

To the Participants WHO Euro Regional Committee Meeting Oct. 2025

30-Oct.2025

Adoption of the Child and Adolescent Health Strategy “A healthy start for a healthy life: a strategy for child and adolescent health and well-being in the WHO European Region 2026–2030“

Dear Delegates of the WHO Euro Regional Committee Meeting,

On behalf of the European Academy of Paediatrics, I wish to congratulate and thank Dr. Hans Kluge and his team for moving the Child and Adolescent Health Strategy (CAHS) forward, and to ask you for supporting its adoption and subsequent implementation.

Children and Adolescents comprise about one fifth of the population of the WHO European Region, and they are a particularly vulnerable population whose health and wellbeing depends directly on the support by others. Moreover, childhood and particularly early childhood is a critical period where health and disease risks are determined for lifetime, due to biological programming mechanisms that have been increasingly deciphered in recent years, and due to establishing and reinforcing health-modulating behaviours that tend to last for lifetime. Therefore, promoting and protecting child health is a most important and effective strategy for advancing population health, securing healthy ageing, and reducing the huge burden of non-communicable diseases with cause 9 of 10 deaths in the European region, as well as reducing health care costs. Prof. James Heckman, laureate of the Nobel Prize in Economy, demonstrated that investing in (particularly early) childhood has a much greater economic return of investment than investments at later ages.

The European Academy of Paediatrics, with its 53 national paediatric member societies and its 14 European paediatric subspecialty societies, is delighted that we were privileged to contribute to the development of the CAHS as part of our agreed formal collaboration with WHO Europe. We ask you to support the adoption, and to engage in the subsequent implementation of identified steps, and to commit the necessary resources. The European Academy of Paediatrics and its member societies are committed to support WHO and member states in dissemination and practical application, and we offer our collaboration.

Thank you for your support. Sincerely yours

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