



EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT
AND HEALTH PROCESS



EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH PROCESS NEWSLETTER

April–June 2025

#KEEP COOL



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1. EDITORIAL



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It is a pleasure to welcome you to this new issue of the European Environment and Health Process (EHP) newsletter.

While summer is already in full swing across the European Region, the season's sunshine and outdoor activities often overshadow a growing, silent threat: extreme heat. Far from being a mere discomfort, soaring temperatures pose an escalating risk to human health – claiming lives, causing suffering and burdening health-care systems globally. By raising awareness of these risks and taking simple protective measures, we can safeguard our health throughout the summer months.

The annual #KeepCool campaign of the WHO Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe) provides simple and practical guidance for individuals and communities to stay safe during hot weather. For more on how to protect yourself and #KeepCool in the heat, click here.

As you read on, you will discover more about EHP activities across various countries, gain insights from efforts addressing health challenges linked to the triple crisis of climate change, environmental pollution and biodiversity loss, and stay up to date with newly published materials.

Enjoy the read!
EHP Secretariat



2. TOP STORIES

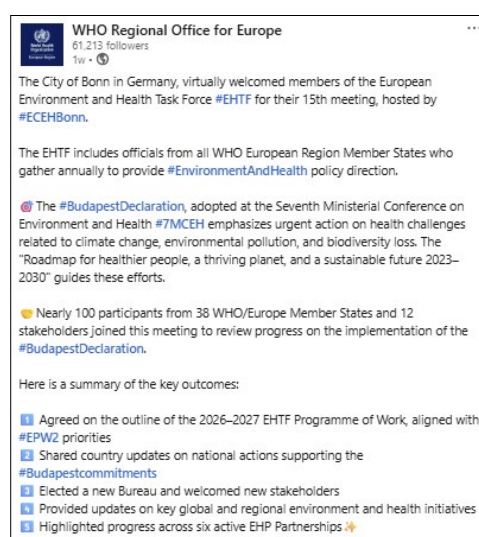
European Environment and Health Task Force accelerates the implementation of the Budapest Declaration commitments

To support the implementation of the [Budapest Declaration](#), the EHP continues to strengthen its governance, foster collaboration and expand country and stakeholder engagement through the work of the [European Environment and Health Task Force](#) (EHTF).

The [15th meeting of the EHTF](#), held virtually from Bonn, Germany on 17 June 2025, brought together nearly 100 participants representing 38 countries and 12 stakeholder organizations. The meeting provided a platform to share progress, align priorities and guide the next phase of regional environment and health action.

The meeting highlights included that the EHTF:

- discussed emerging political and economic developments and their influence on environment and health priorities in the WHO European Region;
- showcased national actions supporting the implementation of the [Budapest Declaration](#), with contributions from Austria, Belgium, Georgia, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands (Kingdom of the) and Spain during an interactive “talk show” session – key developments from countries included strengthened climate adaptation plans, enhanced chemical safety measures and expanded commitments to safe and sustainable water management;
- elected a [new Bureau](#) and welcomed [new stakeholder organizations](#), reinforcing EHTF’s inclusive and dynamic approach to governance;



- reflected on regional and global environment and health initiatives, fostering stronger strategic alignment across sectors and countries;
- endorsed the draft outline of the 2026–2027 Programme of Work of the EHTF, which will be further developed and presented for adoption at the next EHTF meeting – the draft was jointly developed with the EHTF Bureau, building on discussions held during its 14th meeting, convened online on 14 April 2025; and
- highlighted the growing contributions of the six active EHP Partnerships (for more information, see section “EHP Partnerships Corner”).

For continued updates and insights, follow WHO/Europe on [LinkedIn](#), where posts highlight the latest developments from the EHP, including outcomes from the most recent EHTF meeting.



Photo (left to right): Ms Nino Sharashidze, Programme Manager; Ms Brigit Staatsen, former Chair of the EHTF (Netherlands (Kingdom of the)); Ms Francesca Racioppi, Head of the WHO ECEH; Prof. Raquel Duarte-Davidson, newly elected Chair of the EHTF (United Kingdom). © WHO

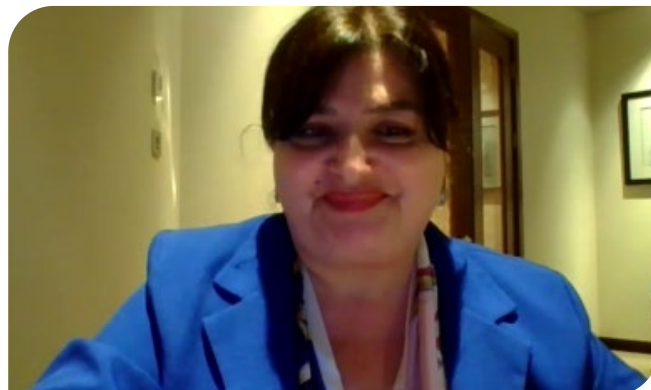


Photo: Ms Maia Javakhishvili (Georgia), newly elected co-Chair, joined the meeting online. © WHO



Photo: Visual from the 15th EHTF meeting. © WHO



Don't miss this: Report of the fourteenth meeting of the European Environment and Health Task Force

This [report](#) captures key decisions, inspiring exchanges and new beginnings. Held in Utrecht in 2024, one year after the Budapest Conference, the [14th meeting of the EHTF](#) brought together over 80 participants from across the WHO European Region. Highlights include the agenda for 2024–2025, the revisions and endorsement of the new Rules of Procedures for the EHTF, the launch of two new EHP Partnerships and the approval of the Bonn Dialogues programme – all setting the pace for impactful work ahead.



Launch and first hearing of the Pan-European Commission on Climate and Health



The escalating health impacts of climate change across the WHO European Region have prompted a bold new initiative: the launch of the [Pan-European Commission on Climate and Health](#). Officially inaugurated on 11 June 2025 in Reykjavík, Iceland, the Commission is set to catalyse a Region-wide transformation in health and climate policy.

Chaired by Katrín Jakobsdóttir, former Prime Minister of Iceland, the Commission brings together leading minds to strengthen political resolve and drive coordinated action across governments and sectors. The goal is to confront the intertwined challenges of rising temperatures, extreme weather events and environmental degradation that are increasingly undermining public health and well-being.

The [launch event](#) marked the start of an ambitious process. Commissioners convened to define the Commission's goals and priorities and held the first of three expert hearings, drawing on leading scientific voices to inform the path ahead. The second and third hearings are scheduled for 1 September and 2 October 2025, respectively (see the "[Upcoming events and initiatives](#)" section), contributing to the development of a high-impact "Call to Action" on climate and health.

The Commission's final recommendations will be presented at the WHO World Health Assembly in May 2026, aiming to drive urgent, evidence-informed policy responses at all levels.

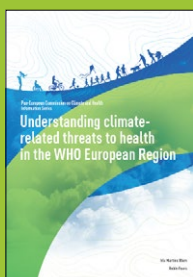


Video: First hearing of the Pan-European Commission on Climate and Health



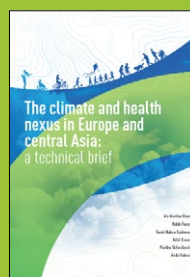
Explore more:

Understanding climate-related threats to health in the WHO European Region: Information series



This document provides key messages about the converging and interconnected climate-induced health risks, the implications of reaching climate tipping points and the health implications of inaction. It is the first of a series of three short thematic briefs.

The climate and health nexus in Europe and central Asia: a technical brief



This technical brief summarizes the key evidence of the multiple links between climate change and health in Europe and central Asia. It was produced to provide background information on the current knowledge about climate-related health effects for the Pan-European Commission on Climate and Health.

Newsroom: The climate crisis is a health crisis and the European Region is in the hot seat

- [statement](#) of Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe;
- [media release](#) on the launch of the Commission; and
- [news article](#) on communicating the climate crisis.

Video: The climate crisis is a health crisis





Increased focus on air quality



Air pollution is the leading environmental risk factor in the WHO European Region and a priority to address, as stated in the [Budapest Declaration](#) and reflected in the [WHO European Programme of Work 2026–2030](#) (EPW2). The evidence that the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants is associated with multiple health benefits has made air pollution a compelling argument for action to address climate change.

In two recent global events, countries reaffirmed their commitments to tackle air pollution and protect public health. At the [Second WHO Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health](#) (March 2025), countries pledged new funding to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, while strengthening air quality standards in alignment with WHO guidelines.

At the World Health Assembly (May 2025), they adopted an [Updated road map for an enhanced global response to the adverse health effects of air pollution](#), which includes a voluntary target to halve the health impacts from anthropogenic air pollution by 2040.

The WHO European Centre for Environment and Health (ECEH), which coordinated the development of the [WHO global air quality guidelines](#), is fully engaged in advancing research on air pollution and health and assisting countries in the European Region in developing and implementing clean air policies aligned with regional and global agreements.

Read this [news release](#) to learn how WHO ECEH supports renewed country commitments to action on air quality.



3. COUNTRY ACTIVITIES

Building resilience: **Georgia** approves a health and climate action plan

In April 2025, the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia, approved the *2025-2027 Action Plan for Adaptation to the Consequences of Climate Change in the Healthcare Sector*, a bold step toward building a climate-resilient health system.

This three-year plan outlines a comprehensive approach to mitigate climate-related health risks

by enhancing the resilience of the health system, raising awareness among the public and health professionals, and introducing an early warning system for climate-sensitive health threats.

By aligning health-care policy with climate adaptation goals, Georgia is setting a forward-looking precedent in public health governance and environmental responsibility.

Poland launches #KeepCool campaign to combat heatwave risks

In a forward-thinking response to the growing health impacts of climate change, the WHO Country Office in Poland in partnership with WHO ECEH and the Polish Press Agency have launched the #KeepCool campaign in Warsaw, Poland. The initiative shines a spotlight on the increasing risks posed by heatwaves and aims to better equip the public with actionable knowledge and resources.

During the campaign's launch, experts and policy-makers emphasized the urgent need

for early warning systems, heat-health action plans and strong cross-sectoral collaboration. Special focus was given to protecting vulnerable populations, ensuring that targeted advice reaches those most at risk during the summer months.

This campaign exemplifies how public awareness and strategic partnerships can serve as vital tools in safeguarding community health in the face of climate extremes.

Kazakhstan highlights One Health and water, sanitation and hygiene progress at a National Water Dialogue

At Kazakhstan's eighth National Policy Dialogue on Water, held on 8 April 2025, the WHO Country Office in Kazakhstan with support of WHO ECEH shared recent updates on integrated efforts to improve public health through the One Health approach and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) initiatives aimed at strengthening health and environmental outcomes.

The discussions, supported by the International Climate Initiative-funded energy–water–land nexus project, will contribute to shaping Kazakhstan's 2025 National Water Dialogue Work Plan, reinforcing cross-sector collaboration for sustainable water management.

Montenegro moves toward mercury-free health care



On 28 May 2025 in Podgorica, Montenegro took a significant step toward eliminating mercury-containing devices in health care as part of an international United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) project implemented by WHO with support from the Global Environment Facility.

The meeting brought together representatives from health-care institutions, government bodies, international partners and technical expert, and focused on presenting the results of an inventory of mercury-containing measuring devices in health-care facilities across Montenegro and the current practices for managing these devices. Conducted by WHO in close cooperation with national authorities, the inventory and assessment were carried out in December 2024 and January 2025. They covered 30 public and seven private institutions, along with an online survey on the use of dental amalgam in 23 health-care facilities. Meeting participants engaged in dialogue on next steps and planned activities for the safe replacement and disposal of mercury-containing devices.

Ukraine: 2025 summer risk assessment



As Ukraine enters the summer of 2025, the country faces the compounded effects of protracted conflict and escalating climate-related challenges. The ongoing war has resulted in widespread damage to critical infrastructure, including energy, water and health-care systems.

To learn more, see the [risk assessment](#), which presents a comprehensive analysis of the compounded public health risks posed by extreme summer heat and conflict-related infrastructure damage.



4. RECENT EVENTS

In the past three months several exciting events in the field of environment and health have taken place; a few of which are highlighted below:

2 April 2025, virtual

The second “deep dive” event from the [EHP Partnership for Health Sector Climate Action](#) entitled *From risk to resilience: effective engagement on climate adaptation for health at subnational levels*, drew 174 participants from 19 countries and showcased tools and strategies from Austria, Germany, Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom, highlighting participatory planning, vulnerability assessments, infrastructure adaptation and health-integrated climate action. Following the country presentations, a lively panel discussion offered local, national and regional perspectives on building resilience.

2–3 April 2025, Geneva, Switzerland

WHO/Europe co-hosted a peer learning round table on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 (Good Health and Well-being), during the [United Nations Economic Commission for Europe \(UNECE\) Regional Forum on Sustainable Development](#), in collaboration with United Nations (UN) partners. With support from WHO ECEH, WHO/Europe delivered a keynote highlighting [EPW2](#) and the future of health in the WHO European Region, identifying climate change and health as one of the defining megatrends. Countries and partners shared good practices, underlining the importance of cross-sectoral and intergenerational collaboration to accelerate progress on EPW2 and SDG 3.

4 April 2025, virtual

At its 43rd meeting, the Bureau of the [Pan-European Programme on Transport, Health and Environment](#) (THE PEP) brought together representatives from 10 countries to review progress on key regional frameworks. Discussions focused on the implementation of the [Vienna Ministerial Declaration](#) and the recently adopted [Geneva Strategy on Transport, Health and Environment](#).

Participants also received updates on the joint THE PEP/EHP Partnership on Healthy Active Mobility, and on THE PEP Partnerships on Sustainable Tourism Mobility, Eco-Driving, and Child- and Youth-friendly Mobility, and the launch of the [#Let'sGetMoving campaign](#).



April–June 2025

7 April 2025, virtual



dedicated [messages](#) for World Health Day.

World Health Day 2025, themed [Healthy beginnings, hopeful futures](#), mobilized global attention towards improving maternal and newborn health. The campaign engaged health leaders, policy-makers, and community advocates to spotlight and address the root causes of avoidable maternal and neonatal deaths. Through sharing best practices and advocating systemic improvements in perinatal care, the initiative aims to ensure every mother and baby receives the quality care they deserve, setting a foundation for healthier generations ahead. Check these

11 April 2025, Copenhagen, Denmark



On 11 April 2025, the meeting of the [Executive Group of the Regional One Health Coordination Mechanism](#) brought together regional directors from the Quadripartite (the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), WHO, the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and UNEP) and key partners to align Europe's One Health efforts with global priorities. Highlights included the handover of chairmanship from WOAH to FAO and a review of achievements from 2024. Discussions focused on strengthening coordination, boosting awareness and enhancing collaboration, including with the European Union (EU). With strong commitment from countries, the meeting reinforced support for tackling health threats at the human-animal-environment interface across Europe and central Asia.

The event also provided a platform to announce a high-level One Health conference, co-hosted by the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the Danish Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries. The conference will take place on 5–6 November 2025 at UN City, under the Danish Presidency of the Council of the European Union.



April–June 2025

7–8 May 2025, Bonn, Germany

The third expert meeting on the updated second edition of the WHO Heat–Health Action Plans guidance brought together the Document Development Group and key regional experts to advance this flagship tool, which is under development. Hosted by WHO ECEH, the meeting focused on reviewing and finalizing the core elements and user action briefs, ensuring the guidance reflects the latest evidence and practical needs. The updated edition will support national and local authorities in strengthening preparedness and protecting health in the face of rising temperatures and extreme heat events.

8 May 2025, virtual

The third Transatlantic dialogue on climate change and mental health gathered nearly 200 participants, spanning national delegates from the WHO European Region and Region of the Americas, along with mental health specialists, policy-makers and civil society representatives. The event fostered a rich exchange of country-driven experiences, shedding light on the varied mental health impacts of climate change – from eco-anxiety to disaster-related trauma – and spotlighted effective interventions across different contexts. Learnings from the session will feed into a forthcoming policy-maker brief, designed to guide integrated, region-spanning strategies that strengthen mental well-being amid the climate crisis.

11–13 May 2025, Bled, Slovenia

The Eleventh High-level Meeting of the Small Countries Initiative focused on innovation to strengthen health systems in nations with under two million inhabitants. Representatives from twelve small countries of the WHO European Region convened to shape the [EPW2](#), sharing solutions in personalized care, digital health, climate-responsive services, sustainable financing and community empowerment. Their collaborative discussions culminated in the “Slovenia Statement”, reinforcing tailored, partnership-driven strategies to address unique public health challenges in small countries.



April–June 2025

12–18 May 2025, virtual



The [8th UN Global Road Safety Week – Streets for Life: Making Walking and Cycling Safe](#) galvanized governments, city planners and public health advocates to prioritize pedestrian and cyclist safety. [Campaign](#) highlights included evidence-based

strategies such as lowering speed limits to 30 km/h, establishing protected walkways and crossings, and promoting helmet use. Through a mix of policy dialogue, public awareness efforts and innovative pilot programmes, the week reaffirmed global momentum toward safer, more active mobility and advanced the [UN Decade of Action for Road Safety](#) (2021–2030).

13–14 May 2025, Geneva, Switzerland

The [15th meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health](#) united regional representatives to appraise advancements under the UNECE-WHO/Europe [Protocol on Water and Health](#) and set the strategic agenda for 2026–2028. Participants delved into ensuring safe management and equitable access to water and sanitation services in institutional, public and communal settings, enhancing resilience against climate-induced threats, and preparing for the upcoming [seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties](#) (Budapest, 5–7 November 2025). The gathering reaffirmed the critical role of cross-sector collaboration in fostering sustainable water governance and safeguarding public health.

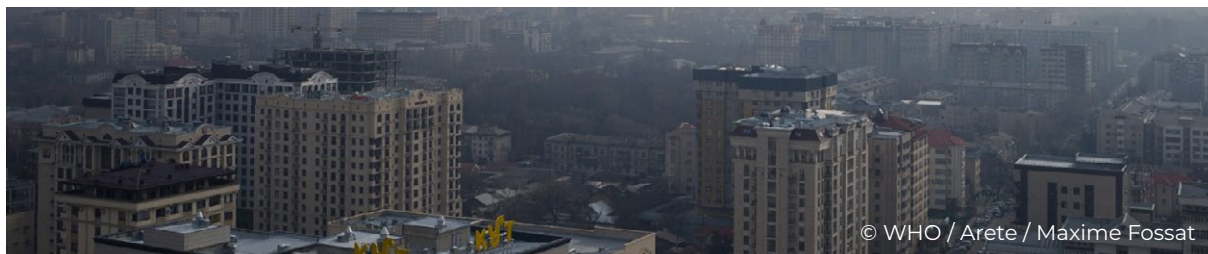
15–16 May 2025, Geneva, Switzerland

Participants at the [34th meeting of the Bureau](#) of the UNECE-WHO/Europe [Protocol on Water and Health](#) discussed the thematic priorities for the programme of work for 2026–2028 in the context of the preparations of the [seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol](#), as well as progress in the implementation of the current programme of work.



April–June 2025

20–21 May 2025, virtual



The annual meeting of the [Joint Task Force on Health Aspects of Air Pollution](#) convened health experts, policy-makers and Parties to the UNECE Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution. Participants reviewed emerging international policies – from the revised [EU Directive on ambient air quality](#) to [WHO's global commitments](#) – and shared progress on research into the health effects of ultrafine particles, black carbon and desert dust; the WHO projects on the health risk assessment of air pollution (i.e. the Update of Health Risks of Air Pollution in Europe and Estimating the Morbidity from Air Pollution and its Economic Costs); and tools for health risk assessment such as [AirQ+](#) and [CLIMAQ-H](#). Through national experience sharing and strategic planning, the Task Force endorsed its 2026–2027 workplan, strengthening a coordinated regional approach to combat air pollution and protect public health.

A new WHO science and policy summary on [Transboundary cooperation for our shared air: protecting public health](#) provides an overview of international agreements on air pollution, including the [Air Convention](#), and acknowledges the role of the Task Force in progressing knowledge on air quality and health and providing tools for health risk assessment of air pollution.

20–21 May 2025, Luxembourg

The [European Climate and Health Observatory](#) is a partnership between the European Commission, the European Environment Agency (EEA) and several other organizations, including WHO/Europe as a founding partner. The ninth partner meeting of the observatory focused on identifying synergies with major European Commission initiatives, including the [EU Adaptation Strategy](#) and the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda. Partners engaged in dialogue around collaborative projects, capacity-building efforts and future opportunities to strengthen the Observatory's role as a hub for knowledge exchange and action at the intersection of climate and health.



April–June 2025

21–23 May 2025, Tirana, Albania



WHO and UNEP recently conducted training sessions with countries participating in the mercury-containing medical devices project. Albania held a dedicated workshop with the health-care facilities selected for the pilot phase of actively substituting mercury-containing measuring devices with safer alternatives.

The pilot facilities include the Regional Hospital of Dibra and the Regional Hospital of Vlora, alongside other key institutions and stakeholders, all collaborating to support this important transition.

22 May 2025, virtual

The [Bonn Dialogue](#) on [Nature-based solutions \(NbS\) and health](#) brought together 170 participants from across the WHO European Region and beyond to explore the role of NbS in improving public health.



The event showcased evidence, real-world examples, and diverse perspectives on how nature can be harnessed across sectors to support healthier environments and communities.

A key highlight of the Dialogue was the launch of a new WHO/Europe [report](#) on NbS and health (see section “[Recent publications and capacity building materials](#)”), jointly developed by the WHO ECEH and the WHO Collaborating Centre on Natural Environments and Health at the University of Exeter, United Kingdom. The report underscores the growing potential of NbS to address complex health and environmental challenges in an integrated and sustainable way.



April–June 2025

3 June 2025, virtual

On World Bicycle Day, WHO/Europe launched the campaign “[Let's Get Moving! 100 Reasons to Walk and Cycle More](#)” as part of the [recent Bonn Dialogue on Environment and Health](#).

#LETSGETMOVING!

- Record a 30-second vertical video answering: “Why do you love walking or cycling?”
- Post it on your socials using #LetsGetMoving, tag @whoeurope and challenge 3 others to join

Nearly 200 participants from across the WHO European Region tuned in to celebrate the power of walking and cycling, driven by a vibrant mix of speakers – from health ministries and city governments to academia, advocacy groups and urban mobility experts – and advocates for inclusive walking and cycling. The campaign highlights the many benefits of walking and cycling: healthier people, greener and safer cities and stronger communities.

Check out the simple steps below explaining of how to participate in the **#Let'sGetMoving** challenge and some of the campaign's materials:



Brochure: Discover 100 evidence-based reasons to promote walking and cycling – for healthier people, cleaner environments and better urban living – supported by science and stories from across the WHO European Region. Available in English and Russian.

A video is available in all four official WHO languages: English, French, German and Russian.



Social media tiles are available in English (shown), French, German and Russian.





3 June 2025, virtual

The WHO Country Office in Kazakhstan in collaboration with the WHO ECEH held an online webinar with local authorities from the Atyrau Region, Kazakhstan, to strengthen environmental and health impact assessment in areas of intensive industrial development.

ECEH experts shared methodologies for conducting environmental health impacts and case studies, while national partners presented health data and air pollution indicators. The discussion addressed the region's significant environmental challenges, particularly those linked to its role as a major hydrocarbon-producing area.

3–5 June 2025, Astana, Kazakhstan



Health and environment experts from the five central Asian countries gathered in Astana, Kazakhstan, for two back-to-back subregional workshops under the auspices of the Protocol on Water and Health: the Workshop on safe sanitation for public health protection in central Asia (3–4 June), and the Workshop on wastewater and environmental surveillance for public health in central Asia (5 June).

Organized by WHO ECEH and the WHO Country Office in Kazakhstan, with support from the Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the first workshop focused on addressing gaps in sanitation services; improving regulations, standards and monitoring; setting national targets for safely managed sanitation; and promoting tools for risk-based management and surveillance of sanitation services. The second workshop focused on strengthening the use of wastewater and environmental surveillance to complement other public health surveillance methods, and to introduce the key principles of the draft WHO wastewater and environmental surveillance multi-pathogen tool. Participants engaged in peer learning with experts from WHO collaborating centres at the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment in Netherlands (Kingdom of the) and the National Centre for Public Health and Pharmacy in Hungary; action planning; and the exchange of best practices, reinforcing cross-country collaboration to improve health outcomes across the WHO European Region.



17–19 June 2025, Bursa, Türkiye

The [2025 WHO European Healthy Cities Conference](#) convened urban policy-makers, public health experts and leaders from across the Region to explore how cities can be engines of resilience and well-being. Under the theme Building Resilient Cities, participants exchanged forward-thinking approaches to health equity, climate adaptation and sustainable urban development. The event spotlighted best practices and innovations that will guide the [European Healthy Cities Network](#) – which comprises over 1900 cities across the Region – towards a future where city design and public health go hand in hand.

19–20 June 2025, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

The 44th meeting of THE PEP Bureau, hosted by the Chair in his home country, brought together country representatives and the joint WHO/Europe and UNECE secretariat of THE PEP to prepare for the upcoming 23rd session of the Steering Committee in Geneva (see section “[Upcoming events and initiatives](#)”). The Bureau discussed and endorsed the Programme of Work for 2026 and considered the organization of a symposium, to be held at the start of the Committee session. The proposed theme focuses on the private sector’s role in sustainable mobility, particularly cycling. The Bureau endorsed a new Partnership on cycle-logistics, led by France.

24–27 June, Punta del Este, Uruguay

Over 600 participants gathered for the inaugural meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group under the [Global Framework on Chemicals](#) (GFC). This landmark event brought together representatives from governments, industry, trade unions, nongovernmental organizations, academia and youth, all committed to advancing safe and sustainable chemicals and waste management.

Over four days of structured dialogue and technical exchange, participants made substantive progress on key elements of GFC implementation, including the Implementation Programmes, the GFC Fund, the Gender Action Plan and the Global Alliance on Pesticides. The meeting also addressed emerging policy issues, financing strategies, interagency cooperation and ways to integrate chemical management into broader sustainable development agendas.



5. LATEST PUBLICATIONS AND CAPACITY-BUILDING MATERIALS

Discover the latest WHO publications, capacity-building materials and podcasts in the field of environment and health, as listed below.

Health advice for hot weather

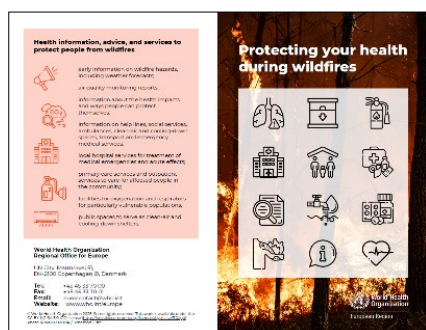


Every year, high temperatures affect the health of many people, particularly older people, infants, people who work outdoors and the chronically ill. This [information sheet](#) provides essential health advice for hot weather, focusing on how to stay safe and healthy during periods of high temperatures.

To see the playlist of #KeepCool campaign videos, click [here](#).

You may also be interested to follow WHO's "[Beat the Heat](#)" initiative, which aims to tackle extreme heat and environmental hazards in workplaces and at major events.

Health advice when wildfires strike



WHO/Europe is deeply concerned about the growing physical and mental health impacts of wildfires, which are becoming more frequent and severe across the Region – in Greece, France, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Türkiye and beyond. See a statement from the Regional Director [here](#).

See this [brochure](#) to learn more about protecting your health during wildfires. Also, check this [link](#) to access the public health advice during the wildfires: how to protect your health and keep safe.



On the island of Chios, Greece, residents do their best to hold back a wildfire inching toward their homes as they wait for firefighters to arrive. Click [here](#) to explore the complete photo narrative from photojournalist Dimitris Tosidis.



Health in Europe podcast: noncommunicable diseases and the triple planetary crisis



How do we tackle the tangled web of climate change and noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) all at once? Dive into the first [episode](#) of Intersections in health, a fresh mini-series unpacking the triple planetary crisis (climate change, environmental pollution and biodiversity loss) and its profound link to NCDs. In this episode the Pan European Commission on Climate and Health and WHO ECEH representatives unpack:

- the challenges of misinformation and attacks on science
- the art of turning complex knowledge into clear messages
- tackling “super wicked” problems and driving system transformation
- what this moment calls for from each of us, and from all of us.

This series is part of WHO/Europe’s countdown to the UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs, happening in September 2025 (see the “[Upcoming events and initiatives](#)” section).

Nature-based solutions and health



This [publication](#) explores how NbS – such as urban green spaces, wetland restoration and ecosystem protection – can deliver important health benefits while addressing environmental and climate challenges. Drawing on real-world examples from across the Region, the report highlights how NbS can improve air and water quality, reduce heat stress, support mental well-being and encourage physical activity. It also emphasizes the value of cross-sector collaboration and inclusive planning to ensure that health gains are equitable and sustainable. The publication serves as a practical guide for health professionals, urban planners, and policy-makers working to build greener, healthier and more resilient communities.

Regional priorities in chemical safety in a new chemical policy landscape



Efforts to protect health and the environment from harmful chemicals are gaining momentum. While some actions call for harmonized approaches across the Region, others require tailored national priorities due to differing chemical use, management practices and risk levels across countries and subregions. To address the need for identifying regional priorities in chemical safety in a new [policy landscape](#), the WHO ECEH organized a meeting of national experts in Bonn, Germany on 4–6 June 2024. This publication summarizes the discussions at the meeting, which created a base for planning regional activities in chemical safety until 2030 and beyond.



Checklists for strengthening water, sanitation and hygiene emergency preparedness and response: focus on Ukraine



The [checklists](#) support national and local authorities in enhancing WASH preparedness and response in emergency settings. Drawing on lessons learned from the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, the publication offers structured checklists that outline key actions for restoring and maintaining essential WASH services during crises. By addressing both immediate needs and system-level resilience, the tool helps ensure public health protection, reduce the risk of infectious disease outbreaks and uphold the dignity and rights of affected populations. The resource is intended for use by WASH practitioners, health authorities and humanitarian responders working in fragile or disrupted contexts.

Strategic actions for infection prevention and control and water, sanitation and hygiene during mpox outbreak response



This new WHO [guidance](#) outlines concrete actions to strengthen outbreak preparedness and response, with a focus on practical, scalable measures across clinical care, public health and humanitarian contexts. It addresses critical areas such as safe patient management, protective measures for frontline workers, hygiene in crowded or high-risk settings and respectful handling of the deceased. Designed for governments, health authorities and emergency responders, the resource supports coordinated efforts to limit transmission while upholding health, safety and dignity. The [executive summary](#) of the report provides a concise overview of key highlights.

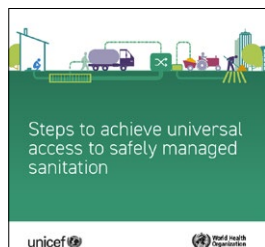
A roadmap for advancing sanitation regulation



This [technical publication](#) offers structured, practical guidance for strengthening regulatory frameworks across the sanitation service chain – from containment and treatment to safe reuse. Drawing on case studies from diverse countries and global experience, it provides actionable steps for ministries, regulators, utilities and development agencies to integrate public health, environmental stewardship and economic oversight into sanitation regulation. Designed for national and local staff responsible for sanitation oversight, this resource seeks to elevate regulatory practices and ensure equitable access to safe sanitation.



Steps to achieve universal access to safely managed sanitation



Providing a practical roadmap for accelerating progress toward safely managed sanitation, this joint WHO–United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) [technical brief](#) outlines 18 structured steps to guide national and local authorities, development partners and sector stakeholders. The framework supports implementation of WHO’s [Guidelines on sanitation and health](#) and UNICEF’s [2022–2030 Game Plan](#), emphasizing climate resilience, equity and public health protection. With clear actions on planning, coordination and capacity-building, the document helps countries move from basic to safely managed sanitation, ensuring no one is left behind.

Top 10 drinking-water and sanitation related pathogens



This [publication](#) delivers an authoritative overview of the 10 most significant pathogens linked to unsafe drinking water and inadequate sanitation. With clear explanations of their transmission routes, health impacts and environmental contexts, the report serves as a vital resource for public health professionals, water safety planners and policy-makers. It aims to support evidence-based decision-making in surveillance, risk reduction and intervention strategies to protect communities and uphold global health standards.

Ad hoc FAO/WHO expert meeting on water quality in agrifood systems and food safety implications – focus on chemical contaminants



Addressing the intersection of water quality and food safety, this [report](#) presents key outcomes from a joint FAO/WHO expert consultation focused on chemical contaminants in agri-food systems. Experts in water management, toxicology, agriculture and food safety assessed current challenges related to pesticide residues, heavy metals and other pollutants in irrigation and processing water. The publication offers targeted recommendations to strengthen monitoring, risk assessment and regulatory frameworks – helping countries safeguard public health while supporting sustainable agricultural production. It serves as a technical resource for policy-makers, regulators and professionals working across food, water and environmental sectors.

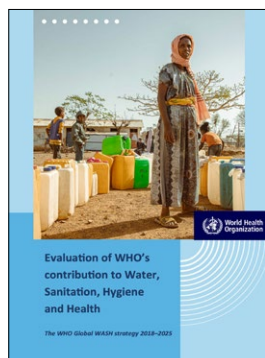


Strengthening hand hygiene practices in community settings and health-care facilities in the context of mpox: summary and call to action



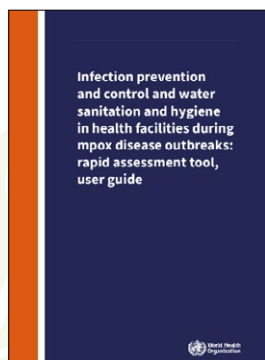
Drawing on WHO's multimodal approach, this [summary and call to action](#) outlines how political leadership, reliable supply chains, evidence-based behaviour change campaigns and robust infection prevention and control systems must work in tandem to break transmission cycles. Targeted at governments, health authorities and humanitarian actors, this nine-page guide calls for urgent policy integration and investment to safeguard vulnerable populations and strengthen overall outbreak preparedness.

Evaluation of WHO's contribution to water, sanitation, hygiene and health: The WHO Global WASH Strategy 2018–2025



Offering an in-depth review of progress made under the WHO Global WASH Strategy, this [evaluation](#) highlights achievements, challenges and lessons learned in advancing universal access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene. It assesses the impact of WHO's work across regions and thematic areas, with a particular focus on equity, systems strengthening and public health outcomes. The findings provide actionable insights for governments, donors and implementing partners to refine strategic priorities and enhance collaboration as the Strategy enters its final phase.

Infection prevention and control and water sanitation and hygiene in health facilities during mpox disease outbreaks: rapid assessment tool, user guide



Developed to strengthen frontline readiness, this [practical guide](#) supports assessments of infection prevention and WASH standards in inpatient health facilities responding to mpox outbreaks. The tool evaluates 16 essential infection prevention and control and WASH criteria – offering clear instructions, data collection templates and tailored follow-up actions – to help diverse users perform rapid, effective evaluations regardless of prior experience. Aimed at health-care managers, WASH practitioners and emergency responders operating in affected areas, the guide enables targeted improvements that reduce transmission risks and enhance patient care quality during outbreak response.



New “Science in 5” episode: Air pollution damages young brains



Did you know that the air you breathe can harm your brain and increase your risk for dementia, anxiety and depression? Nine out of 10 people around the world breathe air that does not meet WHO's recommended air quality standards. Air pollution kills 7 million people every year. What are cities like Beijing, Bogotá and London doing to clean their air? Dr Maria Neira explains in “Science in 5”.

Further interesting reads:

New data: NCDs cause 1.8 million avoidable deaths and cost US\$ 514 billion every year



NCDs are deeply interconnected with the rising global megatrends, requiring an integrated policy response. Climate change and environmental factors exacerbate NCD risks through air pollution, heat stress and unsustainable food systems, necessitating green and health-conscious policies. At the same time, drivers of NCD risk factors and the health sector also contribute to the climate crisis: it has been estimated that food systems are responsible for 26% of greenhouse gas emissions and health-care systems for an additional 4–5%.

Dive into the full [report](#) for all the insights!

Indicators, Measures and Methods for Monitoring Climate Resilient WASH – discussion paper

This [paper](#) explores key metrics and best practices for assessing climate resilience within WASH systems. Drawing on global expertise and current methodologies, it lays out a robust framework for monitoring vulnerabilities – such as water scarcity, flood risks and infrastructure stress – and adapting interventions accordingly. Highlighting case studies and scalable tools, the discussion encourages stakeholders to integrate resilience indicators into national and local WASH strategies. Policy-makers, development agencies and WASH practitioners will find this resource valuable for strengthening early warning systems, tracking progress and guiding investment decisions in a changing climate.



Indicators, Measures and Methods for Monitoring Climate Resilient WASH – Scoping and Definitions

Clarifying the foundational concepts behind climate-resilient WASH, this [document](#) establishes a shared taxonomy and scoping framework for monitoring systems under changing climatic conditions. It defines key terms – such as adaptive capacity, service continuity and infrastructure resilience – and outlines essential measures and indicators suited to various contexts. Designed as a reference for programme designers, data analysts and policy advisors, the publication supports consistent terminology, promotes clear communication and lays the groundwork for the rigorous tracking and evaluation of resilient WASH initiatives.

One Health Atlas

The [One Health Atlas](#) explores the principles, applications and future of the One Health concept. It begins by highlighting the interdependence of human, animal and ecosystem health and the urgency of operationalizing One Health. The atlas is organized into four sections: foundations and history; zoonoses, agriculture and food security; education, networks and governance; and future challenges. It calls for integrating science, policy and society, emphasizing collaboration and local knowledge. The atlas offers practical guidance to help decision-makers implement One Health and translate the international Pandemic Agreement into national action.



6. EHP PARTNERSHIPS CORNER

Here, in the EHP Partnerships corner, we are excited to share some key highlights of the work being implemented by the lead countries and partners in follow-up on the [Budapest commitments](#).

The [EHP Partnerships](#) is a policy mechanism within the EHP to accelerate national and international implementation of commitments made under the [Budapest Declaration](#) and its Roadmap. The EHP Partnerships bring together countries and partners with a shared interest in a specific thematic area to collaborate on a voluntary basis and leverage progress across the WHO European Region.



The latest updates on the EHP Partnerships work are provided within the links below.

Updated EHP Partnership leaflets



[Health Sector
Climate Action](#)



[Human
Biomonitoring](#)



[Poison Centres](#)



[Risk Reduction in the
School Environment](#)



[Youth](#)



[Healthy Active
Mobility](#)



Annual summary of the work of the EHP Partnerships

A new [report](#) outlines key activities and progress made by the EHP Partnerships between the EHTF meeting in Utrecht (June 2024), Netherlands (Kingdom of the) and the most recent virtual session held in June 2025 in Bonn, Germany.



A snapshot of the Partnerships' annual key updates as presented by Partnership leads and co-leads are available below:

Highlights from the EHP Partnerships updates 2024–2025

- The Partnership for **Health Sector Climate Action**, led by Ireland and joined in total by 11 countries, aims to integrate climate action into health-care policies and build climate-resilient, low-carbon health systems. Closely aligned with the [EHTF Working Group on Health in Climate Change](#) and the [Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health](#), the Partnership has held two online “deep dives”. The first, aimed to explore low-emission health-care transport and the second, focused on subnational climate-health adaptation. Furthermore, the Partnership held two meetings in Dublin, Ireland and Vienna, Austria, where focal points came together to exchange ideas, engage in mutual learning and plan the aforementioned deep dives.
- The Partnership on **Human Biomonitoring**, led by Germany and co-led by Georgia, promotes the use of human biomonitoring as a scientific tool to inform chemical regulations and protect public health. Since its launch at the [Budapest Conference](#) in 2023, the Partnership has grown to include 22 countries. Its second in-person [meeting](#) in Belgrade, Serbia, brought together 30 representatives from 19 countries to adopt a joint work programme. A WHO-led training for 37 experts was held directly after the meeting, focusing on national capacity-building, study planning, communication and policy integration. The next meeting is planned in November 2025.



- The Partnership on **Poison Centres**, led by the United Kingdom with co-leadership from the European Association of Poison Centres and Clinical Toxicologists, aims to strengthen poison centres across the Region. With eight countries involved and others preparing to join, the Partnership held its inaugural meeting in February 2025 to define objectives and a workplan. A second meeting in Glasgow, United Kingdom, in May 2025 focused on sharing practices and refining the workplan, with Armenia formally joining during the session.
- The Partnership on **Risk Reduction in the School Environment**, led by Hungary, promotes healthier school settings by addressing indoor air quality, water, sanitation and hygiene. Two online meetings have been held, hosted by Hungary's National Center for Public Health and Pharmacy. The first, in November 2024, focused on WASH and air quality; the second, in May 2025, featured WHO regional updates and national case studies. A third meeting is planned as a side event at the Seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health in November 2025.
- The Partnership on **Youth** supports young leaders in shaping environment and health agendas. Activities have ranged from study sessions and board games to policy advocacy. In November 2024, the Partnership co-hosted a youth engagement side event at the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and led a communications campaign to attract new members. In April 2025, it convened a planning meeting for its 2025–2026 work programme. The International Federation of Medical Students' Associations recently joined the Partnership.
- THE PEP/EHP Partnership on **Healthy Active Mobility** has developed the Pan-European Master Plans for **Cycling** and **Walking**. In October 2024, it held a meeting ahead of the Walk21 Conference, followed by a session in Rotterdam, Netherlands (Kingdom of the) in March 2025. A technical meeting in Ulm, Germany, advanced the integration of cycling and public transport, contributing to the forthcoming Active to Public Transport Action Plan.



7. NEWS FROM EHP STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

Our dedicated partners and environment and health stakeholders have been working tirelessly to create a positive impact. Below you will find a selection of their latest activities.

Health and Environment Alliance conference highlights urgent chemical health risks and policy gaps

On 10 June 2025, the [Health and Environment Alliance \(HEAL\)](#) hosted an international [conference](#) in Warsaw, Poland, under the patronage of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU. The event brought together scientists, policy-makers and public health experts to examine the rising health risks from chemical pollution and assess policy responses at national and EU levels.

Key discussions focused on the implementation of the [EU Chemicals Strategy for sustainability](#), the [Revision of the regulation on the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals](#) (REACH), and findings from a national survey on public awareness in Poland.

In September 2025, the HEAL, in collaboration with the CHEM Trust, will host a one-day high-level conference in Brussels, Belgium, focused on the revision of the EU REACH regulation – a cornerstone of chemicals policy. For more about this upcoming event, click [here](#).

EEA Air quality status report 2025

Air quality is steadily improving across Europe with most air pollution monitoring stations achieving current EU annual limits for some of the most harmful air pollutants. However, additional measures to improve air quality, especially in cities, will be required to fully meet current EU standards as well as recently agreed future air quality standards by 2030, according to the recently published EEA [report](#) on air quality data analysis for 2023 and 2024.

The latest data collected from monitoring stations showed specifically that EU standards were broadly met for fine particulate matter (99% of stations) and for nitrogen dioxide (98% of stations) – two significantly harmful air pollutants. Despite this, [WHO guideline](#) levels are not widely met in Europe and air pollution remains the region's largest environmental health risk, causing diseases, lowering quality of life and leading to preventable deaths.



UN-Habitat's annual report highlights the importance of adequate housing for all

This new [report](#) spotlights international efforts to tackle the housing crisis and drive sustainable urbanization. The report outlines progress in reducing inequality, promoting prosperity, advancing climate action and building urban resilience. Through global case studies and impact data, the report illustrates how adequate housing is being prioritized as a foundation for inclusive, climate-smart cities.

Bridging climate and health: opportunities and barriers to policy integration in Germany

A recent [analysis](#) by the [Centre for Planetary Health Policy](#) explores the current state and future potential of integrating climate and health policies in Germany, based on interviews with stakeholders from government, health care, academia and advocacy. While there is broad agreement on the need for closer integration – particularly emphasized by health actors – barriers such as limited resources, fragmented governance and weak intersectoral collaboration persist. The study highlights opportunities to advance integration through policy reform, strategic communication and stronger cross-sectoral cooperation, offering targeted recommendations for policy-makers, researchers and advocates. The analysis is part of a multi-country study led by George Mason University, United States of America, that explored the connections between climate and health policies in six different geographies summarized in this [synthesis report](#).

Principles by Local Governments for Sustainability Europe on how cities can make mobility equitable and green

The Sustainable Mobility team of Local Governments for Sustainability Europe (known as [ICLEI Europe](#)) has recently published a Mobility as a Right Conceptual Framework and Practical Guidelines. Check this [article](#) which gives a brief overview of the key guiding principles, offering practical recommendations for policy-makers and practitioners. Following these six key steps can help embed Mobility as a Right principles into transport planning and governance, creating a framework for more equitable, sustainable and inclusive mobility systems across Europe.

European State of the Climate Report 2024

This [report](#) provides descriptions and analyses of climate conditions in Europe in 2024, covering variables from across the Earth system, key events and their impacts, and a discussion of climate policy and action with a focus on resilience of the built environment. It also provides an overview of climate conditions across the Arctic and updates on the long-term evolution of key climate indicators.

It is the result of a collaborative effort by around 100 scientists and colleagues across Europe and the rest of the world. The report was compiled by the Copernicus Climate Change Service and the World Meteorological Organization.



8. UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

Listed below are the upcoming events and opportunities to look forward to.

[Second hearing of the Pan-European Commission on Climate and Health](#) (1 September 2025, virtual). Register [here](#).

EHTF activity: country consultation on the forthcoming WHO report on nature-based solutions and health (2 September 2025, virtual).

Conference “How to Implement Health and Wellbeing Policies on Climate Change” (15–17 September 2025, Brussels, Belgium).

Meeting of the EHP Partnership for Health Sector Climate Action (17–18 September 2025, Brussels, Belgium).

16th conference of the European network for the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity “[Health Enhancing Physical Activity: Taking Steps Towards Sustainability](#)” (17–19 September 2025, Kaunas, Lithuania).

[Fourth High-level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on the prevention and control of NCDs and the promotion of mental health and wellbeing](#) (25 September 2025, New York, United States).

12th meeting of the Working Group on Health in Climate Change (30 September 2025, virtual).

[Third hearing of the Pan-European Commission on Climate and Health](#) (2 October 2025, virtual). Register [here](#).

[23rd Session of the Steering Committee of THE PEP](#) (22–24 October 2025, Geneva, Switzerland).

EHTF activity: country consultation on environment and health professional profiles and competency framework (29 October 2025, virtual).

WHO Bonn School on Environment and Health course on Nature and Health (13 October–10 November 2025, virtual).

Third Meeting of the EHP Partnership on Human Biomonitoring (early November 2025, Estonia).

[Seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health](#) (5–7 November 2025, Budapest, Hungary).

18th European Public Health Conference “[Investing for Sustainable Health and Well-Being](#)” (11–14 November 2025, Helsinki, Finland).



April–June 2025

[30th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#)
(10–21 November 2025, Belém, Brazil).

[30th annual meeting of the Regions for Health Network “Better health begins in the regions: building bridges, creating solutions”](#) (26–28 November 2025, St Pölten, Austria).

[Fifth EU Clean Air Forum](#) (1–2 December 2025, Bonn, Germany).



April–June 2025

9. CONTACT US





WHO European Centre for Environment and Health

Platz der Vereinten Nationen 1

D-53113 Bonn, Germany

E-mail: euceh@who.int

To keep up with WHO/Europe on social media, you can follow them on the platforms below:

-  @who_europe
-  @WHORegionalOfficeforEurope
-  @WHOEurope
-  @whoeurope

To explore activities from WHO ECEH, check out the hashtag **#ECEHBonn**

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