

# STAND FOR A BOLD EU LEADERSHIP IN GLOBAL HEALTH!



Four years ago, the world faced the biggest health crisis in decades. The Covid-19 pandemic had a profound impact on healthcare systems around the world, disrupting access to care and to the most essential healthcare products. Although the World Health Organisation (WHO) lifted the "public health emergency of international concern" status for Covid-19 in May 2023, the threat of a new pandemic remains. The question today is *not if, but when*, the next pandemic will occur.

In recent years, the European Union has been a key player in global health:

- It quickly mobilised alongside Member States to enable the purchase and distribution of vaccines in Europe and around the world. **Through Team Europe, the EU has contributed €3 billion to the COVAX programme between 2020 and 2022** to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 crisis in the most vulnerable countries<sup>1</sup>.
- It has actively drawn the first lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic by renewing its EU Global Health Strategy.
- During its last mandate, it distinguished itself by its contributions to multilateral health funds such as the Global Fund to Fight HIV, tuberculosis and malaria, to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and to UNITAID.

As health challenges multiply, exacerbated by climate change and the destruction of biodiversity, it is essential that the European Union maintains its political and financial momentum to support global efforts to prepare for future pandemics, strengthen health systems, and combat health inequalities across the world.



As a Member of the European Parliament,  
you have the opportunity to shape the health  
future of Europe and the world.



# THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT'S POWERS:



## Legislative power

Along with the Council of the European Union, the European Parliament participates in the adoption of EU legislation, on the basis of proposals from the Commission.



## Budgetary power

The European Parliament approves the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and, along with the Council, adopts the Union's annual budget.



## Powers of scrutiny

The European Parliament has a number of powers at its disposal to scrutinise the actions of the Commission and the Council:

- Discussing each Council Presidency's programme in plenary session.
- Adopting a motion of censure against the Commission.
- Submitting questions to and requesting a written reply from the President of the European Council, the Council, the Commission, and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.
- Setting up a committee of enquiry to examine allegations of violation, or misapplication of EU law.
- Appealing to the Court of Justice of the European Union against measures taken by the Council or the Commission.
- Electing the European Ombudsman to investigate complaints about maladministration by EU institutions and bodies.



## Your term as a Member of European Parliament will therefore be decisive to:

- Define the priorities and budget for official development assistance (ODA) when the next multiannual financial framework (MFF) is adopted.
- Ensure health is placed at the heart of European policies by promoting and implementing the European Union's Global Health Strategy.
- Urge the European Commission to respect its budgetary commitments in terms of international solidarity, and to ensure global health is kept as a high priority:

- ✓ **By using your right of legislative initiative;**
- ✓ **By questioning the European Commission during committee hearings, public debates, or through written questions;**
- ✓ **By drafting reports, amendments, etc.**
- ✓ **By setting up monitoring and control mechanisms.**



## KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

The right to health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being, as outlined in the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights.<sup>2</sup> However, more than half of the world population lack access to basic healthcare.<sup>3</sup>

**Worldwide, 2 billion people do not have access to essential medicines**, and the vast majority of these people live in low- and middle-income countries. At a time when Africa is facing the greatest number of public health emergencies, the continent is forced to import around 99% of its vaccines<sup>4</sup>.

The Covid-19 pandemic had a devastating impact on the hard-won progress of recent decades:

- **Between 2020 and 2021, deaths caused by tuberculosis rose by 14%**, representing 1.6 million deaths in 2021<sup>5</sup>.
- **In 2022, more than 14.3 million children had never been vaccinated**, which is 1.4 million more 'zero-dose' children than before the Covid-19 pandemic<sup>6</sup>.
- Almost all sources of finance for developing countries have declined, particularly foreign direct investment and government revenue. **Yet these countries would need at least an additional USD 3.9 trillion (OECD estimate) to achieve their Sustainable Development Goals**<sup>7</sup>.



**In addition to these challenges, the European Union's official development assistance is both insufficient and inadequate:**

- **The percentage of European ODA dedicated to health has fallen between 2021 and 2022, from 7.9% to 5%**, at a time when health challenges are multiplying<sup>8</sup>.
- Official development assistance has suffered greatly from the mid-term review of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), which sends a terrible message to our partners at a time when inequalities are exploding around the world. Following the agreement reached by the Member States:
  - ↳ **2 billion euros have been decommitted from the development instrument of the neighbourhood and international cooperation policy (NDICI) in favour of other priorities**<sup>9</sup>.
  - ↳ **1 billion has been decommitted from EU4Health, the programme adopted in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic to better prepare the EU and the world for future pandemics**<sup>10</sup>.



You have the opportunity to drive forward the political and budgetary efforts needed to ensure that the European Union meets the global health challenges, and helps create a safer world for both European citizens, and the world.





# What can you do as a Member of the European Parliament?

## ENSURE ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR HEALTH POLICIES

### As an MEP, you can:



**Ensure an ambitious budget for official development assistance is included in the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)**, giving priority to the development instrument of the Neighbourhood Policy and International Cooperation (NDICI) - «Europe in the World». This will enable the European Union to meet global challenges, help strengthen health systems, and effectively prepare for future pandemics.



**Call on the European Commission to reaffirm its support for multilateral agencies**, and to increase its contribution to global health initiatives such as UNITAID, Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and to the Global Fund to fight HIV, tuberculosis and malaria.



**Ensure an ambitious commitment from the European Union at the Nutrition for Growth Summit (March 2025)**, by guaranteeing adequate funding and continuity for the Nutrition Action Plan.



## SUPPORTING OUR PARTNERS' HEALTH SOVEREIGNTY

### As an MEP, you can:



**Advocate for the 7th EU-AU Summit to be held in 2025** in order to maintain the commitments made at the previous Summit, and to renew the cooperation strategy between both continents. Health and support for Africa's health sovereignty must remain pillars of the EU-AU strategy.



**Advocate that the Africa-Europe investment package resulting from the «Global Gateway»** strategy provides sustainable funding for initiatives aimed at primary social services, such as health, in the most vulnerable countries.





## ENSURING THAT HEALTH R&D POLICIES MEET ACTUAL NEEDS

**As an MEP, you can:**



**Advocate for the European Union's R&D policies to be driven by public health needs with a high societal impact**, in both Europe and the world, such as through the prioritisation of poverty-related and infectious diseases.



**Help improve transparency in the drugs market**, and regulate the influence of pharmaceutical lobbies and other private interests.



**Help avoid R&D funding from European research programmes from becoming disguised subsidies**, by ensuring the Commission makes such funding **conditional** on a clear return on public investment.



**Monitor the implementation** of the Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe according to its four key pillars.



**Ensure that the Team Europe Initiatives (TEIs) on the African continent prioritise** the strengthening of health systems and the development of regional production and manufacturing. These Initiatives must be provided with funding commensurate with the challenges and be subject to objective impact assessments and monitoring to ensure the transparency of the processes, from design to implementation.



**Ensure the active involvement of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) through regular, meaningful exchanges - both from Brussels and from the Global South - in the decision-making process**, guaranteeing that non-corporate interests are adequately represented in discussions and decisions relating to health.

## For further information on the topics mentioned above:

- [Navigating the Team Europe approach in the EU-AU health partnership](#)
- [A short-lived priority: a look at the European Union's Official Development Assistance to health in 2022](#)
- [2024 European Elections: our Manifesto for a European Union truly committed to global health!](#)
- [Parliamentarians call on world governments for "A dose of solidarity"](#)
- [EU-AU health partnership: The ball is in the EU's court! \(with other CSOs\)](#)
- [World TB Day 2024: Time to write the final chapter in the story of TB!](#)
- [Access denied: private interests vs. public health](#)

## References:

<sup>1</sup> Council of the European Union (January 11th, 2024), Global Solidarity during the COVID-19 pandemic, Available here: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/coronavirus-pandemic/covid-19-global-solidarity/> (consulted on May 30th, 2024)

<sup>2</sup> United Nations (December 10th 1948). Available here: Universal Declaration of Human Rights | United Nations (consulted July 3rd, 2024)

<sup>3</sup> World Health Organisation (October 5th, 2023), Universal Health (UHC), Key facts. Available here: [https://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/universal-health-coverage-\(uhc\)](https://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/universal-health-coverage-(uhc)) (consulted on May 20th, 2024)

<sup>4</sup> United Nations (2023), Report on Sustainable Development Goals, Special Edition, Cross-cutting crises have hampered the achievement of global targets on HIV, malaria and tuberculosis (p. 18) Available here: [https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2023\\_French.pdf](https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2023_French.pdf) (consulted on May 19th, 2024 in French)

<sup>5</sup> World Health Organisation (July 18th, 2023), Childhood immunization begins recovery after COVID-19 backslide. Available here: <https://www.who.int/en/news/item/18-07-2023-childhood-immunization-begins-recovery-after-covid-19-backslide> (consulted on May 16th, 2024)

<sup>6</sup> OECD (2023), Financing the SDGs: what obstacles do developing countries face?, Summary (p. 8), OECD, Paris, <https://www.oecd.org/G20/Financement-des-ODD-a-quel-obstacles-les-pays-en-developpement-se-heurtent-ils.pdf> (consulted on May, 15th in French)

<sup>7</sup> GHA (2024) A short-lived priority: a look at the European Union's Official Development Assistance to health in 2022. Available here: A short-lived priority: a look at the European Union's Official Development Assistance to health in 2022 - Action Santé Mondiale (ghadvocates.eu)

<sup>8</sup> CSO Joint statement, (May 2024), Who will the EU be in the world of tomorrow?, Available here: [https://media.globalcitizen.org/aa/13/aa1377f6-485e-4973-aaa1-1e57bd228fd9/joint\\_cso\\_statement\\_re\\_mff\\_mtr\\_next\\_mandate.pdf](https://media.globalcitizen.org/aa/13/aa1377f6-485e-4973-aaa1-1e57bd228fd9/joint_cso_statement_re_mff_mtr_next_mandate.pdf) (consulted on May 29th, 2024)

<sup>9</sup> CSO Joint statement, (December 15th, 2024), Wrong at all levels: Civil Society Response to the December 15 MFF Negotiating Box <https://cdn.one.org/oneorg/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/24090244/MFF-MTR-CSO-Analysis-Jan-2024-PUBLIC.pdf> (consulted on May 25th, 2024)



# About us

Global Health Advocates (GHA) is a French NGO whose mission is to carry out political advocacy in France and with the EU institutions to ensure policies and resources are effectively addressing health inequalities.

- We maintain a close dialogue with European policy-makers, with whom we share our expertise, analyses, recommendations, and evaluations of public policies.
- We assist MEPs in analysing legislative proposals on international solidarity, on global health, and on the transparency of health R&D policies.
- We chair the informal Global Health Civil Society Coalition in Brussels, with over 15 active civil society members, each with their individual expertise and insights. This enables us to act as a focal point between the European Parliament, experts, and international organisations involved in global health.

## Our vision:

**Public policies ensure the right to health for all.**



## Our areas of expertise:



**International cooperation and development**



**Global health, strengthening healthcare systems and preparing for future pandemics**



**Transparency and equity in healthcare R&D policies**

## Photo credits:



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