

Brussels, 29 January 2020

**Subject: Letter of Intent from the *All Policies for a Healthy Europe* multi-stakeholder initiative**

Dear President von der Leyen,

On behalf of *All Policies for a Healthy Europe*, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as President of the European Commission. The coalition I represent warmly welcomes the experience you will bring to the European Union.

*All Policies for a Healthy Europe* is a multi-stakeholder initiative geared towards putting people's well-being at the centre of all areas of EU policy-making. Since its launch in 2018, our coalition has actively promoted a cross-sectoral approach to health and well-being, at both EU level and towards international organisations such as the WHO and the OECD. To illustrate our approach, we attach our paper on the *Economy of Well-being*.

At the start of your tenure, we wish to submit this Letter of Intent to call on the European Commission to establish an **EU Charter on Well-being**. The Charter would introduce common well-being principles to effectively assess the impact of EU policies on the quality of people's lives, in all fields and with a long-term perspective.

European citizens need concrete action to improve their well-being. Almost half of the European population does not practice any physical activity<sup>1</sup>, and the resources allocated to disease prevention and health promotion are scarce<sup>2</sup> even as the European population is ageing<sup>3</sup>. In 2018, almost 4 million cancer cases were diagnosed in Europe, whilst cancer is often a preventable disease<sup>4</sup>. Every year, more than 1 in 6 people struggle with mental health problems across the EU<sup>5</sup>. To answer these far-reaching challenges, 70% of Europeans want to see more action at EU level on health and well-being<sup>6</sup>.

Citizens' concerns increasingly cut through all policy areas, ranging from becoming ill or disabled to environmental pollution and social inequalities. As highlighted in the 2019 Council Conclusions on the Economy of Well-being, "*taking well-being into account in all policies is vitally important to the Union's economic growth, productivity, long-term fiscal sustainability and societal stability*"<sup>7</sup>.

*All Policies for a Healthy Europe* is keen to support your vision for a healthy, climate-neutral and socially inclusive Europe. We are committed to contribute our expertise to engage constructively with you on an **Economy that Works for People**, a **Europe fit for the Digital Age**, the **European Green Deal**, as well as **Promoting our European Way of Life** by advancing citizens' health and well-being.

To develop a horizontal approach based on cross-sectoral collaboration between different policy areas, we also call on you to endorse the setting of an **Observatory of Well-being** which would ensure the consistent application of the principles laid out in the Charter, while also facilitating a **Structured Dialogue** between the European Commission and *All Policies for a Healthy Europe*.

I strongly believe that our coalition could be a thoughtful and constructive partner for the Commission in putting forward and implementing evidence-based policies that will improve the health and well-being of all European citizens.

Following on our previous exchange with Mr. Seibert, which is attached for your convenience, *All Policies for a Healthy Europe* would very much welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss establishing a partnership in more detail.

We look forward to hearing from you and wish you every success during your mandate.

Yours sincerely,

Marian Harkin



**Chair**

**All Policies for a Healthy Europe**

<http://healthyeurope.eu/>

<sup>1</sup> 2018 Eurobarometer on sport and physical activity: <https://ec.europa.eu/comfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/survey/getsurveydetail/instruments/special/surveyky/2164>.

<sup>2</sup> According to the OECD, health promotion and disease prevention account for only 3-4% of total health spending.

<sup>3</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-statistical-books/-/KS-02-19-681>

<sup>4</sup> European Commission, 'New tool to report cancer burden statistics and trends across Europe': <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/news/new-tool-report-cancer-burden-statistics-and-trends-across-europe>.

<sup>5</sup> OECD, European Commission, 'Health at a Glance': Europe 2016

<sup>6</sup> Eurobarometer 89.2, 'Democracy on the Move: European Elections – One Year to Go' (May 2018): <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/files/heard/eurobarometer/2018/eurobarometer-2018-democracy-on-the-move/report/en-one-year-before-2019-eurobarometer-report.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Council Conclusion on the Economy of Well-being, p. 2: <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-13171-2019-INIT/en/pdf>.



**All Policies for a Healthy Europe** is an intersectoral initiative composed of influential non-governmental and not-for-profit organisations, think-tanks, trade associations and individual companies. We aim to ensure that health and well-being are considered in all relevant EU policy areas. We see health and well-being as crucial contributors to a stronger economic model, one that encompasses more than just GDP and fiscal rules, and which targets inclusive growth and sustainable development. We champion a broad vision of health policy, encompassing Europe's role in addressing the multi-dimensional determinants of health and well-being – economic, social, environmental, commercial and political. We seek opportunities for collaboration beyond the healthcare sector, and we embrace the potential of data and digital technologies to improve citizens' well-being.

The **Healthy Europe 'Knowledge Partners'** contribute to the strategic direction of the initiative, providing data and guidance on content, as well as input on political and communications activities. Our Knowledge Partners are: *Active Citizenship Network, Digital Health Society, European Connected Health Alliance, European Student Network (ESN), EurEau, European Health Future Forum (EHFF), European Health Management Association (EHMA), European Patients' Forum (EPF), European Public Health Alliance (EPHA), EU40, Federation of the European Sporting Goods Industry (FESI), Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) MedTech Europe and Re-Imagine Europa.* This initiative is made possible by the sponsorship of Johnson & Johnson, Microsoft and Randstad.



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