



**EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT  
AND HEALTH PROCESS**



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# EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH PROCESS NEWSLETTER

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**July–September 2022**

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## 1. EDITORIAL

Welcome to the September issue of the [European Environment and Health Process](#) (EHP) newsletter!

We are pleased to share with you the latest developments in relation to the implementation of the Ostrava Declaration. This includes activities in countries, take-away lessons from COVID-19 management, and new publications.

Preparations for the seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (7MC), which will take place on 5–7 July 2023 in Budapest, Hungary, are well under way. Find out about the progress made so far by reading further, and get a sneak peek about what to expect by viewing the 7MC “teaser” below.

We hope you enjoy reading our latest updates.

Best regards,

EHP Secretariat

### **Access to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment declared a universal human right on 28 July 2022**

The resolution comes as the planet grapples with a [triple planetary crisis](#) of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste. Left unchecked, the new resolution said those problems could have disastrous consequences for people around the world, especially the poor, and women and girls. (UNEP, 2022)

Please click [here](#) for more information.



## 2. TOP STORY

### Highlights from the 72nd session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (RC72)

#### A special announcement

During RC72, Hungary announced that the 7MC will take place on 5–7 July 2023 in Budapest. 7MC will be the next major milestone of the EHP.



7MC will review the level of implementation of the Ostrava commitments and is expected to commit to accelerate progress in addressing challenges for health coming from the triple planetary crisis, while promoting a healthy recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Concrete initiatives could be launched, like new European Environment and Health Process (EHP) “Partnerships” led by Member States and engaging those interested in working together on specific issues. In addition, a “Campaign for resilience and building forward better” may be initiated to showcase good practices in building towards a healthier future from the COVID-19 pandemic and inspire action. At 7MC, it is envisioned that stakeholders may make possible commitments to hold further consultations/ high-level meetings addressing the triple crisis.

Due to the diversity of the WHO European Region, the Conference could also include a focus on subregional issues, making use of WHO platforms like the Roadmaps for Health and Well-being in the western Balkans and central Asia.

Please see the upcoming EHP newsletters for more updates. In the meantime, click [here](#) for a “teaser” about what you can expect from 7MC.

We look forward to seeing you in Budapest for a wonderful 7MC next summer!

#### Parallel session: Building Urban Futures Better in the WHO European Region (Tel Aviv, 13 September 2022)

On 13 September 2022, the WHO European Centre for Environment and Health (WHO ECEH) organized a parallel session at RC72 on “building urban futures better”, emphasizing the potential of the post-COVID-19 recovery in addressing climate, environment and health challenges. Please click [here](#) for the session programme.

In the aftermath of COVID-19, major investments are being made across the Region to revive the economy and reduce inequalities that have been increased by the drastic responses that have been deployed to respond to the pandemic. Cities are the place where major opportunities exist for this reconstruction to deliver multiple societal gains. The event explored how cities can recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and build resiliency while facing global environmental and climate change challenges. Member States had the opportunity to hear the experiences of senior city officials and representatives from Member States and international organizations, on challenges and initiatives for building urban resiliency to the threats posed by environmental and climate risks.



## 3. COUNTRY ACTIVITIES

### Water, sanitation and hygiene

- From 30 June to 8 July, WHO ECEH together with WHO headquarters, undertook a mission to **Ukraine** to hold strategic discussions with key government entities, water and sanitation service providers and partners to understand the key gaps and needs, and identify future actions to strengthen WHO's immediate and longer term support in the area of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and health.
- On 12–14 September, WHO ECEH participated in the virtual WHO technical mission to support development of **Georgia's** national antimicrobial resistance (AMR) strategy and provided inputs on WASH and environmental aspects of AMR.

### Nature and One Health

- On 13 July 2022, WHO ECEH contributed to the session on key national priorities in the areas of zoonosis, food safety, AMR and environment, in a World Bank regional consultation on “Protecting Food Systems, Preventing Future Pandemics in Central Asian Countries”. The meeting was held in Tashkent, **Uzbekistan**. WHO ECEH presented WHO's One Health-related work in the central Asia region, plans for One Health implementations, and further information about the environment aspects of One Health.
- On 19 September 2022, by invitation of the Minister of Environment of **Denmark**, WHO ECEH recorded a video greeting on the occasion of the final stage of the municipality competition on creating more space for wild nature in Denmark. The emphases of the competition were nature, green space and health.



## 4. RECENT EVENTS

### 4 July 2022

A webinar was organized jointly by WHO and the Union for the Mediterranean on **health and environment in seaport cities**. The webinar marked the continued collaboration between the two organizations under the memorandum of understanding from 2020, and it was a second opportunity to deepen the discussion on on-shore and off-shore environment and health challenges. The main results from upcoming publications on this topic were presented and additional case studies were shared.

### 7 July 2022

A regular **meeting of the Healthy Cities Network** (HCN) environment and health working group took place virtually. Increased exchange and collaboration on environmental issues in cities between WHO ECEH and the HCN was discussed. The HCN helps promote environment and health issues by raising awareness about topics such as road safety and spaces for physical activity. The WHO European Healthy Cities Network includes 100 flagship cities and approximately 30 national networks. More information can be found [here](#).

### 23 August 2022

WHO ECEH delivered a **workshop on “Health risk assessment of air pollution: an introduction on the use of AirQ+”**, for the **Lugano Summer School** course “Tackling air pollution using science for policies to protect health”. The Summer School provided “basic insights into the measurement, modelling and monitoring of exposure to air pollution, its health effects and the overall impact and costs for public health” (Swiss School of Public Health). More information can be found [here](#).

### 30 August 2022

The core group of the WHO **One Health** Working Group organized the Regional Quadripartite Executive Group Meeting on the One Health Coordination Mechanism (OHCM). The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) also took part in the event. UNEP joined the previously signed tripartite statement on OHCM (making it a quadripartite). Last year’s achievements and plans for 2022–2023



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were discussed. The FAO and the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD), together with representatives from the Quadripartite (FAO, WHO, WOA and UNEP) and the World Bank, collaborated on a return on investment (ROI) of One Health study. The One Health approach addresses health threats at the animal-human-plant-environment interface, fostering multisectoral and interdisciplinary collaboration for more sustainable outcomes. Although the benefits of the One Health approach are increasingly recognized, financing of One Health investments at the country level remains a challenge. The aim of the study was to generate an evidence base on the ROI of One Health and use this to produce an investment brief.

## 31 August–2 September 2022

**Health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) Europe 2022 Conference**, Nice, France. HEPA Europe is a WHO network which aims to provide a forum for the advancement of HEPA research, policy and practice across the WHO European Region. The focus of the conference was an ecosystem approach to promoting HEPA. The conference was hosted by the Université Côte d'Azur, and topics included HEPA policy, physical activity surveillance, active transport, sport, determinants of physical activity, health outcomes and sedentary behaviour.

## 12–14 September 2022

The **72nd session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (RC72)** took place in Tel Aviv, Israel, and online. Health ministers, high-level representatives, partner organizations and civil society gathered to discuss ongoing health matters and shape WHO/Europe's work.

Check out the highlights from [day one](#) and [day two](#). Find more videos in our [archive](#).

For more information on the sessions, including agendas and draft resolutions, please visit the [RC72 website](#). You may also read stories about RC72 [here](#).

## 13 September 2022

A session on **“Building Urban Futures Better in the WHO European Region”** took place at RC72. Please see the Top Story above for more information.





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## 16 September 2022

WHO ECEH organized a **virtual expert meeting on the Health Risks of Air Pollution in Europe (HRAPIE-2) project**, discussing updates on the project. The HRAPIE project was launched in 2013, the Year of Air, as declared by the European Union. The aim was to provide the European Commission and its stakeholders with evidence-based advice on the health aspects of air pollution. More information can be found in [this report](#).

## 23 September 2022

The Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) **Partnership on Active Mobility** organized a meeting within the framework of the Walk21 International Conference series on Walking and Liveable Communities (Dublin, 19–23 September). The Partnership meeting discussed the development of the **pan-European Master Plan on Walking**.



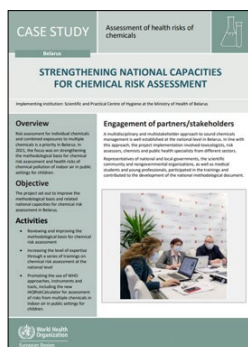
## 5. LATEST PUBLICATIONS, CAMPAIGNS AND TOOLS

### Drinking-water, sanitation and hygiene in the WHO European Region: highlights and progress towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6



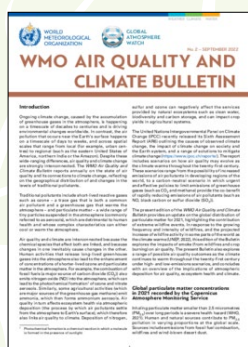
This [report](#) provides an overview of the current situation, progress made to date, and existing gaps and prevailing inequalities in access to safe WASH services for households, schools and health-care facilities in the Region, and highlights further priorities and eight action areas to accelerate efforts towards achieving universal coverage for such services.

### Case studies on chemical safety



WHO ECEH published seven case studies on chemical safety from projects completed in five countries in 2021 (Belarus, Estonia, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation and Serbia): [Case study Belarus: assessment of health risks of chemicals](#); [Case study Belarus: prohibiting lead in paints](#); [Case study Estonia: assessment of health risks of chemicals](#); [Case study Republic of Moldova: assessment of health risks of chemicals](#); [Case study Republic of Moldova: prohibiting lead in paints](#); [Case study Russian Federation: assessment of risk to children's health from air pollution in schools](#); [Case study Serbia: assessment of health risks of chemicals](#).

### WMO Air Quality Climate Bulletin



Providing an annual assessment of the interacting impact of air pollution and climate change, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) published its 2022 [Air Quality and Climate Bulletin](#), focusing this year on the impact that wildfire smoke has had on air quality by producing widespread increases in particulate matter (PM) levels, which are harmful to health. So while air pollution is driving climate change, climate change is also causing deteriorating air quality.





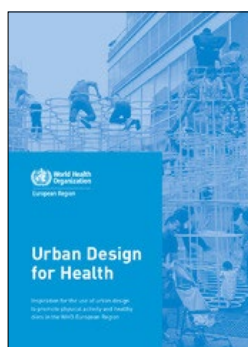
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## Expert meeting on prevention and control of legionellosis in the pan-European region



This recently published [report](#) covers the “Expert meeting on prevention and control of legionellosis in the pan-European region”, organized under the Protocol on Water and Health on 30 November–2 December 2021 in a virtual format. Over 70 experts from 28 countries attended the meeting, exchanged national experiences and contributed to technical discussions. They reviewed the burden of legionellosis in the pan-European region, addressed the status of the regulatory environment, explored surveillance and outbreak management capacity in countries, and discussed priorities for action on prevention and control of legionella infections.

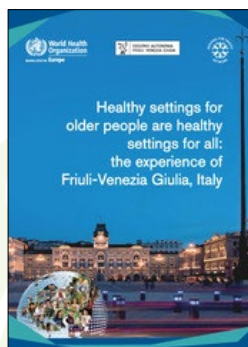
## Urban design for health. Inspiration for the use of urban design to promote physical activity and healthy diets in the WHO European Region



Noncommunicable diseases are a major cause of death and disability around the world. The design of our urban environments limits people's ability to be active in daily life and limits access to and the availability of healthy food options. Outlets selling alcohol and tobacco products are exacerbating the epidemic in many cities. Research has shown that design can impact today's greatest challenges to the physical, mental and social well-being of communities around the world.

This [publication](#) was inspired by the symposium “Urban design for health” organized by WHO/Europe in collaboration with Gehl and held online in April 2021. The symposium explored how to advance concrete actions in support of healthier environments and behaviour in cities through urban planning and design, with a focus on physical activity and healthy diets.

## Healthy settings for older people are healthy settings for all: the experience of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy



This [report](#) shows how age-friendly environments have been created at the subnational level, using examples primarily from the Autonomous Region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy, but also from other regions belonging to the WHO Regions for Health Network. Over the past 20 years, Friuli-Venezia Giulia has utilized WHO frameworks on healthy ageing and scaled up the pioneering experience of the city of Udine to develop a whole-of-the-region policy response to an ageing population, involving many sectors and all levels of governance. With the older segment of its population reaching 25% and still increasing, Friuli-Venezia Giulia put in place an integrated system to promote healthy ageing. The system incorporates new models of social protection and fosters new social relations and networks in local areas in order to promote sustainability; solidarity in relationships,

behaviours and actions; and social responsibility. Key steps in the journey include the city of Udine's leadership of the WHO Healthy Ageing Task Force, on behalf the WHO European Healthy Cities Network, and Friuli-Venezia Giulia's adoption of a legal framework for active and healthy ageing in 2014. The report shows that healthy settings for older people are healthy settings for all.

## Factsheet: Water and sanitation

This [factsheet](#) (from 18 July 2022) provides the latest update on water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH) and health in the WHO European Region.

## The impact of war on the environment and health: implications for readiness, response and recovery in Ukraine



WHO ECEH, the WHO Country Office in Ukraine and WHO headquarters published this [comment](#) in the Lancet in September 2022.

## Externally published research articles

Boeraş I, Curtean-Bănăduc A, Bănăduc D, Cioca G. Anthropogenic sewage water circuit as vector for SARS-CoV-2 viral ARN transport and public health assessment, monitoring and forecasting – Sibiu metropolitan area (Transylvania/Romania) study case. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 2022;19(18):11725 (<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph191811725>).

Jakovljević I, Dvorščak M, Jagić K, Klinčić D. Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in indoor dust in Croatia: levels, sources, and human health risks. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. 2022;19(19):11848 (<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph191911848>).

Rossides M, Kampitsi C-E, Talbäck M, Mogensen H, Wiebert P, Feychting M et al. [Risk of cancer in children of parents occupationally exposed to hydrocarbon solvents and engine exhaust fumes: a register-based nested case-control study from Sweden \(1960–2015\)](https://doi.org/10.1289/EHP11035). Environmental Health Perspectives. 2022;130:7 (<https://doi.org/10.1289/EHP11035>).

Smith M, Cordoza M, Basner M. [Environmental noise and effects on sleep: an update to the WHO systematic review and meta-analysis](https://doi.org/10.1289/EHP10197). Environmental Health Perspectives. 2022;130:7 (<https://doi.org/10.1289/EHP10197>).

Ward F, Lowther-Payne HJ, Halliday EC, Dooley K, Joseph N, Livesey R et al. Engaging communities in addressing air quality: a scoping review. *Environmental Health*. 2022;21(1):89 (<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12940-022-00896-2>).



## 6. EHP CORNER

- The EHP Secretariat organized the first informal consultation of the **Bureau of the European Environment and Health Task Force (EHTF)** on 8 July 2022. The aim of the consultation was to accelerate the preparations for the Seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, which will take place in Budapest on 5–7 July 2023. During the consultation, Bureau members were asked to assess the proposed overall structure of the draft Declaration. The consultation was open to all Member States and was attended by more than 15 country representatives and other stakeholders.

Consultation about the Declaration with Member States is ongoing. A revised Declaration was discussed at the **10th EHTF Bureau meeting** on 27 October 2022 and will be further discussed at the **12th EHTF meeting** on 23–24 November 2022.

- **WHO/Europe website:** this is just a friendly reminder that the transition is still on-going. The European Region section of the website is available [here](#). Please bear with us if you experience any temporary inconvenience while navigating the various pages.



## 7. NEWS FROM EHP STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

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### Net zero roadmap for health care

On 1 September 2022, Health Care Without Harm (HCWH) Europe launched the publication **Designing a net zero roadmap for healthcare: Technical methodology and guidance**. The publication can be used by national or regional health authorities that want to measure their health-care emissions or develop a Paris-compatible decarbonization roadmap.

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### United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE): Eighth Joint Session of the EMEP Steering Body and Working Group on Effects

The meeting took place on 12–16 September 2022 in Geneva. Please click [here](#) for more information.

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### Carec: Inception workshop for the Regional Climate Action Transparency Hub for Central Asia (ReCATH) project

The workshop was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on 19–21 September 2022 in a hybrid format with participation of the representatives of government agencies from the five central Asian countries involved in the project, a consortium of international experts, regional and national project experts, and other partners of the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (Carec). Please click [here](#) for more information.



## 8. UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

Bonn Environment and Health School: two courses, “Health impact assessment” and “Contaminated sites assessment and redevelopment” (see box below).

United Nations Climate Change Conference. The [27th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#) (Sharm El-Sheikh, 7–18 November 2022).

Sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health (Geneva, 16–18 November 2022). The Protocol on Water and Health, jointly supported by WHO/Europe and UNECE, is the prime European policy platform aimed at attaining safe drinking-water and adequate sanitation for everyone and protecting human health and well-being through sustainable management of water resources and preventing, controlling and reducing water-related disease.

Healthy Cities Annual Business Meeting and Technical Conference (Copenhagen, 22–24 November 2022). The Conference aims to present the opportunity to learn from the work of healthy cities across the European Region and beyond. It attracts politicians and key decision-makers from within cities, as well as technical experts. The 2022 Conference will be an opportunity for European Network members to demonstrate how they are leading by example, both regionally and globally. Please click [here](#) for more information.

### Bonn Environment and Health School – 2022 courses forthcoming

Following the first online edition of the Bonn Environment and Health School in 2021, the School will be continued in 2022 with two separate capacity-building courses:

- Health impact assessment
- Contaminated sites assessment and redevelopment

Both courses will run in parallel, based on three sessions per day (9.00–14.00 Central European Time, every Tuesday and Thursday during 3–24 November 2022).

Each course will be held in English with simultaneous interpretation in Russian. The courses will be offered for free to staff of national as well as subnational authorities working in a respective technical field.

Detailed information on the course content will be released shortly and also distributed through the EHTF network.

For further information on the Bonn Environment and Health School 2022, please contact [eurobonnschool@who.int](mailto:eurobonnschool@who.int)



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