

To: President of the European Council, Heads of State, Ministries of the Health, Social and Employment affairs of EU Member States
CC: Permanent Representations attachés on social and health issues

Concerns: The upcoming EU Strategic Agenda 2024-2029

Brussels, 11/03/2024

Integrating Social and Health ambitions into the next EU Strategic Agenda 2024-2029

As signatories to this letter representing social and health stakeholders in the EU, we urge the Council of the European Union and Member States to ensure that the EU Strategic Agenda 2024–2029 keeps social and health ambitions high, as a prerequisite to achieving a “*strong, dynamic, competitive and cohesive Europe*”.

The COVID 19 pandemic rightly highlighted the vital importance of having robust and resilient health and social protection systems. The concurrent challenges of population ageing, climate change, cost-of-living increases, accessibility and affordability of healthcare can only be overcome by giving health and social priorities the attention they deserve. Only then will the EU be able to build a European Union fit for the future, with resilient and sustainable social security and health care systems that serve economic prosperity.

“Building a climate-neutral, green, fair and social Europe” was a central pillar for EU action in the previous EU Strategic Agenda (2019–2024). As rightly highlighted by the Council in its Porto declaration, the European Pillars of Social Rights (EPSR) is “*a fundamental element of the recovery*” and is “*at the core of a highly competitive social market economy*”. Addressing social inequalities and affordability of evidence-based healthcare are crucial for promoting cohesion and economic stability. A strong European economy goes hand-in-hand with a social and healthy Europe that works for all.

During the Spanish Presidency, the Council of the EU committed itself to “*continue its efforts to build a more cohesive, innovation-driven, and interconnected Single Market, preserving (...) its social dimension and its openness*”, as stated in the Granada declaration. The ambitious agenda of the Belgian presidency foresees the perspective of the interinstitutional declaration of La Hulpe, intended to serve as a blueprint for future EU social policy work. The momentum generated by these two presidencies shall provide a strong health and social emphasis for the EU term to come.

We believe the social and health dimensions are of utmost importance and should be given the necessary attention at EU level, and so do the EU citizens according to the most recent European Parliament barometer. Therefore, we call for including these priorities in the Strategic Agenda 2024-2029 and on future decision-makers to provide adequate responses for a truly citizen-centred, solidarity-based social Europe.

Sincerely yours,

Signatory organisations



ACHSE - Allianz Chronischer Seltener Erkrankungen



AGE-Platform



AIEP - European Association of Paritarian Institutions



AIM - International association of mutual benefit societies



CESI - European Confederation of Independent Trade Unions



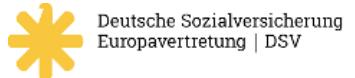
EAPN - European Anti-Poverty Network



COFACE – COFACE Families Europe



ČAVO - Rare Disease Czech Republic



DSV-Europa - Deutsche Sozialversicherung Europavertretung



EFFE – Homecare - European Federation for Family Employment & Home Care



EFSI - European Federation for Services to Individuals



EFN - European Federation of Nurses



EPF - European Patients Forum



EPHA - European Public Health Alliance



ESIP - European Social Insurance Platform



Eurocarers



Feantsa - European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless



HCFA - Hellenic Cystic Fibrosis Association



REIF - Représentation européenne des institutions françaises de sécurité sociale



RONARD - Romanian National Alliance for Rare Diseases