



Europe unites to throw spotlight on public health

More than 70 events in over 25 countries take place between 13 and 17 May in first ever European Public Health Week

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For immediate release

Ahead of Europe Day, the public health community in Europe prepares to unite. Between 13 and 17 May, more than 70 events across at least 25 countries will celebrate healthy populations and raise awareness about public health. Everyone is invited to organise and join these local, national and regional activities of the first ever European Public Health Week (EUPHW).

Initiated by the European Public Health Association (EUPHA), co-organised by the European Commission and supported by the WHO Regional Office for Europe, the innovative initiative launches on Monday 13 May in a two-hour kick-off in Brussels. EUPHW event organisers will answer questions from the audience in the room and via live streaming, and participants will join a “walkinar” through a city park to promote **‘physical activity’**, the theme of the first day.

Events will continue throughout the week. Promotion of healthy cities, safe roads and clean air and water is the theme of day two, dedicated to **‘Healthy environments’**. Day three, **‘Care 4 care’** reminds European citizens to take care of what takes care of them by investing in a strong, skilled health workforce and promoting wellbeing in addition to treating diseases. The importance of a healthy diet while taking care of our planet is the theme for Thursday, **‘Sustainable and healthy diets’**. On the final day of the week the focus will be on **‘Youth mental health’**, promoting stable and supportive homes, schools and social environments for Europe’s future generation.

Activities include workshops, lectures, webinars, games, sports classes, online campaigns, roundtable discussions and exhibitions, in several languages at local, national, regional and European level.

EUPHA Executive Director Dineke Zeegers Paget, said: *“We initiated the European Public Health WEEK to show the full picture of public health by collaborating with our European partners and members. Public health goes far beyond health, involving people from all disciplines, from environment to occupational therapy. And this week also goes far beyond the European Union – we are covering the 53 countries of the WHO European Region. All of us have the right to health and our health needs to be safeguarded in order to fully participate in society.”*

EUPHA President Azzopardi Muscat, said: *“We are two weeks away from the European elections and this initiative highlights that healthy populations require a commitment from all of us to ensure truly that nobody is left behind. Whilst Europe leads the way in many health indicators, there remains much to do to achieve health-related targets in the sustainable development goals and there is no room for complacency in the face of growing inequalities and emerging challenges.”*

Public health weeks have taken place in other countries in the past, such as the United States of America and Austria. Thomas Dorner from the Austrian Public Health Association said: *“We have organised the Austrian Public Health Week for four years. It is very important to raise awareness of public health, particularly at a time when misinformation could be dangerous for people’s health. We are very glad to see that such initiatives are taking place from local to global level to celebrate healthy populations.”*