

Letter to the European Commission

READ NOW

Our demand is that the Clean Industrial Deal tackle air pollution, one of the top environmental risks to health in Europe. We ask for a **Clean Air Deal**.



Dear colleagues

This edition follows the Board meeting on 13 February, when we made the final preparations prior to the upcoming General Assembly. During the upcoming meetings, we have the special privilege of holding our members conference in the European Parliament with an event discussing solutions for the health workforce crisis with policy-makers. We hope many of you will be able to attend this special occasion.

Last month we signed a letter through the EU Healthy Air Coalition (EUHAC) urging the inclusion of air pollution reduction in the upcoming Clean Industrial Deal, which was announced in late February with a focus on industrial decarbonisation and the promotion of clean technologies in order to reduce emissions from energy-intensive industries. This shows the many areas in which European doctors' voices are valuable to protect health.

We welcome you to read all this and more in this month's edition.

Dr Ole Johan Bakke

CPME President



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Internal Affairs

Revised Policy Priorities

- ▶ Updated policy priorities were discussed, based on the discussion at the January Board meeting and follow up with the responsible Vice-President. The Board noted that the final priorities, in particular the nominations of new WG chairs and rapporteurs, as well as the closing of WGs, will be decided by the General Assembly in March.

The Board took note of a proposal to merge the three CPME Working Groups on Healthy Living, Vaccination, and Environmental Health & Climate Change into one Working Group on Public Health.

Working Group Terms of Reference

- ▶ The Board took note of the draft terms of reference which will be presented and adopted by the GA in March.

Draft General Assembly Agenda

- ▶ The Board took note of the draft agenda.

The Board took note that the conference was confirmed from 13:30 to 15:30 on 20 March 2025, immediately after the Board meeting earlier that day. The Secretariat held a coordination meeting earlier that day with the assistants of MEP András Kulja and MEP Tilly Metz, and will revise the conference agenda accordingly.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – 13 FEBRUARY 2025

Dates of 2026 autumn General Assembly

- ▶ The Board showed a preference for holding the GA on 13-14 November. The final decision will be taken by the General Assembly.

The German Medical Assembly requested to change the dates to 13-14 November 2026 or 20-21 November 2026

Finances

Revised draft accounts

- ▶ The Treasurer presented the preliminary financial results for 2024, which showed a positive balance of €67,300 instead of the projected deficit of €45,175.

The savings are attributed to brief staff vacancies, lower travel costs, optimised supply contracts, and reduced consultancy fees. The final audited accounts will be presented in March.

Policies

CPME–EFN–PGEU Revised Joint Statement

- ▶ The Board of took note of the amendments sent by PGEU and were informed of the amendments which were received by the GMA. The Board adopted several of the proposed recommendations from the GMA and approved the Joint Statement with the revisions proposed by PGEU, EFN, and the GMA.

Call for evidence on Critical Medicines Act

- ▶ The Board took note of the draft statement, asking for stockpiling of medicines taking place at the producers' level and to remove the reference for stockpiling at the hospital level, as it could create shortages. It gave authorisation for the Working group on Pharmaceuticals and Healthcare Products to finalise the draft response for submission on its web-meeting on 17 February 2025.

Statement on Medical Devices

- ▶ The Board took note of the draft statement on medical devices which will be discussed at the WG on Pharmaceuticals and Healthcare Products on 17 February. An updated version will be discussed at the Board meeting in March 2025.

Draft concept note on survey on safe staffing levels

- ▶ The Board took note of the draft concept note and welcomed the opportunity to survey CPME members on safe staffing.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – 13 FEBRUARY 2025

Statement on Implementing a ‘user-friendly’ European Health Data Space

- ▶ The Board took note of the latest changes discussed in the Working Group Digital Health on 11 February.

A few comments were suggested, including the financial burden on healthcare professionals which needed to be avoided.

The Board was informed about the open consultations on the deliverables of TEHDAS2 and XT-EHR Joint Actions requesting guidance on how to proceed. Due to the short timeframe to reply and the technical discussion it required, the Board authorised that the CPME responses were made at the level of the WG, in consultation with the WG Digital Health and WG Chair within the scope of existing policies.

WHO Call to action on air pollution

- ▶ The Board decided to sign the WHO’s and the health community’s call to action on world leaders and decision-makers to stop pollution and ensure a future with clean air.

It was initiated by the World Medical Association, the Health and Environment Alliance, and a number of other health organisations ahead of the WHO Second Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health which will be held in Columbia on 25–27 March.

European Congress on Obesity

- ▶ The Board decided to decline the invitation to speak at the European Congress on Obesity organised by the European Association for the Study on Obesity in Malaga, Spain.

CPME was invited to a session organised by WHO/Europe on commercial determinants focusing around managing conflict of interest. The invitation was declined because the event and its organiser are sponsored by pharmaceutical companies, participation expenses are not reimbursed, and because CPME is already in touch with WHO on this topic.

Clean Industrial Deal: EU Healthy Air Coalition called for Clean Air Deal

The EU Healthy Air Coalition, including CPME, [sent](#) a letter to EU leaders urging the inclusion of air pollution reduction in the upcoming Clean Industrial Deal.

The letter [highlights](#) that air pollution remains the top environmental risk to health in Europe, resulting in hundreds of thousands of premature deaths and hundreds of billions of euros of costs annually. Everyone is vulnerable to harm caused by air pollution and our level of vulnerability is outside of individual control, as it evolves with age, health condition, socio-economic status, as well as where we live, study, or work.

Global health community's call to action on clean air

CPME [signed](#) the health community's [call to action](#) on world leaders and decision-makers to stop pollution and ensure a future with clean air.

This survey, the largest of its kind ever undertaken in Europe, aims to gather crucial data to better understand the challenges doctors and nurses face in their work environments.

Air pollution still affects the health of billions of people across the globe. Also in the EU, there were 357,000 premature deaths from exposure to fine particulate matter, ozone, and nitrogen dioxide in 2022. The health community calls for actions for example to ensure a just and inclusive clean energy transition and fossil fuel phase out.

CPME NEWS



Dr. Andreas Botzlar speaking at the Morning Rounds

German Medical Association event: “Morning Rounds: Health workforce shortages in Europe- Mapping the way forward”

On 18 February, the German Medical Association (BÄK) and the National Association of Statutory Health Insurance Physicians (KBV), organised a high level event; “Health workforce shortages in Europe- Mapping the way forward.” This event brought together MEPs, Dennis Radtke, Vytenis Andriukaitis and Tilly Metz, as well as Director of Digital, EU4 Health and Health Systems Modernisation, DG SANTE, Marco Marsella and Brussels-based organisations representing diverse constituencies of the health sector, public health experts, and of course doctors.

During the event, solutions to the shortage of workers in the healthcare sector, European Strategy for healthcare workers and collaborative efforts were discussed along with professional mobility, digitalisation, European digital patient records and interoperability of healthcare systems.

CPME Vice President Dr. Andras Botzlar highlighted that workforce management is not just about recruiting people but also about retaining them, and that it has very much to do with working conditions. Additionally, Dr. Botzlar pointed out an increasing number of salaried doctors facing violence from patients but also from employers. He asked panellists what can European Union do to encourage Member States to focus more on working conditions and, how to ensure compliance to labor law and collective agreements.

European doctors call for action on Awareness Day of Violence Against Doctors and other Healthcare Professionals

We [published](#) a video to mark the European Awareness Day of Violence Against Doctors and other Healthcare Professionals to provide the doctors voice and raise attention and catalyse action.

CPME President Dr. Ole Johan Bakke reaffirmed our commitment to addressing this pressing issue together with our partners, including European Medical Organisations.

#DoctorsVoice in the European Parliament

20 March 2025, 13:30-15:30

On 20 March, European doctors will take our collective voice to the European Parliament to **discuss solutions for the European health workforce crisis with Members of the European Parliament.**

This event, hosted by MEP Dr András Kulja with co-host MEP Tilly Metz in collaboration with CPME will address topics relevant to the planned European Parliament report on health workforce, including challenges and solutions for the European health workforce crisis.

Full details for registration have been sent with the invitation to the General Assembly. Participation without registration is not possible due to the European Parliament's security rules. Registration closes on 17 March at 12:00 Brussels time.

Solutions for the European Health Workforce Crisis

#DoctorsVoice in the European Parliament

20 March, 13:30–15:30

Room ANTALL 6Q1



Hosted by
MEP Dr
András Kulja



Co-hosted by
MEP Tilly
Metz

In collaboration with the
Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME)



MONITORING

Political Outlook

Charting the Course: Key Priorities of Poland's Ongoing Presidency

The Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union started publishing its [priorities](#) for the first half of 2025 and will regularly be updated until June 2025.

The priorities' goals will revolve around strengthening European security in its many dimensions including:

- Internal market and consumer protection: With digital policy, meetings and measures on cybersecurity are planned along with the application of the Artificial Intelligence Act.
- Employment and social affairs: Future of employment in the digital transformation as well as the ongoing challenge of an aging EU population will be the current focus.
- Environment, Climate and Food Safety: The need for climate adaptation measures has been highlighted by the Minister but the stance of the Presidency on the 2040 emissions target is being questioned by the MEPs.
- Public Health: the digital transformation of healthcare, health promotion, disease prevention, and the mental health of children and adolescents. Additionally, the Presidency aims to finalise a common position on the pharmaceutical package in the Council by June to begin negotiations with the European Parliament.

Paving the Way for a Sustainable Future: The Clean Industrial Deal in Action

The European Commission presented [The Clean Industrial Deal](#), to enhance industrial competitiveness while accelerating decarbonisation, focusing on supporting energy-intensive industries and clean tech while addressing high energy costs, global competition, and regulatory hurdles. Key measures include Lowering energy costs and boosting demand for clean products. Additionally, over €100 billion is planned to be mobilised in financing for clean manufacturing.

Although this strategy is aiming to a decarbonised economy by 2050, it still omits air pollution. The EU Healthy Air Coalition (EUHAC), including CPME, sent a letter to EU Commissioners to advocate for its inclusion.

MONITORING

European Commission's 2025 Work Programme

The European Commission released its [2025 work programme](#) along with [annexes](#) and [factsheet](#) putting a boost in competitiveness, security enhancing and economic resilience in the EU at its centre.

Key points to be delivered in this 2025 Work programme include:

- Sustainable Prosperity and Competitiveness with the Clean Industrial Deal paving the way to a 90% emission-reduction for 2040.
- Defence and Security with the reinforcement of the Critical Medicine Act to strengthen crisis anticipation and resilience.
- A New Action Plan on the European Pillar of Social Rights will be released and is said to adapt to technological and demographic transformations
- Union of Skills to ensure sufficient education and training needed
- A new Multiannual Financial Framework that aims at simplifying access to EU funding and its impact to support national, private, and institutional financing.
- A legislative "Digital Package" with an impact assessment, is included along with several legislative acts, such as the "Cloud and AI Development Act," and the "European Business Wallet."
- Non-legislative initiatives include an "AI Continent Action Plan" to support AI ecosystems, an "Apply AI Strategy," and efforts to enhance cybersecurity in hospitals
- The development of a "European Internal Security Strategy," aiming at revisiting data storage and law enforcement access to protected personal data.
- A digital policy legislation's check is set to conclude by Q4 2025.
- The withdrawal of the "AI Liability Directive Proposal" and the "Regulation on Privacy and Electronic Communications" due to a lack of agreement and recent legislative developments.

MONITORING

Public Health

WHO/Europe report highlights that alcohol labels should warn of cancer risk

The report [“Alcohol health warning labels: a public health perspective for Europe”](#) advocates for mandatory, standardised alcohol labels across Europe. The document concludes that alcohol causes about 800 000 deaths annually in the European Region, highlighting that Europe has some of the highest levels of alcohol consumption globally. Even though cancer is the leading cause of alcohol-related deaths in the European Union, the general public’s understanding of the link between alcohol consumption and cancer is still surprisingly limited.

Currently, only three of the 27 EU countries, have health warning labels, leaving many individuals unaware of the risk. The main recommendations include implementing mandatory labelling, prominent health warning labels, such as cancer warnings, not just QR codes.

Healthcare systems need to better respond to patients’ needs, according to first international OECD patient survey

The OECD published first international survey of patients with chronic health conditions, the [Patient-Reported Indicator Surveys \(PaRIS\)](#), highlights the urgent need to adapt healthcare systems to meet the needs of people with chronic conditions. Countries such as Switzerland, the USA, Australia, Czech Republic, France and Norway, report positive care experiences and outcomes, while Greece, Iceland, Portugal, Romania and Wales (United Kingdom) show below-average scores on more than half of the indicators.

PaRis finds that four in ten patients do not trust the healthcare system. Additionally, there are large gender disparities, with men generally reporting better health outcomes than women. The report calls for greater use of digital technology in healthcare and the inclusion of patient perspectives in decision-making to improve service delivery and shift towards more integrated care models.

MONITORING

From cradle to cane: WHO's new European Health Report warns of lifelong health crises across the Region

On 25 February, WHO published a [report](#) "From cradle to cane: WHO's new European Health Report warns of lifelong health crises across the Region," report highlights significant health challenges across the WHO European Region, emphasising the need for urgent action to address these issues. Report reveals that nearly 76,000 children in the European Region die before the age of five each year, while adolescents struggle with mental health issues and obesity.

Although the European Region has made great strides in tackling noncommunicable diseases, diseases such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer, and diabetes, remain the leading causes of premature death, claiming the lives of one in six people before reaching the age of 70.

Finally, the report concludes that urgent action is needed to improve health systems, protect child health, and address the growing burden of preventable diseases through vaccination efforts, and ensuring equitable access to healthcare across the region.

EU advancing on 2030 zero-pollution targets but stronger action is needed

On 3 March 2025, the European Commission and the European Environment Agency (EEA) released the second [Zero Pollution Monitoring and Outlook report](#), which outlines the EU's progress toward achieving the 2030 zero pollution goals. Additionally, the Commission published its [fourth Clean Air Outlook report](#). Even though EU policies have successfully reduced air pollution, pesticide use, and plastic waste in the sea, pollution levels remain too high – particularly from harmful noise, microplastics, nutrient pollution, and waste.

The report highlights that more action is necessary to meet the EU's zero-pollution goal. Full implementation and enforcement of EU environmental laws are essential to achieve the 2030 targets outlined in the Zero Pollution Action Plan.

MONITORING

Pharmaceuticals & Healthcare

New clinical trial map launched in the EU

From 3 March, a new clinical trial map is available on the public website of [the Clinical Trials Information System](#) (CTIS). Designed to improve access to clinical research across the European Union, the map provides healthcare professionals and patients with easy access to up-to-date, comprehensive information on clinical trials in their area. The map is built on public data from CTIS, furthermore, the map enhances the user experience by allowing searches for ongoing trials based on location and medical condition. CTIS features a public searchable database for healthcare professionals, patients, and citizens, ensuring the high level of transparency required by the Clinical Trials Regulation.

Professional Practice

European Junior Doctors survey on working hours

This survey aims to gather data on the working hours of junior doctors across Europe to better determine the sustainability of junior doctors' working hours. The input will play a vital role in shaping EJD's policies in support of junior doctors.

Survey link accessible here: <https://bit.ly/EJD-WorkingHours>

MONITORING

Digital Health

Investing in AI: EU's €200 Billion Initiative to Transform Healthcare

On 11 February 2025, the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Action Summit took place in Paris where the Commission president Ursula von der Leyen launched the new [Invest AI initiative](#) which aims to mobilise 200 billion euros including a new European fund of 20 billion euros for AI gigafactories. The Commission President mentioned how AI can improve healthcare, research and innovation.

This new EU fund will finance four AI giga factories that specialise in training AI models used in medicine or science domains and required extensive computing measures. This new project aims at facilitating the access of large-scale computing power for every company.

Additionally, the Commission will create a European AI Research Council allowing Europe to have a pool resource and explore the potential of data to support AI as well as other technologies.

Protecting Healthcare: European Commission Presents its Cybersecurity EU Action Plan

The European Commission presented [its EU Action Plan on cybersecurity of hospital and healthcare providers](#) during an exchange of views in the context of the meeting of the Committee on Public Health and aims to protect healthcare sectors from cyber attacks but also enhance services through the use digital innovations such as electronic health records and AI-driven diagnostics.

Moreover, guidance will be provided with different tools and training to prepare the healthcare sector.

Mr Marsella, Director for Digital, EU4Health and health system modernization at DG SANTE and Ms Christiane Kirketerp De Viron acting Director for digital society, trust and cybersecurity at DG Connect, emphasised that this new action plan does not add any new regulatory burden but instead provides concrete tools and recognizes the current crisis healthcare sectors are going through.

The recording of the live stream is available [here](#) (16:13:00)

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