

6 October 2026

To: Members of the European Parliament

Increase investments in climate resilience and pollution prevention for health

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

On 7 October, you will be discussing *An ambitious Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2028 – 2034 for a strong and resilient Europe*.

The Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) is an alliance of over 70 member organisations working for better health through a healthier environment. HEAL calls on you to place particular emphasis on increasing public investments for disease prevention, health resilience to climate change and pollution prevention in the next EU budget.

[The Lancet Countdown Europe 2026 report](#) confirms that people's health is threatened like never before from the triple crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. Europe's four record-breaking heatwaves of 2026 caused [at least 35,000 premature deaths](#). Climate- and pollution-related risks already cost the EU economy over [€738 billion](#) between 1980 and 2023.

Public financing is essential to prevent health impacts and cost from this triple crisis.

Health should be at the centre of the upcoming budget negotiations.

1. Prioritise climate and clean air investments

Air pollution remains the top environmental threat to health in the EU. The current EU budget 2021–2027 dedicates [€185.5 billion](#) to clean air objectives, mostly (70%) allocated under the temporary NextGeneration EU, ending in 2027, and Cohesion funds.

As EU member states will have to implement key clean air requirements (with the

revised Ambient Air Quality Directive (AAQD) and the National Emission Reduction Commitments (NEC) Directive), the next EU MFF will be key to help deliver on clean air for health, to provide for major investments for implementation.

HEAL urges you to support a dedicated budget line for clean air financing which would provide an adequate incentive mechanism, transparency, and accountability, and support especially regional and local clean air measures.

Every euro invested in pollution prevention will deliver high-value European public goods, including reduced cross-border risks and economic losses, and increased health resilience of society, especially of the most vulnerable groups.

Clean air is also a prerequisite for a more climate resilient Europe. In the next weeks, the European Commission is expected to launch a climate resilience framework and a European heatwave plan. This record heat summer has shown that the EU and member states are currently unprepared to address the reality and the scale of the climate-health emergency, with uneven progress on climate resilience and implementation which leaves vulnerable groups exposed to substantial impacts.

HEAL urges you to support a dedicated budget line for EU investments on health and climate resilience and ensure that the upcoming plans deliver on better health protection.

2. End fossil fuel subsidies

The burning of fossil fuels is the leading contributor to the health burden and cost from air pollution, as well as to climate change. Despite political commitments, public subsidies for fossil fuels continue, with [354 billion in 2023 alone](#). In [five EU countries, the amount of net fossil fuel subsidies is over 10% higher than health expenditure](#).

HEAL urges you to support a clean, healthy transition by phasing out fossil fuel subsidies in the 2028-34 EU budget and swiftly ending direct and indirect fossil fuels subsidies in the energy sector by 2035.

3. Keep the EU LIFE programme as a standalone programme

HEAL is one of over [700 civil society organisations, local and regional authorities, and businesses](#) expressing deep concern about the current proposal to integrate the EU LIFE programme on environment and climate into broader funding mechanisms. In over three decades, LIFE has supported over 6,000 projects, many of which have led to tangible health improvements, e.g. through cleaner air.

HEAL urges you to support maintaining LIFE as a standalone programme with a reinforced budget, essential for preventative, resilience and preparedness efforts. This has to include support for all types of beneficiaries, including operating grants to civil society.

HEAL counts on your leadership for decisive public financing decisions to protect health against the triple crisis.

Yours sincerely,

Anne Stauffer

Deputy Director

Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)

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We are the leading not-for-profit organisation addressing how our environment affects health in the European Union and beyond. Supported by over 70 member organisations, HEAL brings independent and expert scientific evidence from the health community to European and global decision-making processes to inspire disease prevention strategies. HEAL'S EU Transparency Register Number: 00723343929-96

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