



16th European Public Health Conference 2023
Our Food, Our Health, Our Earth: A Sustainable Future for Humanity

EPH Conference Dublin 2023 Statement

We are at another turning point in our shared human history, and we must respond effectively. The ways in which humans feed themselves have always mattered but now the links between our food, our health, and our ecosystem must be attended to. Action must be both immediate, and sustainable.

On one side, our modern diet drives endemic ill health, with overnutrition, and malnutrition, wasting, stunted growth, as well as obesity, heart disease, stroke, and more. On the other side our models of food production drive both damage to us, and to our environment, including deforestation, biodiversity loss, desertification, climate change, health and social inequalities, and contamination of water and air.

To turn this corner, to move to a healthier, safer, more sustainable system for feeding ourselves we need to change how we produce food, and how we incentivise farmers. Almost all food production comes from farms and farmers, and they are a key part of the necessary transformation in our food production. It also provides them with an immense opportunity. If we take an approach to food looking at regenerative agriculture globally, eating more plants, food production in the places where it make sense, sometimes local, sometimes very definitely not, we can open up to a more sustainable future, and a fairer future, for all of us.

Two key policies are the Budapest Declaration, endorsed at the 7th Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in Hungary in 2023, a stark reminder of the pressing need to address health challenges stemming from climate change, pollution, biodiversity reduction, and land degradation; and the European Green Deal, from the European Commission in December 2019, which is a transformative roadmap for the EU. It aims to evolve into a sustainable, climate-neutral, and eco-conscious economy by 2050. Integral to this Deal is the Farm to Fork Strategy, which envisions a just, healthy, and green food system. As part of this there is a commitment to sustainable practices, lower greenhouse gas emissions, improving biodiversity, and guaranteeing food security for all. Especially post-COVID-19, the urgency to heed these calls and act decisively to preserve our planet and our well-being is obvious.

To make this happen the European Public Health conference, and EUPHA, along with other European health entities, urge European leaders to:

1. *Adopt a Holistic Perspective:* Recognize and respect the interconnectedness of food, health, and planetary well-being to drive informed decisions and organize the interconnectedness of their policies

2. *Legislate for Sustainability*: Implement and enforce laws to champion and support green agriculture, ensure universal food access, and protect our natural habitats. Businesses must act responsibly, emphasizing green sourcing and operations, and individuals need to make informed daily food choices.

3. *Promote Education and Awareness*: Empower individuals through knowledge, emphasizing the significant link between the food system, health, and environmental well-being to move to a greener future.

4. *Foster Intersectoral Collaboration*: Overcome traditional barriers, embrace progressive leadership, support farmers, and novel governance structures. Encourage inter-industry cooperation, merging sectors like agriculture, health, environment, and education.

Now is our moment of reckoning. This is the challenge for our generation. With collective will and urgency, let's create a food landscape that enriches both humanity and our planet. Together, with a shared purpose, we can choose to have the way for a sustainable and resilient future. Time is running out and the responsibility lies on our shoulders to protect and preserve our shared world.

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The **European Public Health Association (EUPHA)**, is an umbrella organisation for public health associations in Europe. Our network of national associations of public health represents around 25,000 public health professionals. Our mission is to facilitate and activate a strong voice of the public health network by enhancing visibility of the evidence and by strengthening the capacity of public health professionals. EUPHA contributes to the preservation and improvement of public health in the European region through capacity and knowledge building. We are committed to creating a more inclusive Europe, narrowing all health inequalities among Europeans, by facilitating, activating, and disseminating strong evidence-based voices from the public health community and by strengthening the capacity of public health professionals to achieve evidence-based change.

The **European Public Health (EPH) Conference** is an annually organised scientific conference on public health issues in Europe. Each year the conference is organised in a different country by the EPH Conference Foundation in close cooperation with one or more local partner(s). The conference actively seeks a larger partnership with other European NGOs and institutions. EPH Conference Foundation is a non-governmental and not-for-profit organisation, founded at the initiative of the European Public Health Association (EUPHA). The Foundation is managed by the Executive Board (EB). In organising the conference, the Executive Board is assisted by the Local Support Committee (LSC), International Conference Council (ICC), the International Scientific Committee (ISC) and EPH Conference Office (EPH-CO).

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