIL 2023 IN BRUSSELS



HEAL’S BOOTH AT THE EXHIBITION WAS HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL

Clean Air For Health

Air pollution is the single largest environmental risk to health. It causes numerous noncommunicable diseases, such as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, stroke and lung cancer, and increases the risk for acute respiratory infections. Everyone is vulnerable to its impacts, and some are more at risk, including people who are already ill, children, the elderly, pregnant women, and those facing health inequalities. The health burden from poor air quality in the EU is unacceptably high, with hundreds of thousands of premature deaths and hundreds of billions of euros in health costs each year.



For over a decade, HEAL has been calling for an update of the scientifically outdated EU Clean Air Standards, a need which became even more apparent following the publication of the [2021 WHO air quality guidelines](#). Compared to these health-based recommendations, the current EU legally binding limit values (from 2008) for particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) are significantly weaker. The European Commission's 2021 Zero Pollution Action Plan, launched as part of the EU Green Deal, committed to revising the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive (AAQD), the legal instrument crucial in regulating air quality across EU Member States.

From the publication of the European Commission's revision proposal in October 2022 to the EU Council and Parliament reaching a political agreement in February 2024, HEAL rallied its health and medical network at EU level and in key member states to provide health expertise for legislative improvements and [shared our demands](#) with EU decision-makers for all key policy junctures in the revision process.

Because of the health sector's insistence, the revised AAQD is a major step forward towards clean air in Europe, in the short- and long-term.

The provisional agreement included updates on maximum levels for the major air pollutants, strengthened monitoring requirements, and better information to the public including vulnerable groups. The draft law also introduced new access to justice and compensation rules. It is now at the finish line, having received confirmation from the European Parliament in April 2024.

"Last night's Ambient Air Quality Directive deal is a major step forward towards clean air in Europe. While regrettably the compromise falls short on fully updating with the scientific recommendations, the package has a huge potential to lessen people's suffering, prevent disease and achieve economic savings."

ANNE STAUFFER, HEAL DEPUTY DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC LEAD

We achieved this success with five key advocacy components:

1

Clear and recognisable key messages



2

Advocacy towards all decision-makers involved in the revision process

European Parliament, Council and the EU Commission: through briefings, letters, meetings and enhanced communications activities.

3

Relying on and disseminating the latest scientific evidence

For example on the health harm from low air pollution levels, bringing forward the voices of patients and those most at risk from air pollution, and highlighting the economic impacts of air pollution.

SHIFTING PUBLIC AND POLITICAL OPINION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

In **Poland**, we rallied organisations and individuals from the health sector for targeted advocacy, including personalised letters to MEPs, high-level meetings with the Ministry of Environment, and media initiatives highlighting the health impacts of air pollution. We shared the information of the first ever diagnosis of air pollution as the cause for a child's asthma – the story of Maciek – and received extensive media coverage, shifting public understanding of air pollution's impact. Our efforts contributed to Poland shifting position and supporting the trilogue agreement in spring 2024.



MACIEK DREW A PICTURE EXPLAINING HOW HE GOT ILL

In **Germany**, we collaborated with the German Medical Association and the German Climate and Health Alliance in joint letters and media briefings, resulting in significant public and media engagement. Our concerted efforts contributed to Germany switching position to supporting the AAQD provisional agreement.

4

Active HEAL national member organisations as well as health partners engaged with EU decision-makers and their ministers

This led to a record number of health organisations being active for clean air, including those from Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Slovenia and Sweden. This engagement was well noticed by policymakers, with the lead MEP on the AAQD revision, MEP Javi Lopez thanking health groups for their engagement in the European Parliament plenary.

HEAL JOINS FORCES WITH OTHER BRUSSELS-BASED HEALTH GROUPS TO SET UP THE EUROPEAN HEALTHY AIR COALITION (EUHAC)

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

5

Supporting advocacy efforts with strategic communications

We published infographics on [our main demands](#) and on [the disease burden caused by air pollution](#), the economic cost of inaction on clean air, and the consequences of delays. We also ran social media campaigns which attracted significant engagement, with over 1.6 million impressions, and a Clean Air petition supported by more than 25 health partners.




ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2023, HEAL TEAM MEMBERS WERE IN STRASBOURG TO STAND WITH OTHER CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS FROM AROUND EUROPE TO CALL ON MEPS TO VOTE FOR AMBITIOUS, LEGALLY-BINDING AIR QUALITY STANDARDS







PHOTO CREDITS: EEB

Putting health at the centre of EU energy and climate policies

The health impacts of burning fossil fuels are significant, ranging from the immediate effects of air pollution to the long-term consequences of climate change, which is fuelled by the burning of fossil fuels. As Europe advances towards a healthier, more sustainable future under the European Green Deal, a swifter transition to renewable energy sources, energy savings, and the phasing-out of fossil fuels is crucial for people's health.



SIX LONG-TERM HEALTH COMMUNITY DEMANDS

-  **Update** national climate commitments under the Paris Agreement, build health into those plans
-  **High income countries** to provide the promised transfer of funds to low-income countries
-  **Deliver** a rapid and just transition away from fossil fuels, starting with immediately cutting all related permits, subsidies and financing for fossil fuels
-  **Build** climate resilient, low-carbon, sustainable health systems
-  **High income countries** to make larger cuts to greenhouse gas emissions, in line with a 1.5°C temperature goal
-  **Ensure** that pandemic recovery investments support climate action and reduce social and health inequities

HEAL has actively engaged in shaping EU policies that align environmental health with climate action, especially during a pivotal period leading up to the 2024 European Parliament elections. We focused on presenting and sharing evidence on how health is threatened from accelerating climate change, including from the renowned Lancet Countdown, the European Environment Agency (EEA) and EU funded research projects, such as ENBEL (Enhancing Belmont Research Action to support EU policy making on climate change and health), EXHAUSTION and ATHLETE (Advancing Tools for Human Early Lifecourse Exposome Research and Translation) in which HEAL is a partner.

As part of these projects, HEAL co-organised events during the European Public Health Week and the policy conference EXHAUSTION. The events showcased respectively novel research findings on health impacts of climate change from the ENBEL network of climate change and health research projects and the latest cutting-edge results on warming and air pollution developments in Europe, including from wildfires and health effects of interactions between heat and air pollution.

Advocating for a healthy energy transition

A key focus of HEAL's work has been promoting the shift towards healthy energy as part of the EU's healthy energy transition. Throughout 2023, HEAL intensified this focus by developing infographics and social media materials that highlighted the health effects of wood burning, underlining that wood burning is neither good for the climate, nor for health. These resources played a crucial role in raising awareness and advocating for stricter clean air standards that protect public health.

HEAL's efforts to phase out subsidies for coal, oil and gas also remained a central component of our broader climate and health advocacy. By engaging in key policy discussions and presenting the latest evidence on the health risks associated with fossil fuel use, HEAL contributed to critical debates, including the midterm review of the EU's 8th Environment Action Programme, as well as the EU strategic agenda.

We widely communicated the findings of the first ever EU climate risk assessment EUCRA, which included health as one of five key risk pillars:

“Health groups have long underlined that health needs to be at the heart of EU climate assessments and action, so it is welcome news to see the health risks thoroughly assessed, and vulnerable groups considered. EUCRA issues a dire warning that if we don't act now, some of the health impacts will become catastrophic by 2100. The health risks identified lead to a crystal-clear prescription, which includes taking swifter action to mitigate climate change, adopting health protective measures in adaptation policies, as well as strengthening clean air, zero pollution, nature protection and restoration policies, as a way to increase health and climate resilience.”

ANNE STAUFFER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC LEAD

WOOD BURNING

A false solution fuelling the climate crisis and harming health

Burning wood in households and in power and thermal plants emits air pollutants, and contributes to an accelerated climate crisis, which affects people's health.

IN EUROPE, WOOD BURNING IS GROWING BECAUSE:



In the EU, it is classified as a renewable energy source and subsidised



Energy poverty is on the rise, leading to more people burning wood



In Western Europe, burning wood is considered comfortable and cosy



There is a widespread belief that burning wood is climate-friendly (when it's the contrary)

WOOD BURNING RELEASES HEALTH-HARMING POLLUTANTS LINKED TO:

- CO2
- PM10, PM2.5
- Methane
- Black Carbon
- Carbon Monoxide
- Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs)
- Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)
- Carcinogenic compounds

- Ischemic heart disease
- Lung cancer
- Respiratory and pulmonary diseases
- Stroke
- Premature mortality
- Childhood asthma
- Poor cardiovascular health
- Low birth weight



2018: Total health-related social costs of outdoor air pollution due to residential heating and cooking (gas, coal, wood) in the EU27+UK
Source: health.ec.europa.eu/press-10-health-impact-eu27-uk

€ 29 BILLION

WHO IS AT RISK?

Air pollution is the top environmental threat to health in Europe and everyone is vulnerable to its impacts. The groups most at risk include **the elderly, patients, people already ill, pregnant women, children and those facing health inequalities.**

HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS

For policy makers:

- End the classification of biomass as a renewable energy form, and its subsidisation.
- Incentivise renewable energy and heating and energy savings, with a priority for the people living in energy poverty.

For health professionals:

- Highlight the evidence and materials provided by the World Health Organization (WHO) - Guidelines on Ambient Air Quality and Guidelines on Indoor Air Quality.
- Assess the risks associated with poor (households) air quality, raise awareness and engage in shaping public opinion on the polluting aspect of burning wood.



HEAL gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the European Union (EU) for the production of this publication. The responsibility for the content lies with the authors and the views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the EU institutions and funders. The European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency (CINEA) and the funders are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained in this publication. HEAL EU transparency register number: 00720345929-66



In Poland, HEAL played a crucial role in advocating for healthier energy policies.

We did so through activities such as:

- Contributing to the passage of a bill to end solid fuel burning in Warsaw (in collaboration with the Polish Smog Alert (PAS) and the European Clean Air Centre (ECAC)), which received extensive media coverage, helping to raise public awareness about air quality issues in Poland
- Participating in a Senate meeting on protecting children's health
- Defending the Masovian anti-smog bill against threats from energy security concerns and industry lobbying
- Working closely with local governments, sharing materials on air pollution and participating in public consultations
- Producing significant media attention, with appearances on major outlets like TVN and TOK FM, and collaborations with influential journalists and podcasters



In Turkey, HEAL raised awareness about the health risks of coal power generation, and building capacity within the health sector

Since 2015, HEAL has played a crucial role in raising awareness about the health risks associated with coal power generation and climate change. Through a series of comprehensive reports and briefings (such as “The Unpaid Health Bill” and “Chronic Coal Pollution”), HEAL in collaboration with Turkish health sector experts, has shifted public and policy attention towards the need for a coal phase-out. This shift is evident as Turkey, once poised to double its coal capacity, has now shelved many new projects, focusing instead on phasing out existing plants.

As part of the EU-funded ÇİSİP project, HEAL continued to build capacity within the Turkish health sector, to better understand and combat the health effects of climate change. A 2023 survey involving over 500 health professionals from Turkey, Serbia, and the European region highlighted the growing awareness and concern within the sector regarding climate-related health threats. This increasing recognition underscores the importance of continued education, collaboration, and resilience-building to address the profound health challenges posed by climate change in Turkey and beyond.



Rallying the health sector to advocate for stronger chemicals regulation

The health burden from hazardous chemicals is unacceptably high and keeps growing. Cancer, infertility, impaired immune, hormonal and reproductive systems can result even from low levels of exposure to harmful chemicals, such as endocrine-disrupting chemicals (EDCs) and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Preventing the health impacts of chemical pollution requires urgent improvements in EU laws. Harmful substances like EDCs and PFAS are widely used in materials such as plastics, pesticides and many everyday products, and must be restricted swiftly. Safer alternatives are available.




HEAL actively advocated for stronger chemicals legislation. For example, following the EU Court of Justice's annulment of the carcinogenicity classification of titanium dioxide – HEAL's [op-ed](#), supported by health insurers, underscored the importance of hazard-based approaches and criticised industry attempts to introduce socio-economic considerations into chemical classifications that fall outside the scope of the Classification, Labelling, and Packaging (CLP) regulation. This piece reflected broader concerns about the weakening of chemical safety standards and called for stronger, health-protective legislation across the EU.

HEAL's advocacy efforts and cooperation with other NGOs resulted **in a successful vote to restrict undecafluorohexanoic acid (PFHxA), marking a significant step in addressing hazardous chemicals within the EU regulatory framework.**

Reforming EU rules on the classification, labelling and packaging of chemicals to better protect health

The European Commission's 2020 Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability committed to revising the outdated CLP Regulation. This revision was crucial to ensuring that all hazardous chemicals, especially EDCs, are identified and regulated more effectively. **HEAL played a pivotal role in this process, advocating for the inclusion of a new hazard class for EDCs that reflects the latest scientific evidence on chemical risks – with success.**

The December 2023 agreement on the revised CLP Regulation marked a significant step forward for people's health and the prevention of disease, through better protection for citizens and workers against harmful substances. HEAL's work ensured that the European Parliament's position was significantly improved and adopted with a large majority, paving the way for the reform to become law in 2024.



Features	2008 CLP Regulation	CLP Reform
Hazard classes for endocrine disrupting, bioaccumulating, persistent and mobile chemicals	✗	✓
The European Commission can kickstart the classification process	✗	✓
Classifications for entire groups of chemicals	✗	✓
Rules for the use of refill stations, digital labelling and online- and bulk sales	✗	✓

HEAL hosts the EDC-Free Europe campaign secretariat and works with partners on a range of EDC-related issues, including toys, food packaging, the CLP revision, and pesticides. This campaign aims to create a Europe free from harmful EDCs, ensuring safer products and a healthier environment for all. Through coordinated efforts, the campaign has amplified the call for stronger regulations and greater public awareness, further cementing HEAL's commitment to protecting public health from hazardous chemicals.



EDC-Free Europe urges the EU and national governments to fix EU laws

- Implement the **Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability** without further delay.
- Phase out **known and suspected EDCs** in all consumer products, including clothing, food packaging and cosmetics.
- Get rid of EDCs in our food, water and air. Deliver on the **2030 targets for a toxic-free environment.**

A health-focused reform of REACH

The REACH legislation sets out how the European Union registers, evaluates, authorises and restricts chemicals. Its greatly needed overhaul is an opportunity to strengthen its effectiveness in protecting our health and the environment through better and earlier identification of hazardous chemicals.

- 1 Shift the burden of proof back onto industry and make it easier for authorities to regulate harmful chemicals
- 2 Apply the 'no data, no market' principle before putting chemicals on the market
- 3 Apply sanctions to deter industry non-compliance with REACH's rules
- 4 Assess combinations of chemicals representing real-life exposures
- 5 Assess and regulate entire groups of chemicals (instead of one at the time) to avoid regrettable substitution
- 6 Provide clear criteria to decide when the use of a harmful chemical is really essential

Despite our continuous advocacy efforts calling for the revision of the REACH regulation to be launched, the reform proposal has not been presented yet, largely due to concerns about the competitiveness of the EU chemicals industry. Together with its members and partners, HEAL will continue to call for the health-focused revision of REACH.



HEAL PUBLISHED A VIDEO ON OUR DEMANDS FOR THE REACH REFORM

HEAL initiated a public petition to phase out PVC and actively participated in ECHA forums, contributing to discussions on identifying new Substances of Very High Concern (SVHCs) and supporting the EU's efforts to restrict harmful chemicals.



Ban PFAS to protect people's health

Since ECHA published its universal PFAS restriction proposal in February 2023, HEAL has actively advocated for stronger health protection against these harmful "forever chemicals". **HEAL supported the proposal's broad scope but emphasised the need for stricter reporting requirements, time limits on derogations, and the inclusion of PFAS pesticides and biocides.** HEAL also launched [a campaign website](#) offering resources for affected communities and healthcare professionals and an infographic to support advocacy effort.

In addition, HEAL focused on engaging health and medical organisations to raise awareness about PFAS pollution. This included presenting at an international webinar organised by the Federation for Earth Day in April 2023 and collaborating with the International Federation of Obstetrics and Gynecology (FIGO) on developing health guidance for patients exposed to PFAS.

"The PFHxA restriction is much needed, as the use in food contact materials and clothing results in a direct exposure of people, not to mention the chemical leaching to the environment from landfills. PFAS can have serious impact on people's health, and the huge amount of this pollution requires regulatory action immediately."

SANDRA JEN, PROGRAMME LEAD, HEALTH AND CHEMICALS

FREE DOWNLOAD

ACTION TOOLKIT

- How to talk to someone about PFAS exposure?
- How to talk with your doctor about PFAS exposure?
- How to take action against PFAS?

#BanPFAS
env-health.org/BanPFAS

HEAL

ANNUAL HEALTH COSTS

in Europe relating to PFAS

ranges between **€52 - €84 BILLION**

#BanPFAS
env-health.org/BanPFAS

HEAL

12.5 million

Europeans are living with drinking water

POLLUTED WITH PFAS CHEMICALS

That's more people than the entire population of Belgium
(According to 2019 data)

#BanPFAS
env-health.org/BanPFAS

HEAL





Stepping up on pesticide reduction for better health

People's exposure to hazardous pesticides leads to significant health risks including cancer, neurological disorders, and respiratory impacts. These risks are particularly heightened for vulnerable groups, including children, pregnant women, and agricultural workers, who are disproportionately affected.

Despite the critical importance of reducing pesticide exposure to protect people's health, the EU was unfortunately faced with a deeply polarised and politicised debate on pesticide reduction, often overshadowing the urgent need for a health-focused approach.

The way forward is clear: **to protect people's health and the environment, policymakers need to implement the EU Farm to Fork strategy and phase out synthetic pesticides by 2035.** Alternatives to some of the most harmful pesticides, such as glyphosate, are already available and show a transition to a pesticide-free future is possible.

Who is most at risk from exposure to health-harming pesticides?

-  Pregnant women, newborn babies and children
-  Farmers, private users, and agricultural and park maintenance workers
-  Visitors of public spaces treated with pesticides
-  Residents of agricultural zones



env-health.org

[#PesticideFreeEU](https://twitter.com/PesticideFreeEU)

To protect people's health and the environment, we ask the EU Commission and member states to:

- Swiftly negotiate a legally-binding, health-first update of EU pesticides rules to protect current and future generations
- End the use of hazardous pesticides by 2035
- Create pesticide-free areas and adequate buffer zones

In 2023-2024, HEAL's advocacy on pesticide reduction focused on the European Commission's proposal for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides Regulation (SUR), which was in key policy deliberations in the European Parliament and among member states. Despite our efforts, the European Parliament's vote in November 2023 saw the draft SUR regulation significantly weakened. HEAL's key demands were gutted from the proposal, which HEAL criticised as tiptoeing on pesticide reduction.

HEAL published an infographic, regular social media content and a short, animated video focusing on children's health and pesticide-free areas, which was shared widely across social media platforms. These materials produced significant attention, with videos being viewed over 26,000 times and campaign materials available in seven languages (English, German, Dutch, French, Spanish, Polish and Italian).

Exposure to hazardous pesticides harms people's health:

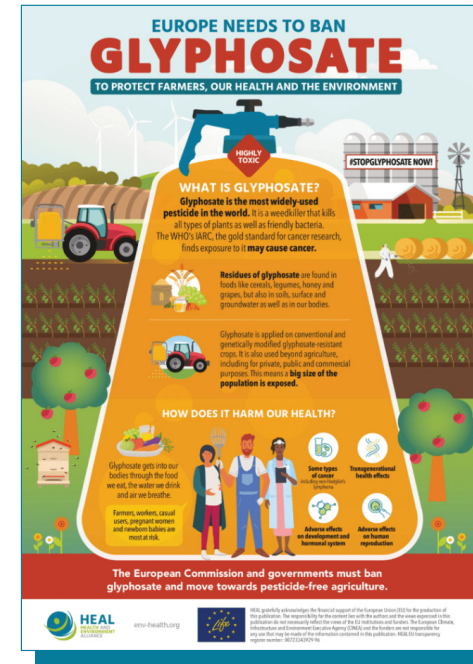
- **Cancers** (including non-Hodgkin lymphoma and prostate cancer)
- **Neurodegenerative diseases** (including Parkinson's)
- **Cognitive impairment**
- **Respiratory health disorders**
- **Endocrine disruption**
- **Reproductive disorders**

env-health.org #PesticideFreeEU

HEAL’s advocacy extended beyond the SUR to focus on securing an EU-wide phase out of glyphosate, the most widely use herbicide. Building on previous campaigns, HEAL argued against the renewal of glyphosate’s market license, citing substantial independent scientific evidence of its potential carcinogenicity, neurotoxicity, and endocrine-disrupting effects. Throughout 2023, HEAL worked closely with independent scientists, partners, and members to scrutinise the renewal dossier for glyphosate, highlighting flaws in the safety assessment process, and actively engaged with EU decision-makers urging them to reject the renewal based on the scientific evidence of glyphosate’s health risks. In April 2023, HEAL co-organised a webinar on new glyphosate research, attracting significant attention and participation, with 301 registrants. Despite these efforts, the EU Commission reapproved glyphosate for another ten years in November 2023.

In addition to glyphosate, **HEAL advocated for the non-renewal of five endocrine-disrupting pesticides, arguing that these substances should be phased out under EU regulations.** HEAL’s advocacy was successful, as the decision was made not to renew these substances due to their endocrine-disrupting properties.

Together with our members, HEAL will continue to advocate on the public health benefits of banning harmful pesticides across Europe. We will continue to stand with affected farmers, workers, their families and residents suffering from health problems because of exposure to hazardous substances.



HEAL supports the EU ban on chlorpyrifos-methyl at European Court of Justice

HEAL was engaged to give evidence in a lawsuit with EU Court of Justice. We welcomed the October 2023 decision to uphold the non-renewal of chlorpyrifos-methyl, a pesticide with known health risks. HEAL’s involvement in this legal case highlighted the organisation’s commitment to promoting scientific excellence and coherence in the EU’s pesticide assessment and regulation process.

“The court ruling upholding the European ban of chlorpyrifos-methyl is a significant victory for the health of Europeans. Neurotoxicity and genotoxicity concerns are not abstract concepts; we are talking about irreversible effects across generations such as the impairment of healthy brain development and functioning – as well as the potential development of cancer.”

NATACHA CINGOTTI, FORMER HEALTH AND CHEMICALS PROGRAMME LEAD



Our unique science-to-policy approach

Evidence-based facts and scientific publications are key to informing political decisions in depth. Through HEAL's involvement in a number of EU-funded research projects, we apply our science to policy approach and are on point with the latest, cutting edge research on environmental health.

In 2023-2024, HEAL was a partner in eight research projects funded by the EU, two of which ended in 2023, while another two were launched in 2023 and 2024. Our role is to provide valuable policy expertise and to lead, or contribute to, the research projects' work on communication, dissemination, stakeholder engagement and exploitation towards policy and legislation.

PERIOD: January 2020 - June 2025

WEBSITE: www.athleteproject.eu

SOCIALS: www.twitter.com/ATHLETExposome | [#ATHLETEproject](https://www.linkedin.com/company/athlete-research-project)
www.linkedin.com/company/athlete-research-project

ATHLETE (Advancing Tools for Human Early Lifecourse Exposome Research and Translation) is a EU-funded research project that aims to better understand and prevent health effects of numerous environmental hazards and their mixtures, starting from the earliest stages of life.

The human exposome refers to the combination of environmental influences and how the body reacts to them. It factors in what people eat and do, where they live and work and how they interact with their physical surroundings. It shifts our approach to studying the environment from the traditional 'one exposure, one disease' framework to a more holistic approach that explores multiple environmental factors affecting health.

One of the outcomes from ATHLETE will be a human exposome toolbox that can be used to evaluate the effects of a large number of environmental exposures in individuals, as well as in communities, in order to design policies and interventions to prevent or reduce their health impact.



POSTER PRESENTED AT THE WHO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IN BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

PERIOD: April 2021 - March 2025

WEBSITE: www.polyrisk.science

SOCIALS: www.twitter.com/PolyriskScience
www.linkedin.com/company/polyrisk-research-project

The EU-funded POLYRISK project is a member of the European Cluster on the Health Impacts of Micro- and NanoPlastics (CUSP) and aims to advance the science and our understanding of how micro- and nanoplastic particles in our environment might impact human health, particularly in relation to the immune system.

The outcomes of the project are intended to feed into current and future EU policies, and support actions envisaged under the European Green Deal in relation to plastic pollution – helping to ensure that human health is protected, today and in the future.

The European Cluster on the Health Impacts of Micro- and Nanoplastics (CUSP), the umbrella research collaborative that also includes the POLYRISK project, presented their innovative work at the 7th Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in Budapest. Clustering can help develop robust methodologies for further studies, and grant a holistic picture of how people are exposed to micro- and nanoplastics in different geographical areas and across different professions and socio-economic contexts. This kind of cross-cutting EU-funded open access research is a crucial pathway for pollution and health impact monitoring that works as direct input on policy making.

PERIOD: January 2019 - June 2024

WEBSITE: www.freiaproject.eu

SOCIALS: www.x.com/freiaprojecteu

FREIA (Female Reproductive Toxicity of EDCs Project: A human evidence-based screening and identification approach) was an EU-funded research project dedicated to advance test methods to identify how exactly endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) can harm women's health. The project ended in December 2023.



The FREIA project published [recommendations to EU institutions, national governments and healthcare professionals to protect women's health against endocrine disrupting chemicals](#). They include the following measures:

- Improve environmental health literacy and awareness of EDCs
- Increase environmental health training for health professionals
- Expand knowledge on the effectiveness of exposure prevention interventions and promotion strategies
- Support the development and implementation of EU-wide legislation to reduce the use of and exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals

PERIOD: September 2022 - August 2027

WEBSITE: www.catalysehorizon.eu

SOCIALS: www.linkedin.com/company/catalyse-project
#CatalyseHorizon

CATALYSE (Climate Action To Advance HeaLthY Societies in Europe) seeks to provide new knowledge, data and tools to close the knowledge-to-action gap to accelerate climate change action and protect public health in Europe.

CATALYSE will do this by developing an integrated indicator framework and repository, quantifying the health co-benefits and costs of mitigation measures, developing novel surveillance and forecasting tools and investigating how stakeholders engage with evidence regarding the health impacts of climate change. All of this to provide evidence and training on the most effective strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation for European health systems.

A CATALYSE study assessed the potential health benefits of policies replacing fossil fuels with clean, renewable energy sources and confirmed that phasing out fossil fuels is an effective intervention to reduce ambient air pollution and substantially reduce the number of attributable deaths.



PERIOD: January 2023 - December 2026

WEBSITE: www.ubdpolicy.eu

SOCIALS: #UBDPolicy

The EU-funded UBDPolicy (Urban Burden of Disease Estimation for Policy-making) project aims to estimate the health and socioeconomic costs and benefits of air quality, noise, lack of urban green spaces, heat and temperature, physical activity, inequity for nearly 1,000 European cities in EU and monitors three-year trends and impacts of urban planning, transport planning and environmental policies.

Some of the outcomes expected from the UBDPolicy research include an open database of 1,000 cities, with estimates of health and well-being impacts and socio-economic costs and benefits of environmental stressors such as air pollution, green spaces and mobility, a ranking of cities in the EU, as well as policy briefs, reports and scientific synthesis of the evidence.

On 11 December 2023, HEAL, together with the Barcelona Institute for Global Health, hosted a [science to policy consultation workshop](#) with representatives of the Brussels administration and other stakeholders, on how to reduce the urban burden of disease in Brussels through environmental policies. This UBDPolicy workshop was the first in a series of stakeholder engagement activities in various European cities in Europe.



PERIOD: November 2020 - December 2023

WEBSITE: www.enbel-project.eu

SOCIALS: www.x.com/ENBEL_H2020
www.instagram.com/enbel_h2020

Enhancing Belmont Research Action to support EU policy making on climate change and health (ENBEL) was an international research project funded by the EU's Horizon2020 programme and aimed at connecting health and climate change research. Specifically, ENBEL brought together leaders in climate change and health research and coordinated a network of international health and climate research projects under the Belmont Forum's Collaborative Research Action (CRA) on Climate, Environment and Health (CEH) and EU-funded projects.

A key outcome from the ENBEL project is a knowledge platform of health impacts of climate change: policy briefs, training courses, learning materials, reports and scientific synthesis of the evidence.

The [latest film](#) from the ENBEL project highlights the impact that the consortium has had in connecting climate and health research with policy making. ENBEL has first and foremost contributed to making links between climate and health researchers.



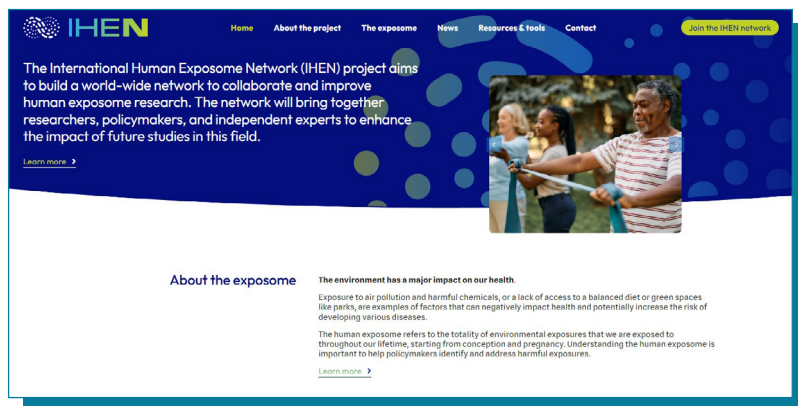
PERIOD: December 2023 - November 2026

WEBSITE: www.humanexposome.net

SOCIALS: www.x.com/ExposomeNetwork
www.linkedin.com/company/international-human-exposome-network

The EU-funded International Human Exposome Network (IHEN) project aims to build an international network to improve global research and cooperation on the exposome. This international network will bring together a wide variety of global stakeholders to enhance the impact of future exposome research.

Some of the expected outcomes from the IHEN project include a global toolbox that will collect existing exposome tools and resources, and a series of exposome demonstrator projects to test whether the exposome tools and resources gathered in the global toolbox are fit-for-purpose, and a roadmap that will identify the direction of exposome research in the near, intermediate, and distant future.

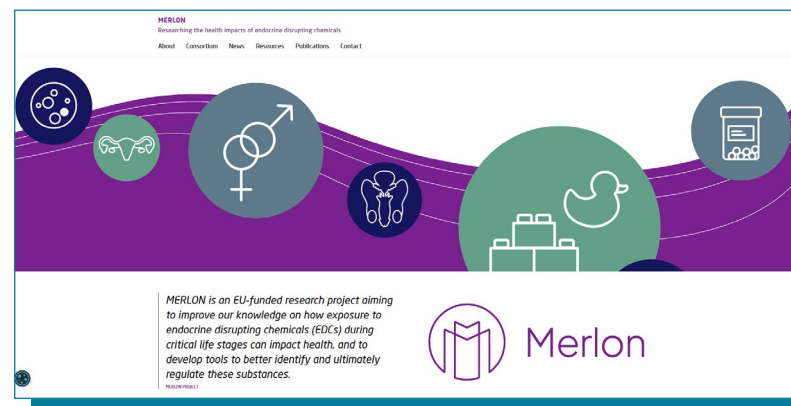


PERIOD: January 2024 - December 2028

WEBSITE: www.merlon.dtu.dk

SOCIALS: www.x.com/MerlonResearch
www.linkedin.com/company/merlon-research-project

MERLON (Merging scientific evidence with regulatory practices and leveraging identification of endocrine disruptors using new approach methodologies) is a EU-funded research project that aims to improve our knowledge on how exposure to endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) during critical life stages can impact health, particularly by impairing sexual development and reproductive functions. The project will also develop tools for chemical risk assessors and policymakers to better identify and ultimately regulate EDCs.



The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee was elected by HEAL members at the 2020 Annual General Assembly for a four-year mandate. Elections for new Executive Committee members will take place in October 2024.

The current members of the Executive Committee are:



Peter van den Hazel

HEAL PRESIDENT
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR CHILDREN'S HEALTH,
ENVIRONMENT AND SAFETY (INCHES), NETHERLANDS



Denitsa Ivanova

AIR FOR HEALTH, BULGARIA



Marie-Christine Dewolf

HEAL VICE-PRESIDENT
RÉGIE HAINAUT ANALYSES, BELGIUM



Jessica Carreño Louro

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MUTUAL
BENEFIT SOCIETIES (AIM), BELGIUM



Christian Horemans

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT
HEALTH INSURANCE FUNDS, BELGIUM



Panagiotis Chaslaridis

EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF ALLERGY &
AIRWAYS DISEASES PATIENTS' ASSOCIATION
(EFA), BELGIUM

The HEAL secretariat

The secretariat completed several important projects in 2023-2024. We reviewed our statutes which were successfully adopted by HEAL members on 5 December 2024. We also conducted a full audit of our IT infrastructure and implemented the ensuing recommendations to improve the security, reliability and efficiency of our IT systems and strengthen our practices in terms of data management.

We successfully hired and onboarded three new staff members to increase capacity within the team in key areas. We have continued to offer training to our team members at an organisational and individual level. In particular, several team members benefited from training on graphic design and video editing tools, English language and people management and leadership.

In February 2024, we launched a year-long resilience training programme aiming at strengthening both organisational and individual resilience, and developing a resilience road map. The training programme is due to finish in January 2025, whereas the roadmap will take us to the end of 2026.

OUR TEAM VALUES

- ✓ We put health first
- ✓ We are driven by independent science
- ✓ We are open and transparent
- ✓ We are stronger together



OUR PEOPLE

The HEAL team



Genon K. Jensen
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Anne Stauffer
DEPUTY DIRECTOR,
STRATEGIC LEAD



Stefan Grand-Meyer
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS



Julianna Angelova
EU RESEARCH PROJECT
COORDINATOR



Sara Azcona Zabala
HEAD OF FINANCE



Andreea Botoș
EDC-FREE EUROPE
CAMPAIGN COORDINATOR



Marianne Chagnon
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT
COORDINATOR, URBAN HEALTH



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PROGRAMME LEAD,
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SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS
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Weronika Michalak
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POLAND



Nea Pakarinen
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Sophie Perroud
SENIOR COORDINATOR,
HEALTH AND AIR QUALITY



Martina Razzaboni
FINANCE AND
OPERATIONS OFFICER



Helena Uhl
SCIENCE COMMUNICATIONS
OFFICER



Olga Wdowiczak
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH
POLICY SPECIALIST



Elke Zander
HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS

We also gratefully thank the following team members who helped us implement our work in 2023-2024, but have since left HEAL: Natacha Cingotti, Hannah Donart, Funda Gacal, Basile Ghesquiere, Vijoleta Gordeljevic, Jacek Karaczun, Inas Laaziri, Dalila Lopes and Vlatka Matkovic.

A financially strong, independent organisation

HEAL has the resources to carry out its work programme, meet its strategic objectives and continue to grow. With an annual budget of around €2m million in 2023, HEAL's funding continues to grow demonstrating that our Alliance is viewed as credible and effective partner by funders.

Thanks to a highly successful fundraising strategy, HEAL continues to diversify its funding sources. While in 2004, the European Commission's operating grant represented 80% of our funding, our EU LIFE operating grant now makes up 34% of our annual budget. Today, HEAL receives funding from 10 different donors through 18 grants.

The Alliance is independent of any political party or commercial interest. We receive funding from the European Union, private foundations and members through their annual membership fees. We do not accept funding from sources with commercial interests.

Income	EUR
EU LIFE grant	700,000
EU action grants	431,476
Other grants (private foundations)	864,970
Membership fees	12,050
Other income	7,160
Total	2,015,656

Expenditure	EUR
Personnel costs	1,263,150
Activity costs (incl. subcontracting costs)	368,721
Travel and subsistence costs	99,470
Administration, IT and office costs	255,533
Other costs	16,732
Allocation to operating reserves	12,050
Total charges	2,015,656

Funders

HEAL would like to thank the following funders for their support in our 2023-2024 financial year:

- Adessium Foundation
- Clean Air Fund
- Climate Works Foundation
- European Climate Foundation
- European Commission DG Environment / DG Climate Action
- European Commission DG for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
- European Commission DG Research and Innovation
- Global Greengrants Fund
- Oak Foundation / Swiss Philanthropy Foundation
- Tides Foundation



The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) is the leading not-for-profit organisation addressing how the environment affects human health in the European Union (EU) and beyond. HEAL works to shape laws and policies that promote planetary and human health and protect those most affected by pollution, and raise awareness on the benefits of environmental action for health. HEAL has over 80 member organisations, including international, European, national and local groups of health professionals, not-for-profit health insurers, patients, citizens, women, youth, and environmental experts representing over 200 million people across the 53 countries of the WHO European Region.

As an alliance, HEAL brings independent and expert evidence from the health community to EU and global decision-making processes to inspire disease prevention and to promote a toxic-free, low-carbon, fair and healthy future.

HEAL's EU Transparency Register Number: 00723343929-96

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