



EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT  
AND HEALTH PROCESS



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# EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH PROCESS NEWSLETTER

April–September 2023

Special issue celebrating the momentous  
**Seventh Ministerial Conference on  
Environment and Health**

Photo: Budapest Declaration signing. From left to right: Dr Péter Takács, State Secretary for Health on behalf of Mr Sándor Pintér, Minister of Interior, Hungary; Dr Anikó Raisz, State Secretary for Environment and Circular Economy on behalf of Mr Csaba Lantos, Minister of Energy; and Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe. © Donát Kékesi 2023





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## 1. EDITORIAL

Greetings, and welcome to this special issue of the [European Environment and Health Process \(EHP\) newsletter](#), which shines a spotlight on the [Seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health](#) (7MCEH), held in Budapest on 5–7 July 2023, an event that marks a significant milestone in the pursuit of accelerating action for healthier people, a thriving planet and a sustainable future.

Prepare to be inspired by the collective dedication and commitments shown by the [European Environment and Health Task Force](#) (EHTF) members.

As you read further, you will discover more about relevant activities in various countries; benefit from the insights gained through working on health challenges related to climate change, environmental pollution, biodiversity loss and land degradation; and stay up to date with newly published materials.

We trust that the contents of this newsletter are captivating and wish you a delightful autumn.

Best regards,  
EHP Secretariat

**Please continue reading the upcoming chapters by referring to the content list provided below.**

1. EDITORIAL
2. THE SEVENTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH
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4. RECENT EVENTS
5. LATEST PUBLICATIONS AND INSPIRING VIDEOS
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## 2. THE SEVENTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

Attention all members of the EHTF and partners!  
The 7MCEH concluded successfully, defining  
future environment and health priorities and  
exploring opportunities for a healthy recovery

from the COVID-19 pandemic, in light of the  
2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.  
Please read below for more information on the  
key outcomes and actions from the Conference.

### Countries of the WHO European Region adopt Budapest Declaration, pushing action to enhance environment and health

Countries of the European Region, which  
gathered at the 7MCEH in Hungary, adopted the  
[Budapest Declaration](#), which prioritizes urgent,  
wide-ranging action on health challenges  
related to climate change, environmental  
pollution, biodiversity loss and land degradation,  
along with, and in the context of, recovery from  
COVID-19. To strengthen countries' capacities  
to fulfil commitments made under the  
Declaration, it also focuses on strengthening  
governance, investing in human resources, and  
advancing knowledge and tools for action.

In the Declaration, countries agree to  
accelerate the transition towards resilient,  
healthy, equitable and sustainable societies,  
incorporating the lessons learned from the  
COVID-19 pandemic. They seek to increase  
efforts to prevent, prepare, detect and respond  
to emergencies, protecting particularly  
vulnerable populations. These actions aim to

enhance health systems' resilience and capacity  
to withstand and respond to disasters and crises.  
In addition, efforts to address the environmental  
determinants of diseases will increase.

Countries will use the "[Roadmap for healthier  
people, a thriving planet and a sustainable  
future 2023–2030](#)", which is part of the  
Declaration, to expedite the transitions needed  
to bring about sustainable communities.  
The Roadmap offers a set of actions Member  
States can implement to reduce the health  
consequences posed by climate change,  
environmental pollution and biodiversity loss. It  
also proposes steps to strengthen governance,  
human resources, financing and knowledge  
for health and the environment. The Roadmap  
explains why urgent action is needed in a  
particular area, offers a list of commitments  
countries can consider, and suggests measures  
to achieve them.



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“It’s no exaggeration to say that the Budapest Declaration and the steps it lays out are a landmark achievement; one that comes not a moment too soon. We must ensure now that we maintain the momentum coming out of the 7MCEH, hold ourselves accountable, and live up to the promises made to the youth of our Region in the months and years to come.”

Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe

For more information, please visit the WHO website:

- News release: [Countries of the WHO European Region adopt Budapest Declaration, pushing action to enhance environment and health](#)
- Statement by Dr Kluge: [Countries must act to prevent the worst impacts of climate change on our health and health systems](#)
- Media release: [Clean air + green planet = good health for all](#)
- [Conference programme](#)

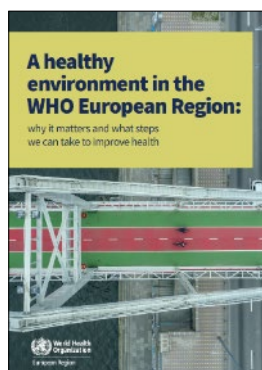


Browse the [photo gallery](#) to relive the memorable moments of the 7MCEH.

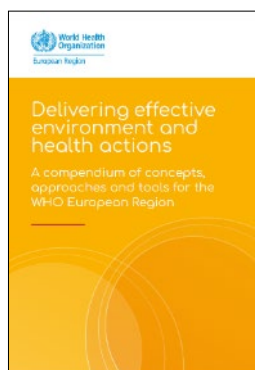


## Overview of background documents prepared for the 7MCEH

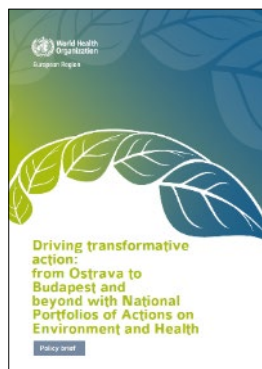
These are the publications that formed the background to the 7MCEH – on healthy environments, COVID-19, National Portfolios of Actions on Environment and Health, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and action on climate change.



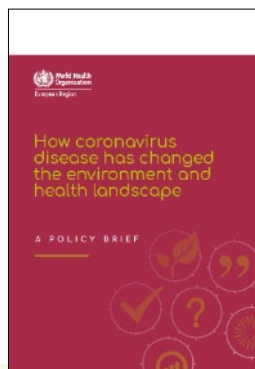
This [document](#) gives an overview of the environmental burden of disease and additional environment and health data and facts in the Region.



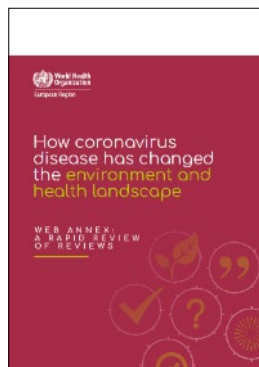
This [publication](#) presents a mix of concepts/ frameworks, approaches and tools to catalyse and support national and subnational activities for environment and health.



This [paper](#) presents an assessment of the implementation of the Ostrava commitment related to the National Portfolios, utilizing data from a desk review, surveys and interviews with members of the EHTF.



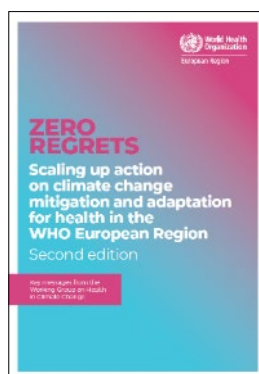
This [paper](#) supports reflection by distilling the impacts of COVID-19 on environment and health and summarizing the evidence that its roots lie in disregard for events at the interface of human, animal and environmental health.



This [document](#) presents a rapid review of reviews that was undertaken to establish evidence of the relationship between environmental health and the COVID-19 pandemic.



This [report](#) uses official statistics to assess progress made in implementing the Ostrava Declaration in the Region and outlines the assessment results.



This [document](#) emphasizes the importance of taking proactive measures by the Member States of the Region to address climate change and its impact on human health, without incurring regrets in the future for missed opportunities.





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## Launch of the EHP Partnerships



The 7MCEH also offered the opportunity to launch the EHP Partnerships, a new mechanism within the EHP, to help accelerate the implementation of commitments made.

The Partnerships bring together countries and partners with a shared interest in a specific thematic area to work on joint projects, capacity-building activities, training and workshops, technical assistance, collaboration in innovation and research, and dissemination of relevant WHO guidelines.

### Current EHP Partnerships:

- EHP Partnership on Human Biomonitoring in the WHO European Region (led by Germany and co-led by Georgia);
- EHP Partnership for Health Sector Climate Action (led by Ireland);
- Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP)/EHP Partnership on Healthy Active Mobility (led by Austria, France and Netherlands (Kingdom of the));
- EHP Partnership on Youth in the WHO European Region (led by Slovenia and co-led by the International Youth Health Organization).

To read more about all four EHP Partnerships, please click [here](#).

## Sharing good practices through the parallel sessions

Explore the array of parallel sessions co-led by the WHO European Centre for Environment and Health (ECEH):

- **From assessment to action: realizing the human rights to water and sanitation through the [Protocol on Water and Health](#)**

This session showcased the tools and guidance that had been developed under the Protocol to support countries in realizing the human rights to safe drinking-water and sanitation. Emphasis was placed on tools that supported conducting baseline assessments, strengthening surveillance, identifying areas for improvement, and driving action for equitable access to services in communities

and institutional settings to successfully address the needs of vulnerable groups.

- **Integrating the environment into One Health**

This session showcased the role of the environment in animal-mediated diseases; discussed the development, transmission and spread of antimicrobial resistance; and explored solutions to tackle this growing threat. It also highlighted the steps that had been taken to translate the One Health approach into concrete actions.



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- **Leveraging THE PEP Partnerships to accelerate the transition to healthy, sustainable and climate neutral mobility**

At this [event](#), a new e-biking feature of the [Health Economic Assessment Tool](#) (HEAT) for walking and cycling was launched, accompanied by a practical demonstration of its applications. The tool allowed assessment of the impacts of e-biking in terms of physical activity benefits, air pollution exposure risks, crash risk, and effects on carbon emissions.

- **Nature-based solutions to tackle the triple crises and prevent and reverse the worst impacts to human health, well-being and our environment**

This parallel session showcased examples of nature-based solutions that tackle the climate, biodiversity and pollution crises, and aim to prevent and reverse the worst impacts on our environment and health.

- **Digital tools, data and research in action for health risk reduction and better air quality management**

This session highlighted the importance of research and data for effective air quality management, along with country case studies and digital tools that are available to support clean air policy-making.

- **Addressing inequalities in environment and health**

The parallel session addressed international and national data and experiences on assessing and tackling environmental health inequalities. The presented material illustrated that it is not enough to progress on environmental conditions unless all citizens can benefit from these improvements.



For more information, please check the [programme of parallel sessions](#).



## Youth and the 7MCEH



At 7MCEH, representatives of different European youth organizations called for “a paradigm shift” on environment and health and demanded a “transformative change on the systemic and individual level that radically alters the

mindset and behaviours of all entities whose actions are adversely affecting the environment and health or have done so in the past.” This was part of the [Budapest Youth Declaration](#), signed in Budapest on 6 July.

“As the generation that will suffer disproportionate impacts of the triple crisis, we represent a key stakeholder in climate action and climate-related policy-making,” says the Youth Declaration, which calls for “stronger commitments from Member States to completely and meaningfully include us in such processes”.

The Youth Declaration calls on Member States to adopt concrete strategies for engaging youth in addressing environmental and health issues and encouraging young people to

actively participate in the decision-making process. It also calls on countries to ensure the availability of high-quality information and education on the environment and health that are accessible to youth groups. It calls for a complete set of measures to tackle the “triple crisis”, that includes addressing mental health issues and implementing sustainable practices and climate-friendly policies in the public sector in general but especially in schools and hospitals. Such measures would include energy-efficient buildings, waste reduction and recycling programmes, sustainable water management, the inclusion of climate change considerations into health-care planning and green procurement practices, among others.

More than 50 young people from different countries across the European Region participated in the youth pre-event “Generation Green: Youth Pre-event to the #7MCEH”, which took place on 4 July 2023. Participants discussed the health aspects of the triple crisis for the younger generations, and advocacy efforts to engage with countries across the Region. The meeting concluded with the adoption of the Budapest Youth Declaration. The European Environment and Health Youth Coalition and the International Youth Health Organization organized the event with the WHO ECEH and WHO Youth4Health network.



Browse the [photo gallery](#) to see some moments from the **Generation Green: Youth Pre-event to the 7MCEH**.



### 3. COUNTRY ACTIVITIES

Within the EHP framework, we continue to highlight activities carried out in the Member States of the European Region. Here are a few of examples of environment and health activities that countries conducted in April–September 2023.

#### New methods in sanitary supervision in Belarus

On 29 June, the Scientific and Practical Center of Hygiene, supported by the Ministry of Health in **Belarus**, hosted a seminar on “New Methods in State Sanitary Supervision”. Over 350 specialists in hygiene and toxicology attended from all regions of Belarus. The seminar covered updated international approaches, modern test methods, and environmental safety

assessments for products. Topics included air, water, food safety, pesticides and more. The event also discussed important issues related to environmental safety for people and progress towards achieving the SDG targets on reducing the mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution (3.9.1), and to unsafe water, unsafe sanitation and lack of hygiene (3.9.2).

#### Youth innovation and drawing competitions in Hungary



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The students from Hungarian schools participated in an “innovation challenge”, where they were asked to develop innovative ideas to ensure efficient water use for a healthier future.

The competition's winners proposed to create a water filter that measures water consumption; another team presented an efficient water management system for sustainable agriculture; and the third team offered alternative water sources for a green and healthy future.

Also, with the help of the Klebelsberg Institution Maintenance Centre, Hungarian children aged 7–11 years old from schools around the country were invited to paint or draw what they understood by environment and health. The WHO Country Office in **Hungary** received more than 1200 drawings from children living in small villages, towns and large cities. From those, 150 pieces were selected to be exhibited during the three days of the 7MCEH.



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Photo: Hungarian schools' participants in an "innovation challenge" with organizers from the WHO Country Office in Hungary  
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Photo: Paintings from the drawing competition for elementary school children – "Environment and health through the eyes of children" © Donát Kékesi 2023



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## Implementation of Heat Health Action Planning in Turkmenistan

To support the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry of **Turkmenistan** in the development and implementation of a national Heat Health Action Plan, WHO ECEH, together with the WHO Country Office, hosted an event in Ashgabat on 19–21 April 2023. The meeting aimed to increase institutional awareness and foster agreement on a portfolio of action to reduce the risks of adverse health effects of heat in the forthcoming summer. During the mission,

the members of the multisectoral working group responsible for the implementation of the Action Plan agreed on consolidated protocols for readiness and preparedness to be used by local/subregional and national stakeholders. Key stakeholders and health professionals from national and subregional levels also underwent training to enhance their understanding and knowledge of the Action Plan.

## Situational analysis on water, sanitation, hygiene, waste management and environmental cleaning in health-care facilities in Turkmenistan

With the support of WHO ECEH, the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry of **Turkmenistan** has been conducting a comprehensive survey on water, sanitation and hygiene conditions in health-care facilities, as well as an analysis of the enabling environment, including the legal framework, for essential provisions critical for infection prevention and control and quality of

care. WHO ECEH's support included a training workshop for health officers and data collectors, held in Ashgabat on 15–17 May in collaboration with the WHO Country Office. The workshop covered the methodology of the survey and important recommendations in line with WHO guidelines.

## Capacity-building on safe management of drinking-water supply and surveillance of water-related disease

WHO ECEH and the WHO Country Office in **Ukraine**, in partnership with the Ministry of Health and the Public Health Centre of Ukraine and the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, hosted two capacity-building workshops in Kyiv: one on the principles underpinning the WHO-recommended, risk-

based water safety plan approach and how it can be adopted in the Ukrainian context (17–18 July 2023), and one on effective approaches to surveillance and management of water-related disease outbreaks (20–21 July 2023), including in the context of the war.



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## Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) readiness and preparedness in Ukraine

WHO ECEH and the WHO Country Office in **Ukraine**, with the partners listed above, hosted a focus group discussion on WASH readiness and preparedness in the context of the war, in Kyiv on 4–6 April 2023. The aim of the meeting was to share and collate experience of sector stakeholders on critical WASH readiness and response aspects and to

review WASH needs (including in connection to broader environmental hazards) with a view to identifying future actions to improve resilience in preparation for possible military attacks and war-related emergency situations.



## 4. RECENT EVENTS

Within the past half-year there have been a number of exciting events in the field of environment and health. A number of these are presented below.

### 1 May 2023, the Hague, Netherlands (Kingdom of the)

Just before [World Hand Hygiene Day](#), as part of the [Hand Hygiene for All Initiative](#) (HH4A), WHO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) organized a global workshop on "Accelerating towards universal hand hygiene in community settings: strengthening systems, establishing norms". Participants included representatives from governments of 18 low-, middle- and high-income countries across several regions, United Nations agencies, international financial institutions, development partners, civil society and the private sector. WHO ECEH contributed by sharing experience and lessons from the European Region and facilitated the active participation of three countries from the Region. The meeting enabled participants to share and learn from successful governance action at the national level, and encouraged peer-to-peer exchange. The outcome of the discussion will be used to inform the development of forthcoming WHO/UNICEF "Guidelines on hand hygiene in community settings".

### 10–11 May 2023, Geneva, Switzerland

The [Twenty-ninth meeting of the Bureau of the Protocol on Water and Health](#) reviewed progress on the implementation of the 2023–2025 programme of work and initiated the process of developing a strategic vision document for the Protocol.

### 10–12 May 2023, Luxembourg

Ministers and other delegates from the 11 countries in the WHO European Region with populations of two million or less met for the [Ninth High-level Meeting of the Small Countries Initiative: advancing health and well-being](#). This meeting provided an opportunity to share progress in implementing the [Roadmap towards better health in small countries in the WHO European Region, 2022–2025](#), and to address the growing challenges of small countries in the Region and beyond. The meeting closed with the signing of the [Luxembourg Statement](#) on advancing health and well-being.



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## 16–17 May 2023, Bonn, Germany

The [26th meeting of the Joint Convention/WHO Task Force on the Health Aspects of Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution](#) was a valuable platform for reviewing international policies and processes related to air quality and health. Member States shared insights into their efforts to combat air pollution for improved public health. Additionally, participants were updated on WHO tools such as [AirQ+](#) and [CLIMAQ-H](#), exploring their connections to climate change mitigation. The meeting also addressed the [Task Force's](#) workplan for 2024–2025, ongoing research on air pollution's health impacts, the Saltsjöbaden VII workshop report, and the new Strategy for scientific bodies under the [Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution](#), while also discussing communication strategies for air quality and health.

## 21 May 2023, virtual

On the occasion of the [International Day for Biological Diversity](#), WHO ECEH held a webinar to showcase some examples of nature values and present the different approaches to assessing urban green and blue spaces and their impacts on health and well-being. During a webinar, the report [“Assessing the value of urban green and blue spaces for health and well-being”](#) was launched (for more information, please see “Publications” section).

## 5–7 June 2023, Baku, Azerbaijan

The high-level regional meeting on [“Fit-for-purpose hospitals: prioritizing quality and sustainability to meet the demands of modern healthcare”](#) brought together government representatives, hospital practitioners and partners to discuss challenges facing hospitals in the WHO European Region. The meeting aimed to create a shared vision on the role of hospitals in health systems and to build consensus on the need to heal, improve and transform hospitals in the health-care system.

WHO ECEH led a session on climate resilient and environmentally sustainable hospitals with the aim of providing an overview of opportunities and challenges associated with making hospitals environmentally sustainable, low carbon and climate-resilient, and to underscore the importance of a health sector strategy in embracing sustainability and climate aspects, while also providing examples of how a hospital can address different dimensions of sustainability.



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## 13–14 June 2023, Istanbul, Türkiye

The ongoing war in Ukraine, emergency preparedness, strained health-care systems, climate change and environmental pollution, paired with the challenge of unlocking improved health and well-being for all, were among several topics on the agenda as the WHO Regional Office for Europe convened its first-ever [Partners Forum – United Action for Better Health in Europe](#).<sup>1</sup> The forum brought together representatives of Member States and over 30 of WHO's funding partners, including international organizations, development banks and charitable organizations.

Climate change was brought to the fore on the second day of the Forum. In a special session led by WHO ECEH, partners from countries, foundations and youth organizations concluded that the imperative to protect and improve the health of current and future generations is one of the strongest arguments for action on climate change. Addressing climate change's impact on health requires rigorous mitigation and adaptation measures, including by the health sector, and integration of health considerations into all climate actions. The insights and conclusions from this discussion were subsequently presented and deliberated at the 7MCEH.

## 13–15 June 2023, Amman, Jordan

The [WHO/UNICEF Global summit on water, sanitation, hygiene and electricity in health care facilities](#) was co-hosted by the Ministry of Health of Jordan and the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean. The Global Summit saw over 120 participants from 35 countries and various global organizations. WHO ECEH contributed to the summit, bringing experience and priorities from the countries of the European Region, informed by the work under the Protocol on Water and Health and the EHP, and supported the participation of five countries from the Region. The event provided a forum for country exchange on challenges and effective action on scaling up progress on WASH, waste and energy in health-care facilities. The event coincided with the launch of the [global progress report on WASH in health-care facilities](#) and initiated the development of a new global action plan. The meeting report can be found [here](#).

<sup>1</sup> The WHO Regional Office for Europe is committed to strengthening its partnerships, and to mobilizing a wider range of expertise and diverse perspectives to better understand health and well-being issues and address them together, under the architecture of the [European Programme of Work, 2020–2025](#) – “United Action for Better Health”, which was adopted by the 53 Member States at the 70th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe in September 2020.



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## 8 September 2023, Bonn, Germany

WHO ECEH hosted its Sixth Bonn Dialogue on Environment and Health, reflecting on [progress in the WHO European Region towards the SDGs in the context of the Ostrava Declaration on Environment and Health](#). The objective of the Dialogue was to assess progress and identify challenges of SDG implementation in the European Region, focusing on the SDGs relevant to the environment and health priorities of the Ostrava Declaration. For more information see the “EHP corner” section.

## 25–29 September 2023, Bonn, Germany

The [fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management](#), hosted by the Government of Germany, which holds the presidency of this fifth session and intersessional process, took place on 25–29 September in Bonn with a high-level segment on 28–29 September. The Conference concluded with the launch of the Global Framework on Chemicals and Bonn Declaration outlining the way forward for a planet free from the harm of chemicals and wastes. Intersectoral and stakeholder coordination and collaboration, as stressed in the Declaration, is key for achieving progress in protecting human health and the environment from the harmful effects of chemicals. The Conference resolutions will guide the Framework implementation and measurement of progress, the elimination of highly-hazardous pesticides, and the development of health surveillance systems in relation to chemicals exposure. WHO ECEH contributed to the side events on the WHO Chemicals Road Map and the contribution of poison centres to the sound management of chemicals.



## 5. LATEST PUBLICATIONS AND INSPIRING VIDEOS

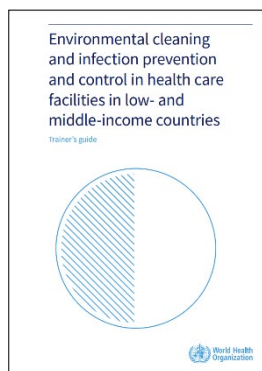
### The WHO European Centre for Environment and Health – Supporting Member States in implementation



This [document](#) provides an overview of the key publications contributing to the environment and health process between the Ostrava and Budapest ministerial conferences, with links and QR codes

Below you will find the most recent WHO publications in the field of environment and health, as well as a playlist with some inspiring videos and recorded speeches.

### Environmental cleaning and infection prevention and control in health care facilities in low- and middle-income countries



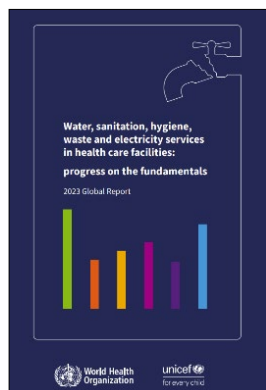
People who perform environmental cleaning in health-care facilities are key personnel responsible for supporting safe environmental health conditions for patients, visitors and staff. This training package aims to improve the competence of those who clean health-care facilities through a practical, educational approach for adult learners in low- and middle-income countries.

The [Trainer's guide](#) takes the user through how to prepare, deliver and sustain an effective training for those who clean. The [Modules and resources](#) provides instructions, definitions, photographs, posters and specific illustrations of recommended practices.



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## 2023 Global report on WASH in health care facilities



This [report](#) focuses on global and national efforts and progress to improve WASH, cleaning and health-care waste management in health-care facilities. It builds upon the first update of progress published in 2020.

The report also summarizes national progress based on the 2019 World Health Assembly Resolution on WASH in health-care facilities, drawing insights from country experiences.

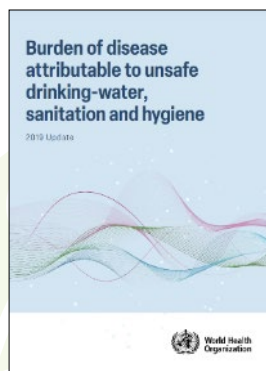
## WHO research agenda for hand hygiene in health care 2023–2030: summary



On 5 May – World Hand Hygiene Day – WHO released [its first-ever research agenda on hand hygiene in health care](#).

This [summary](#) provides guidance on the highest priorities for research to gather further evidence on best approaches to improving hand hygiene practices during health-care delivery, as well as to accelerate innovative solutions.

## Burden of disease attributable to unsafe drinking-water, sanitation and hygiene: 2019 update



This [report](#) summarizes the estimates of the burden of disease attributable to unsafe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene for the year 2019 for four health outcomes – diarrhoea, acute respiratory infections, soil-transmitted helminthiases and undernutrition – which are included in the reporting of the SDG indicator 3.9.2. The report includes estimates at global, regional and country level for 183 WHO Member States. An accompanying [article](#) was published in The Lancet.

In addition, a new WASH-related disease burden estimation [tool](#) launched by WHO enables estimation of deaths, disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) and mortality rate from diarrhoea, acute respiratory infections, protein-energy malnutrition and soil-transmitted helminthiases.



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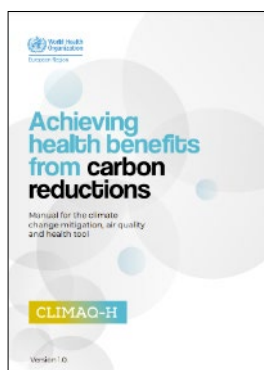
## Uptake and impact of the WHO Environmental noise guidelines for the European Region: experiences from Member States



This [policy brief](#) examines the uptake and impact of the WHO environmental noise guidelines for the European Region, drawing on the experiences of Member States. The guidelines have played a role in shaping policy at various levels by providing evidence-informed recommendations.

The brief highlights the strengths of the guidelines and identifies several challenges to implementation and possible solutions.

## Achieving health benefits from carbon reductions. Manual for use of the climate change mitigation, air quality and health tool



Climate change mitigation, air quality and health ([CLIMAO-H](#)) is a software tool developed by the WHO Regional Office for Europe for quantifying the consequences for human health and the related costs associated with improving national air quality by reducing domestic carbon emissions.

The tool is used to analyse the policies for mitigation of carbon emissions reported in nationally determined contributions submitted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

This [manual](#) introduces users to analysis of the impact of air pollution on public health with data from different countries.

## 2023 WHO review of health in nationally determined contributions and long-term strategies: health at the heart of the Paris Agreement



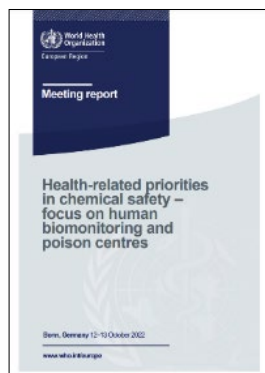
This WHO [review](#) provides a snapshot of the overall progress governments have made in addressing the health risks of climate change to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement.

This report synthesizes information from the latest available nationally determined contributions, communicated by 193 Parties to the Paris Agreement and recorded in the official registry of the UNFCCC, as of 23 September 2022.



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## Health-related priorities in chemical safety – focus on human biomonitoring and poison centres: meeting report



To address health-related aspects of chemical safety, WHO ECEH convened a meeting on 12–13 October 2022 in Bonn, Germany. The meeting focused on identification of key steps and the support needed to accelerate use of human biomonitoring in chemical exposure and risk assessment, and on strengthening health sector institutional arrangements – in particular, poison centres.

This [report](#) summarizes the main outcomes of the meeting and further actions towards creation of national human biomonitoring programmes and establishment or strengthening of poison centres.

## Poison centres as essential unit for poisoning prevention and sound chemicals management: technical summary



This [publication](#) summarizes key information on poison centres, their role in management of poisonings, public health preparedness and response to emergency situations, and implementation of International Health Regulations, and contribution to sound chemicals management. Examples confirming the importance and value of poison centres for health-care systems are included in the publication. This publication is primarily aimed at public-health and health-care professionals, toxicologists and medical students.

## At least one poison centre in each country: summary for policy makers



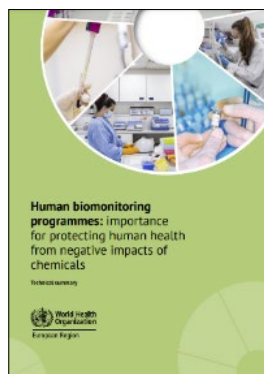
A poison centre is a specialized unit advising on and assisting in the prevention, diagnosis and management of acute and chronic poisoning. Poison centres contribute to reducing the burden of diseases related to exposure to hazardous chemical agents in emergencies and in everyday life.

This [summary for policy makers](#) explains why a poison centre should be established in each country.



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## Human biomonitoring programmes: importance for protecting human health from negative impacts of chemicals: technical summary



This [publication](#) summarizes key information on human biomonitoring (HBM): its objectives, the value of the information obtained through HBM surveys for making decisions on chemicals management to minimize negative health impacts, and challenges countries may face when implementing national HBM programmes. It also highlights the unique value of HBM for assessing prenatal exposure, building capacity and preparing for emergencies related to environmental pollution.

This publication is aimed at public-health and health-care professionals, environmental protection and chemicals management experts, chemists and students.

## Human biomonitoring: assessment of exposure to chemicals and their health risks: summary for decision makers



HBM directly measures the concentration of chemical pollutants or their metabolites in human fluids and tissues.

This [summary for decision makers](#) explains why HBM is a reliable instrument for the assessment of human exposure to chemicals from different sources, by different pathways and during certain periods of life.

## Promoting environment and health policies at local level: a policy brief for decision-makers and practitioners



This [policy brief](#) summarizes messages and lessons learned on how local authorities across the European Region can establish effective policies and interventions to provide healthy, sustainable environments for their citizens. It addresses the design and implementation of health-promoting urban policies that have been effective at local level, including both the challenges to be overcome and the enablers that should be maximized. The target readers of this brief are national, regional and local decision-makers and practitioners working in urban planning, environmental management and health promotion.



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## Transforming the health and social equity landscape



This [report](#) explores the interrelationships between health, the economy and social capital. It examines how Member States can work to build social cohesion and invest in people's health to improve resilience and promote an equitable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The report underscores that mitigating climate change and promoting environmental advancements can enhance health equity, necessitating the resolution of existing inequities in digital and green sectors to ensure inclusive progress.

## World health statistics 2023: monitoring health for the SDGs, sustainable development goals



The [2023 edition](#) of the World health statistics report reviews more than 50 health-related indicators from the SDGs and WHO's [Thirteenth General Programme of Work](#).

This report with data up to 2022 underscores a stagnation of health progress on key health indicators in recent years compared with trends seen during 2000–2015. It also alerts us to the growing threat of noncommunicable diseases and climate change, and calls for a coordinated and strengthened response.

Click [here](#) to read more about WHO's contribution towards health outcomes.

## Assessing the value of urban green and blue spaces for health and well-being



This [report](#) outlines the range of benefits from urban green and blue spaces and the different approaches, both qualitative and quantitative, that policy-makers and practitioners can use to assess the value of such spaces and their impacts on health and well-being.

Also, the report suggests a range of [steps](#) to increase the benefits of urban nature, and the application of tools with which to assess the value of such benefits and support decision-making.



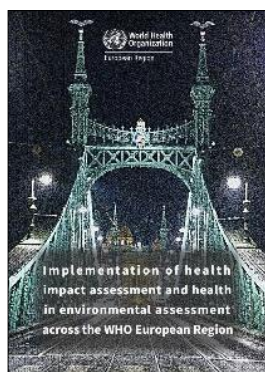
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## Environmental inequalities in national reporting on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. An analysis of voluntary national reviews in the WHO European Region



Environmental inequalities pose a challenge to population health and health equity in general, and affect the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with its focus on leaving no one behind. This [report](#) provides an overview of environmental inequality aspects considered within the voluntary national reviews of countries in the WHO European Region. The findings illustrate that inequality aspects and challenges are acknowledged across many environmental domains, with all countries reporting on at least one aspect of environmental inequality. Although the types of inequalities reported were diverse, they were most often recognized in relation to housing conditions, water and sanitation, energy, transportation and climate vulnerability.

## Implementation of health impact assessment and health in environmental assessment across the WHO European Region



Health impact assessments (HIAs) offer crucial support to decision-makers within and outside the health sector to identify and estimate possible health impacts of proposed policies, plans, programmes or projects. The HIA methodology is well established, and HIAs have been developed and deployed around the world. This [report](#) presents the results of three literature reviews and two online surveys conducted between 2015 and 2021, and develops suggestions for further action to implement HIAs and enhance inclusion of health in environmental assessments.

## Enabling the implementation of health impact assessment in Portugal



HIA is a means of assessing the health impacts of policies, plans and projects in diverse economic, social and environmental sectors using quantitative, qualitative and participatory techniques. The recent Portuguese strategy for protecting and promoting public health provides an important legal and policy entry point for the strategic goal of health in all policies, and for the more operational objective of facilitating HIA implementation at the national and local levels. This could be achieved by enabling the health sector to take leadership for HIA in Portugal. This [report](#) is a summary of a two-year capacity-building project supported by the WHO Regional Office for Europe, represented by WHO ECEH, and the Portuguese Ministry of Health, represented by the National Institute of Health Dr Ricardo Jorge. The process included three capacity-building workshops and supervision of three HIA case studies in Portugal.



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## Interesting crosscutting reads



This [publication](#) presents an implementation tool which offers practice-based tips on how to engage with youth in emergency preparedness, response and recovery.



This [publication](#) presents the European regional action framework for behavioural and cultural insights for health, 2022–2027.

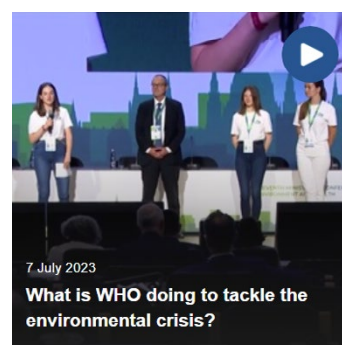
## Statement by WHO Regional Director for Europe, Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge – [Without preparation the heat can be deadly](#)

- ➔ Keep out of the heat
- ➔ Keep your home cool
- ➔ Keep your body cool & hydrated



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## Inspiring videos and recorded speeches





## 6. EHP CORNER



Here, in our corner, please find a few highlights of the work implemented by the EHP Secretariat over the previous half a year, as well as a small taster of that to come.

WHO ECEH, under the auspices of the EHP, held the [sixth high-level Bonn Dialogue on Environment and Health](#) on 8 September 2023. The Dialogue presented the findings of a recent WHO [publication](#) highlighting the progress made towards the SDGs in the WHO European Region based on a set of indicators relevant to the environment and health priority areas identified in the [Ostrava Declaration](#). Member States of the Region shared their experience in taking actions on environment and health to close the gaps towards meeting the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

### Where are we on the path towards achieving the environment and health-related SDGs?

This [report](#) presented at the sixth Bonn Dialogue uses official statistics to assess progress made in the environment and health domains identified as a priority in the Ostrava Declaration.

The quantitative analyses show that progress is mixed and, in most cases, insufficient; but there are important differences in performance depending on the thematic priority area and subregion within the European Region.

Certain priorities of the Declaration show progress in all Member States; however, in some thematic areas the trends are moving in the wrong direction, and particular attention is needed to reverse the situation. Furthermore, some key dimensions of the Ostrava Declaration cannot be accurately monitored in the European Region due to a lack of timely, internationally comparable data.

Looking forward, accelerated actions are needed to achieve the SDGs by 2030; it will also be important to strengthen data timeliness and availability to improve the monitoring of the priority areas listed in the Ostrava Declaration and in future declarations.



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A **Special Session of the EHTF** was convened in Budapest a day before the opening of the 7MCEH on 4 July 2023. The meeting was hosted by Hungary's Ministry of Interior. The EHTF event resulted in the attainment of a finalized set of Conference outcomes, including the Budapest Declaration and proposals on the EHP Partnerships, alongside a full agreement of the 7MCEH workflow.



The **thirteenth meeting of the EHTF** took place in Brussels, Belgium, on 20–21 April 2023, with the kind support of the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL), who generously hosted the event.

The primary focus of this meeting was to conclude the preparations for the 7MCEH, with a specific emphasis on finalizing the drafting of the Ministerial Declaration and shaping the Conference programme.

For insights and detailed information about the meeting, please refer to the [meeting report](#).

## EHP progress report and draft decision endorsing the Budapest Declaration now available in four languages

In preparation for the upcoming [73rd session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe](#) and [28th session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe \(UNECE\) Committee on Environmental Policy](#), the EHP Secretariat has developed the [EHP progress report](#). This report is now accessible in four languages: English, French, German and Russian.

The [draft decision endorsing the Budapest Declaration](#) is also available in these four languages.

To facilitate coordination, the EHTF is encouraged to explore the possibility of liaising with colleagues who are responsible for preparing country interventions for the WHO Regional Committee for Europe, particularly if a country delegation intends to address these agenda items.



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## 7. NEWS FROM EHP STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

Our vital environmental health stakeholders and partners have been tirelessly and vigorously working to make a difference. Please find some

of the most recent publications and activities from our partners below.

### Together for clean air: UNECE and UNEP promote partnerships and cooperation, leveraging the Air Convention

Marking the [International Day of Clean Air for blue skies](#), which is celebrated annually on 7 September, experts on the [Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution](#) and representatives from United Nations organizations (UNECE, UNEP, WHO, World Meteorological Organization) discussed the urgent need for stronger partnerships, increased investment and redoubling of efforts for clean air at a side event jointly organized by UNECE

and UNEP, which took place back to back with the 61st session of the Convention's Working Group on Strategies and Review (4–6 September 2023). At the event, UNECE also launched the latest addition to its e-learning courses, making available the [Russian version](#) of the course on [How to report emissions](#) under the Convention, the English version of which was launched earlier this year.

### The importance of restoring nature in Europe – briefing by European Environment Agency

Nature, along with its inherent biodiversity, is key to functioning societies and economies. It provides the food we eat, filters the water we drink, cleans the air we breathe, and is important for our mental and physical health. Yet in the European Union (EU), many habitats and species are in a poor state, and only a very small fraction of these has shown any

improvement over recent years. The restoration of Europe's habitats and species is important not only for the inherent value of nature itself; it is also key for improved human health and well-being, and reduced climate change impacts.

Read the full briefing [here](#).



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## Webinar on the international cooperation on research on human health and well-being in the Arctic

People living in the Arctic, especially Indigenous people, are experiencing increasing challenges to their health and well-being owing to the impacts of climate change on their environment, affecting the species they hunt, fish or harvest and thus their food security, among others. To better understand these complex challenges, their impacts and potential means to address them, a broad One Health

type of approach is needed, encompassing the health of ecosystems, animals and humans. In the webinar on 13 September 2023, these issues were addressed based on current international research activities conducted under the EU, the [Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme](#) and their respective member countries. Further information is available at the [EU-PolarNet website](#).

## Redesignation of WHO Collaborating Centres

In summer 2023, two collaborating centres were successfully redesignated, working for another four years with WHO.

The WHO Collaborating Centre on Natural Environments and Health at the University of Exeter will be producing, jointly with WHO, two reports on nature-based solutions and health and how nature can be applied as a strategy to enhance and promote health and well-being. In addition, the collaborating centre will establish a curriculum for a “Nature and health” course under the **Bonn School on Environment and Health**.

The Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health Inequalities at the University of Bremen supports WHO on compiling evidence on environmental health inequalities, producing a set of inequality fact sheets on annual basis. Furthermore, the collaborating centre will establish an environment and health equity module for the Bonn School, and is working towards a methodological approach to quantify the health impacts of environmental inequalities.



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## 8. UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

We have a number of important forthcoming meetings and events. Here is a list of the upcoming highlights.

[21st session of Steering Committee of THE PEP](#) (Geneva, Switzerland, 23–25 October 2023).

[73rd session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe](#) (Astana, Kazakhstan, 24–26 October 2023).

The Living Planet Fellowship Scheme 2023 offered by the European Space Agency to scientists. Please see a [call for proposals](#) here. The deadline for submission of proposals is 27 October 2023. To learn more about targeted scientific areas, please click [here](#).

[28th session of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy](#) (Geneva, Switzerland, 1–3 November 2023).

Strategic roundtable on increasing resilience to climate change in the water and sanitation sector under the Protocol on Water and Health (Geneva, Switzerland, 13–14 November 2023).

[13th meeting of the Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting of the Protocol on Water and Health](#) (Geneva, Switzerland, 14 November 2023).

Health impact assessment and assessing health in environmental assessments – What's next? Online expert consultation (14 November 2023). In case of interest please contact [euha@who.int](mailto:euha@who.int).

[30th meeting of the Bureau of the Protocol on Water and Health](#) (Geneva, Switzerland, 15 November 2023).

International Conference: Towards a Global Wastewater Surveillance System for Public Health (Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 15–17 November 2023).

28th annual meeting of the WHO European Regions for Health Network – “[Health for all: addressing challenges, sharing experiences](#)” (Seville, Spain, 15–17 November 2023).



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[WHO European Healthy Cities Annual Business Meeting and Technical Conference](#) (Utrecht, Kingdom of the Netherlands, 21–23 November 2023).

Following on from the outcomes of 7MCEH, the Environment and Health Working Group of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network (HCN) will engage in discussions regarding a local-level partnership on environment and health, taking a multilevel governance perspective. This dialogue will take place during the working group meeting scheduled for 22 November from 8:30 to 10:00 during the HCN Annual Business Meeting and Technical Conference.

The dialogue's agenda encompasses discussions on both organizational and substantive matters, with participation from a diverse group of representatives from HCN and other delegates. The outcomes of these discussions will serve as a foundation for further defining the scope and focus of a possible new EHP Partnership.

6th Global European Asbestos Forum Conference "[Asbestos and the Way Forward](#)" (Brussels, Belgium, 30 November – 1 December 2023).

[28th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) (Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 30 November–12 December 2023).

Webinar to launch the WHO Regional Office for Europe Diet Impact Assessment model (virtual, 6 November 2023).

[Tallinn Charter 15th Anniversary Health Systems Conference: Trust and transformation – resilient and sustainable health systems for the future](#) (Tallinn, Estonia, 12–13 December 2023).



## 9. CONTACT US

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