

**Agenda item: General discussion on the addresses by the Director-General and the Regional Director**

**Written statement by the European Federation of Neurological Associations**

**Implementing the WHO's Global action plan on neurological conditions: a call to action for the WHO EURO region**

Neurological conditions are the 3<sup>rd</sup> leading cause of mortality and disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) [in the WHO EURO region](#). Globally, a 2024 [Lancet Neurology paper](#) reveals these conditions are the primary cause of ill health and disability, affecting over 3 billion people and resulting in 11 million deaths annually. Since 1990, DALYs attributed to neurological conditions have increased by 18%.

Addressing these conditions has become a global and European priority, especially with the adoption of the WHO's 10-year Intersectoral Global Action Plan on Epilepsy and Other Neurological Disorders (IGAP) 2022–2031. The IGAP provides a comprehensive strategy to tackle the burden of neurological conditions, addressing gaps in care, promoting brain health, and setting clear targets for all nations.

Importantly, this summer WHO has published a new [implementation toolkit](#) for the IGAP, outlining specific actions and resources for countries to enhance services for individuals with neurological conditions in preparation for meeting IGAP's targets for 2031. This toolkit is the essential resource for those involved in shaping neurology policies and services, primarily intended for policymakers at national and subnational levels across various sectors. Designed to correspond with the IGAP's strategic objectives, the toolkit lists specific steps and provides access to 90 tools and resources, allowing countries to customise their plans for IGAP implementation according to their unique contexts and the advancements already made in neurological care.

In addition, the 2024 paper in [Lancet Global Public Health](#), titled “National plans and awareness campaigns as priorities for achieving global brain health,” a collaborative effort by the European Federation of Neurological Associations (EFNA) and the OneNeurology global partnership, highlights the urgency of implementing the IGAP. It stresses the need for updated national policies, awareness campaigns, and advocacy programs to advance global brain health, supported by six strategic pillars.

National and regional (EU-level) action plans focused on neurological or brain health can play a particularly important role in executing the IGAP. These plans should adopt a coordinated approach to tackle common challenges and implement effective solutions for neurological conditions.

Europe now has a unique opportunity to lead the implementation of the IGAP. We must move towards its swift deployment and encourage governments to allocate resources to make it possible. Engaging patients in this work is crucial; their insights should inform policies that address their needs.

We urge WHO EURO, the EU and its member states to spearhead the IGAP's implementation across Europe, focusing initially on raising awareness of the IGAP and toolkit, and establishing a robust evidence base. As a first step, WHO EURO should assess key areas such as epidemiology, disease burden, and service availability. We urge European countries to allocate adequate resources to WHO to support this important work and ensure the effective prioritisation of IGAP implementation in each country.

By working together, we can significantly reduce the prevalence of neurological conditions in Europe and promote brain health as a vital asset for the well-being of society as a whole.