



Activity report 2020

Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)

March 2020 - March 2021

Introduction



This document gives a glimpse into some of the highlights of HEAL's work in 2020.

It is impossible to share all the many activities and successes that HEAL has seen in this out of the ordinary year.

If you are interested to find out more about our work on health and diseases, toxic chemicals, climate and energy or air quality, please check out our website www.env-health.org. Here you can

- Subscribe to our various newsletter and real-time feeds
- Find out more about HEAL's latest <u>campaigns</u>
- Dive into our <u>research projects</u>
- View and share our multilingual <u>publications and infographics</u>

Our webinars are available on HEAL's YouTube channel.

HEAL is also present on <u>Twitter</u>, <u>Facebook</u>, <u>LinkedIn</u> and <u>Instagram</u>, follow us there!

About HEAL



More than 90 organisations in 28 countries

- Doctors associations
- Patient groups
- Nurses associations
- Public health institutes
- Research institutes
- Not-for-profit health insurers
- Women's groups
- Youth groups
- Environmental groups
- Consumer groups



Governance - Executive Committee



The Executive Committee oversees the implementation of the annual work programme and the priorities of HEAL's activities. It is elected for a four-year mandate by our members (2020-2024).



Peter van den Hazel

HEAL President.

International Network for
Children's Health,
Environment and Safety
(INCHES) (Netherlands)



Jessica Carreño Louro

International Association of Mutual Benefit Societies AIM (Belgium)



Marie-Christine Dewolf

HEAL Vice-President.

<u>Hygiène Publique en</u>

<u>Hainaut</u> (Belgium)



Christian Horemans

National Federation of Independent Health Insurance Funds (Belgium)



Dave Stone

HEAL Treasurer. Natural England (United Kingdom)



Isabel Proaño Gómez

European Federation of Allergy & Airways Diseases Patients' Association (EFA) (Belgium)



Denitsa Ivanova

<u>Association Air for Health</u> (Bulgaria)

HEAL team



Our committed and dynamic team, based in Belgium, Poland, Germany, France, Serbia and Turkey, works passionately to create a better, healthier environments.

Génon K. Jensen - Executive Director	Anne Stauffer – Deputy Director, Strategic Lead
Sara Azcona Zabala - Finance and Office Manager	Srdjan Kukolj - Health and Energy Advisor for the Balkan region
Joanna Brzezinska – Consultant on Health and Transport Poland*	Clementine Lecomte – Finance and Office Consultant
Natacha Cingotti - Senior Policy Officer, Health and Chemicals	Ivonne Leenen – Senior Communications Officer
	Dalila Lopes – Communications Assistant*
Funda Gacal - Consultant on Energy and Health, Turkey	Angeliki Lyssimachou – Senior Science Policy Officer
Vijoleta Gordlejevic – Health and Climate Change Coordinator	Vlatka Matkovic - Senior Health and Energy Policy Officer
Berkay Hacimustafa - Consultant, Turkey	Weronika Michalak - HEAL Poland Director
Sandra Jen - EDC-Free Europe Coordinator	Sophie Perroud – EU Policy Coordinator
Jacek Karaczun - Communications Assistant Poland *HEAL	Elke Zander – Head of Communications team members who started in our new financial period of 15 March 2021- 14 March 2022)

Finances



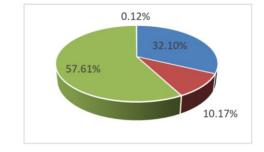
HEAL is independent of any political party or commercial interest. The alliance receives funding from the European Union, governments and private foundations as well as through membership contributions. We do not accept funding from sources with commercial interests.

HEAL's strategic priorities, work programme and budget are adopted by our Annual General Assembly, and carried out by the HEAL secretariat under the guidance of the Executive Committee.

HEAL's financial year runs from 15 March 2020 to 14 March 2021. The audit was carried out by an independent auditor's company.

Income

•	E.C. grant (Operating grant)	€ 379,699.00
•	E.C. grants (Action grants)	€ 120,347.31
•	Other grants (governments, private foundations)	€ 681,514.70
•	Membership fees	€ 1,400.00

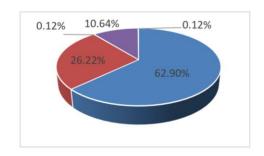


Total Income

€ 1,182,961.01

Expenditure

•	Personnel costs	€ 744,135.25
•	Activity costs including subcontractors	€ 310,187.73
•	Travel and subsistence costs	€ 1,394.68
•	Administration, IT & office costs	€ 125,843.35
•	Provisions for social regulations	€ 1,400.00



Total Expenditure

€ 1,182,961.01

Finances



HEAL would like to thank its donors for their great support throughout this financial year

- European Commission (DG Environment / DG CLIMATE EU LIFE+ Programme)
- European Commission (DG Research & Innovation)
- European Commission (European Union, Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance)
- European Climate Foundation (ECF)
- Global Greengrants Fund
- Oak Foundation
- Wellcome Trust Foundation
- Global Climate and Health Alliance (GCHA)
- Kristian Gerhard Jebsen Foundation
- Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz und nukleare Sicherheit / Umweltbundesamt (BMU/UBA)

COVID-19



2020 was a unique year for HEAL as an organisation, for our network, and for the mission and objectives that HEAL has set.

The COVID-19 pandemic initially brought a new degree of political uncertainty on environment and climate commitments, followed by unprecedented announcements of financing for recovery which uses the EU's Green Deal as a blueprint. COVID-19 accelerated the decline of coal in (Western) Europe's energy sector, gave Europeans a glimpse of a cleaner air future, and many a newfound appreciation of nature. Health protection became the top concern of policymakers across party lines, and scientific expertise was increasingly sought after, opening opportunities beyond the pandemic for environmental disease prevention and evidence-based policy-making.

The pandemic also created challenges on an organisational level, with teleworking, care for family members of all ages and a high level of uncertainty and apprehension – all of which HEAL addressed with a substantive time investement on organisational matters, clear guidelines and a 'health first' approach for all staff members and consultants.

HEALTH & DISEASES





Health, recovery and zero pollution



The COVID-19 pandemic produced a policy shift that presented new challenges but also unforeseen opportunities, such as the EU Green Deal as the blueprint for the just, green and healthy recovery.

- ⇒ #HealthyRecovery statement (May 2020) by 350 organisations representing over 40 million health professionals and over 4,500 individual health professionals from 90 different countries
- ⇒ <u>HEAL letter</u> to European Commission and Council Presidents, stating that environmental health protection and evidence-based disease prevention should be at the heart of EU's COVID-19 recovery
- ⇒ In budget negotiations, European Parliament resolutions and national considerations, we ensured emphasis of the link between healthy recovery, Green Deal and zero pollution, at events, on social media, and in the press.
- ⇒ EU's Zero Pollution Action Plan roadmap and public <u>consultation</u>, where we set the following three principles: 1. Zero harm from pollution, 2. Zero money for pollution, 3. Zero delay in stopping pollution.

Our work has been instrumental in ensuring that the zero pollution ambition was spelled out, and not delayed because of COVID-19. The EU Green Deal is the framework for recovery, and building back better specifically for health is also increasingly on policy-makers minds.

However, the next months will be crucial to see if EU policy-makers walk the talk on health protection and zero pollution, in the legislative proposals and recovery financing decisions.

Beat pollution today, prevent disease tomorrow – for everyone



Visuals prepared for HEAL's zero pollution advocacy, to highlight the principle will benefit each and everyone, and reducing pollution is active disease prevention.









HEAL in research projects









CUSSH - Complex Urban Systems for Sustainability and Health



https://projectcussh.org/





FREIA - Female Reproductive toxicity of EDCs project: a human evidence-based screening and dentification approach

http://freiaproject.eu/



HERA - Integrating Environment & Health Research project https://www.heraresearcheu.eu/

TOXIC CHEMICALS





EU Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability



Throughout 2020 HEAL carried out targeted advocacy and communications activities, and engaged members and partners on the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability (CSS), a key part of the EU Green Deal.

- ⇒ Responded to the EU Commission roadmap on the CSS (June 2020)
- ⇒ Organised a series of high-level meetings in Spring and Summer 2020 with EU Commissioners Timmermans, Sinkevicius, Kyriakides and Breton
- ⇒ Secured a strong <u>EU Parliament resolution on the CSS</u>, in working with lead MEPs (July 2020)
- ⇒ Engagement with civil servants in Member States
- ⇒ <u>Public petition</u> with WeMove and the EEB, available in seven languages and signed by close to 130k citizens (September 2020)
- ⇒ HEAL joint letter with 14 NGOs to Commission-President Von der Leyen

HEAL's intense advocacy efforts paid off when in October 2020, the CSS <u>was launched</u>. The ability of the strategy to truly minimize people's exposure to harmful substances and prevent diseases will highly depend on the practical implementation of the proposed initiatives. It is here where our continued health watchdog role will be needed and such, HEAL will follow three priorities for urgent action: getting EDCs out of consumer products, making quick progress on ED identification under CLP, and progress on the group of "forever chemicals" called PFAS. The CSS will continue to be HEAL's major framework for chemicals work in 2022 and beyond.

Plastic and health



In September 2020, we launched the HEAL report <u>'Turning the Plastic Tide - The Chemicals in Plastic that Put Our Health at Risk'.</u> The report shines a light on a rarely explored perspective on plastic pollution, namely the undeniable link between the synthetic chemicals used in plastics and their effects on our health.



Our work was picked up by key media outlets and scientific journals, but also by European agencies and HEAL national members. Infographics from the report were used in publications by the Food Packaging Forum, to name an example.

Following popular demand, many chapters and infographics of the report were made available by HEAL as stand-alone factsheets (15 in total). French versions of the report and of these factsheets were also made available for individual download and use. We may also develop further translations of the factsheets in the next work programme.



Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs)



- HEAL continued to contribute to the advancement of developing information requirements for EDCs under REACH through participation and contributions to the EU Chemicals Agency's CARACAL subgroup dedicated to EDCs. We provided 2 written inputs, supporting the development of ED hazard classes under CLP.
- HEAL contributed to the public consultation on the proposed update of the EDC information requirements in the biocides product regulation, insisting the importance to ensure thorough safety testing of biocidal active substances to take place before products are placed on the market (March 2020).
- We stepped up our collaboration with French members in light of the country's commitments made on EDCs in its 2nd national strategy on EDCs (SNPE2):
 - Joint letter with AMLP, FNE, WECF, Générations Futures, Reseau Environnement Santé, & Cantine sans Plastiques to French ministers (<u>January 2021</u>)
 - HEAL-AMLP blog series on endocrine disruptors hosted on France's main independent online investigative media outlet, Mediapart (June 2020)



Endocrine Disrupting Chemicals (EDCs)



In November 2020, results from a new survey – published by HEAL member Mutualités Libres (ML) with support and input from HEAL, revealed nearly half of Belgian citizens have little knowledge of what EDCs are and how they impact our health. This is why HEAL & ML teamed up to launch an infographic and 5 social media cards illustrating 10 tips to avoid hormone disruptors in and around the house (available in English, French and Dutch).

The survey's results and infographic were launched during the annual ML symposium, organised together with HEAL in November 2020. The social media campaign during and after this event reached 80,000 individuals on Twitter and resulted in media coverage with a

combined readership of 269 K.



Health engagement on chemicals



HEAL continued to build capacity and engage on EU policy developments with key health actors, among which many HEAL members:

- Developed an infographic and social media campaign with the European Cancer Leagues to illustrate how Europe can prevent cancer by tackling environmental pollutants (May 2020)
- Launched educational and advocacy materials with the Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) & the University of California

 San Francisco (UCSF) with 10 easy tips to avoid toxic chemicals during and after pregnancy (July 2020)
- Published an infographic with the Belgian Mutualités Libres illustrating 10 tips to avoid endocrine disruptors in and around the home (November 2020)
- Presented HEAL's work on chemicals at the WHO Global Chemicals and Health Network (January 2021)

Pesticides – chlorpyrifos court case



HEAL requested the right to intervene in a legal challenge launched against the non-renewal of the pesticide-active substance chlorpyrifos methyl at the European Court of Justice.

HEAL, together with the support of its members and partners, has been advocating for the non-renewal of chlorpyrifos for several years.

"Forever chemicals": PFAS

Building on the wave of public and policy attention forever chemicals received following the launch of the hit film 'Dark Waters', HEAL continued to publish public materials on PFAS:

- Joint two-page flyer on PFAS with ChemSec, EEB, CHEM Trust & THINK-Film
- Infographic to create awareness around pregnancy and chemicals with FIGO and UCSF



Food contact materials



HEAL teamed up with a coalition of like-minded NGOs to develop a strategy for joint advocacy and campaign in the context of the upcoming reform of Europe's legislation on food contact materials. Subsequently and together, we targeted the respective European institutions to further this agenda.

These advocacy efforts have all fed into the initiation of the first steps of legislative revision, through the launch of the public consultation on the roadmap for the inception impact assessment in January 2021. HEAL's response to the roadmap highlighted how we have long called on the EU authorities to close the loopholes in the legislation, which put the health of Europeans at risk through potential leaching of chemicals of concerns from the food contact articles and materials into the food, and set out a list of loopholes to close.

With CHEM Trust and Zero Waste Europe, HEAL has developed the 'Food for Thought' newsletter, aiming at informing decision makers and stakeholders on the latest FCM-relevant developments regarding policies, the publication of new reports and scientific studies.

HEAL also has contributed to an Arnika-led joint NGO testing initiative and writing the report – the launch has been delayed by COVID19 and was launched in May 2021.



EDC-Free Europe coalition



HEAL in its role as the EDC-Free campaign secretariat continued to host and provide a facilitating role, and strategic planning for ten EDC NGO virtual monthly meetings. These virtual meetings aim to give campaign partners a platform to share European and national policy updates and news on EDCs. They enable our campaign partners to share material and intelligence from EU & national level, plan and mobilise around EU policy developments. HEAL also continued to host the EDC-Free Advisory group.

A large part of the work at EU level over this reporting period was focused on the follow up to the EU Commission Fitness check on EDCs and contributions to EU Chemical Strategy for Sustainability with the publication of EDC-Free Europe new position paper "Key Recommendations for a Reformed EU Regulatory Framework on EDCs".

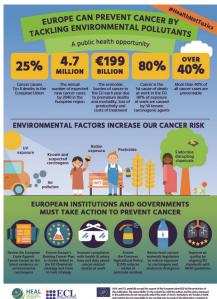
HEAL also runs the campaigns communications and reached 177k individuals on social media, sent 12 newsletters in five languages and created visuals for campaign partners to use on social media and elsewhere.

Toxic chemicals in images













CLIMATE & ENERGY





Climate



With COP26 being postponed, HEAL put a key emphasis on advocating for a higher EU climate ambition for 2030, and for showcasing the latest research, in a colllaboration with collaboration with the Lancet Countdown for their annual publication on Climate Change and Health.

- ⇒HEAL <u>letter</u> to EU Heads of State on upping the EU 2030 GHG emission reduction target
- ⇒ Provided input to the <u>Lancet Policy brief for EU policy-makers</u>
- ⇒Press work around the launch date and extensive social media activities with the Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) and our national offices
- ⇒Speaker in the webinar to launch the European Lancet briefing, where HEAL put a focus on the opportunities around the EU Green Deal, and reiterated the call for a -65% GHG reduction goal.

A Europe Beyond Coal



The pandemic produced some policy shifts in the discussions and campaigning for a Europe Beyond Coal — with discussions on healthy recovery, an acceleration of coal phase outs and a lot of opportunities to respond to EU level opportunities, especially through the various financing packages that were being discussed (EU Recovery and Resilience Facility, EU MFF).

HEAL decided to concentrate on advocacy and communication on how a swift and healthy transition in current coal regions can be achieved, as part of Just Transition deliberations.

We accompanied the legislative process through health expertise and communication, providing support and amplifying Europe Beyond Coal campaign partners activities. We focused our advocacy on calling for a coal phase out date as a prerequisite for JT funding, and highlighting that fossil gas is not a healthy solution in going beyond coal.

We launched a briefing entitled 'Just transition for health protection — why disease prevention and zero pollution need to be at the heart of energy investments', emphasizing the need for a truly healthy and sustainable just transition and recommendations on how to ensure just that.

Poland



HEAL has been working to bring climate conversations higher on the agenda in Poland for several years, and the HEAL Poland team often appears in big national media to make this point.

2020 marked a big milestone for health engagement on climate change in Poland.

We organised meetings, working groups, 4 webinars, all with the aim to and in preparation for the launch the first-ever statement on climate and health in December 2020. The statement describes the health threats from climate change, and puts forward a set of recommendations for Polish policy-makers on how to better protect health through climate mitigation measures. HEAL faciliated the statement and the respective website 'Doctors for Climate'.

By the end of the reporting period, the appeal had gathered 36 signatures from numerous prestigious and recognised health experts, institutions and organizations, from the range of Poland's health sector, including Supreme Medical Chamber (representing all doctors in Poland), representatives from the World Health Organization, University of Łódź, Medical University of Warsaw, Medical University of Silesia, Deputy Director for Analyzes and Strategies in Public Health, Head of the Department of Monitoring and Analyzes of Population Health, Head of the Department of Environmental Epidemiology, Institute of Occupational Medicine, Silesian Center for Heart Diseases in Zabrze, Yagiellonian University, President, Federation of Polish Patients or National Consultant in the field of Environmental Health and many more.



Western Balkans



Health sector and public interest was high in the region, also as part of policy deliberations on the Green Agenda and HEAL was also a sought-after speaker for high-level events in the region.

We published a major analysis entitled 'Chronic Coal Pollution Serbia – Making the case for health promoting investments for zero pollution in Serbia', on the public investments into pollution control in Serbia's Kostolac and Nikola Tesla plants, showing that emissions data points to emission control technology not being used.

We had regular interaction and communication with the Energy Community and saw several of HEAL's current materials being used as evidence by European institutions.

A major success of HEAL in the Western Balkans is the fact that we are invited to present our vision and the health expertise at high-level events, in scientific articles and on television very regularly, a consequence of our consistent and thorough engagement and research in the region.

Germany



After a poor and unambitious coal phase out date of 2038, HEAL focused on the implementation of the new LCP BREF in Germany, pushing for strong emission cut requirements.

HEAL teamed up with ClientEarth, Deutsche Umwelthilfe and Klimaallianz, for advocacy with a <u>joint letter</u> backed up by a study on the health benefits of stricter BREF limits, with a press release, with speaking engagements.

We also developed several joint <u>infographics</u> with ClientEarth to show the huge (cumulative) health costs from prolonged pollution until 2038, and a series of cards to focus on specific coal power plants. Jointly, we also sent a letter with ClientEarth on to all members of the German environment committee ahead of a hearing on the issue and ran extensive social media when negotiations began and voting took place. At the end of the reporting period, negotiations on BREF implementation were still ongoing, and it is currently unclear if the process will be concluded before the next elections in September 2021.

Turkey



HEAL's work on coal energy in health in Turkey saw new heights in this year.

We launched a new assessment on the health costs of existing coal power generation in Turkey: <u>'Chronic Coal Pollution Turkey - The health burden caused by coal power in Turkey and how to stop the coal addition'</u>.

The report is available in English and Turkish.

The analysis underscores that the health impacts of existing coal generate economic costs of up to 10.9 billion EUR (or up to 99.37 billion Turkish Lira) annually, which is equivalent of up to 27% of Turkey's annual health expenditure.

The report was endorsed by five leading Turkish health organisations and saw tremendous media and social media success, especially in Turkey.

Turkey



A new project in Turkey was launche, too: the 'Health Collaboration on Climate Change and Environment Project' (Turkish abbreviation ÇİSİP)

Together with partners HASUDER and Kocaeli University, Department of Public Health, HEAL runs the project on engaging the health sector on climate change, organising a range of activities including trainings, and communication.

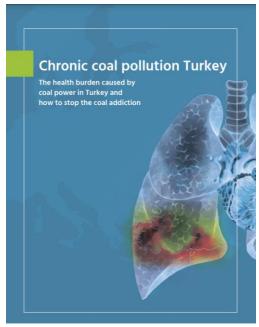
After setting off the project including putting together an identity, communications plan and social media presence, we have organised webinars and meetings and have launched a <u>briefing</u> in English and Turkish, entitled 'One Health Approach to Climate Change and the COVID-19 Pandemic'.





Climate and energy in images







Chociaż od prawie roku uwagę większości pochłania walka z epidemią COVID-19, nie wolno zapominać nam o **globalnym zagrożeniu zdrowia i życia** wynikającym z postępującej **zmiany klimatu**.













Clean Air for Health



The air quality debate has come into full swing in 2020, following the fitness check of the EU ambient air quality directive.

A key focus of HEAL's work on this topic was advocacy towards the EP ENVI committee who worked on an own-initiative implementation report on the AAQD, and, when that report, calling for full alignment of EU standards with WHO guidelines, was voted through the committee, also on the European Parliament as a whole who subsequently also voted in favour of the report.

When the European Commission opened a consultation on the impact inception assessment on the revision of AAQD, HEAL submitted an <u>answer</u> which was then also published and shared, of course calling for full alignment of EU air quality standards with science-based WHO guidelines.

This process is ongoing and 2021 and 2022 will be decisive years for protecting and promoting health through stricter air quality standards.

Our healthy city of tomorrow



HEAL developed <u>materials around the theme 'our healthy city of tomorrow'</u> to be launched for the first ever UNEP International Day for Clean Air and Blue Skies.

With 26 health partners active in 14 cities across Europe, health engagement was high. There is a wealth of materials and messaging available in seven local languages (13 videos, 3 infographics, specific demands for 11 cities on clean air, 16 health quotes), which health partners and NGOs could and can use in their further work.

We developed two infographics: one highlighting the health and cost benefits of walking and cycling based on scientific studies conducted in a number of European cities; and the other focusing on illustrating the importance of adhering to WHO air quality recommendations particularly on city level.

HEAL was able to start closing the gap on health sector engagement at city level, which will in the medium term contribute to increasing the health push for decarbonisation.

Through impactful social media and traditional media coverage and opeds, we contributed to public and policy debates on sustainable and healthy transport in urban environments, using various hooks such as UNEP's Internation Day for Clean Air and Blue Skies, launches of partners' reports or political developments.

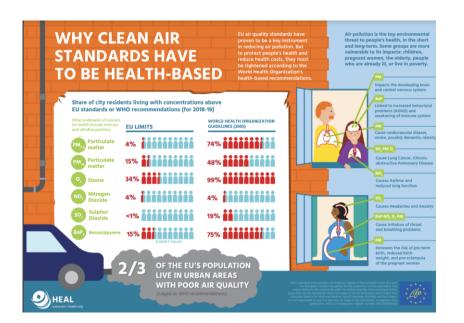
The local perspective continues to be an important one in our ongoing campaigning for stricter EU air quality standards.

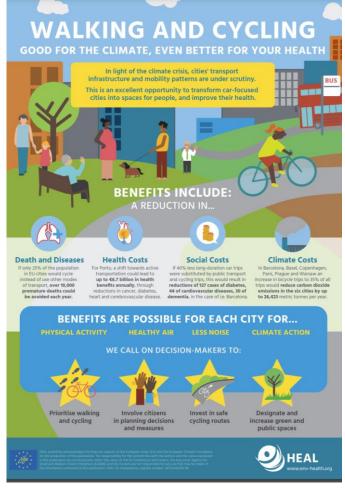


Air quality in visuals



















Thank you for your attention! And do get in touch...

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The responsibility for the content lies with the authors and the views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the EU institutions and funders.

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