

**Statement of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network and WHO Regions for Health Network
presented at the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health
Ostrava, Czech Republic, 13–15 June 2017**

Annex to the *Pécs Declaration*, outcome of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network Annual Business and Technical Conference, Pécs, Hungary, 1–3 March 2017

We, the cities and national networks of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network, together with the regions of the WHO Regions for Health Network, fully support the Ostrava Declaration, the outcome of the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, Ostrava, Czech Republic, 13–15 June 2017. In doing so, we emphasize the leading roles of cities and regions in addressing and promoting the co-benefits to health and well-being from action to protect the environment.

We are fully committed to ensuring the highest attainable level of health and well-being for all people in the European Region. We emphasize that health is a fundamental human right and a human necessity, and that only collaborative, coordinated action at the global, national, subnational, regional, municipal and local levels will allow us to achieve health, well-being, and sustainable and equitable development for all. We stress the importance of a healthy environment for improved health and well-being of people and communities. We recognize the vital importance of concerted action by the sectors for health and environment, at the level of cities and regions, as well as other sectors and partners, to meet the ambitious common goals of equity, health, and well-being for all.

We recognize the scope for important synergies between the objectives of: the WHO European Healthy Cities Network and the WHO Regions for Health Network; the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, Ostrava, Czech Republic, 13–15 June 2017; Health 2020, the European policy and strategy for health and well-being; and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We emphasize the strength of the mandate held by cities and regions to take action, and that we cannot afford to fail in the pursuit of our goals in order to improve the health and well-being of people and their communities.

We, as cities and regions, are closest to the people and our input is crucial to successful multilevel governance for the sustainable development of healthier, happier, more resilient people and communities, both now and in the future.

We acknowledge the progress that is being made in addressing health inequalities in the European Region, but find their persistence unacceptable. We emphasize the urgency of focusing on reducing health inequalities by addressing the social, cultural, economic and environmental determinants of health and well-being, particularly among groups at risk of vulnerability, in a holistic, integrated manner across the life-course, both intra- and intergenerationally. We stress the need for strengthened policy coherence, as well as better and sustainable governance for health and well-being at the national and multinational levels, to support and facilitate action to this end.

We emphasize the important roles of cities, municipalities, and regions as entry points for improving health and well-being for all, and the unique opportunity they have of creating inclusive, participatory governance processes that promote empowerment and trust, and foster the joint ownership and promotion of health and well-being. We stress our commitment to establishing multisectoral and multistakeholder partnerships for equity, health and well-being for all, and to acting as champions for environment and health through coherent and sustainable governance mechanisms to achieve these joint goals.

We assert the necessity of strengthening adherence to human rights to fully address health inequalities, create healthy urban places and inclusive cities, and meet the specific health needs of the rural populations in our regions. We are committed to reducing inequalities, including gender inequalities, in the areas of environment and health, with a focus on groups at risk of vulnerability. We affirm the need to advance gender equality and the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people as well as other groups at risk of vulnerability, not only as fundamental to, but also necessary for, societal well-being, peace and sustainable development.

We recognize the need for intersectoral action to support the priorities of the European Environment and Health Process and are dedicated to fulfilling our significant role in facilitating the continuation and sustainability of this process. We aim to do so by encouraging peer learning among cities and regions with different strengths and challenges, sharing good practice, and developing tools and policies to promote equity, health and well-being for all. We are pledged to strengthening multilevel, intersectoral exchange across the two networks to foster increased commitment to and accountability for action to safeguard people's health, well-being, and environments, and streamline the processes involved in striving towards this goal.

We recognize the vital importance of building environmental, social, and community resilience in the context of escalating global environmental challenges, and addressing the risks they pose for human health and well-being. Cities and regions are uniquely placed to lead on action relating to environment and health and well-being, including measures that promote: healthy early years and healthy and active ageing; the reduction of air, noise and chemical pollution; the assurance of drinking-water quality, safe sanitation and waste management; sustainable food production and consumption; climate proofing in urban development; environmentally sustainable transport and active mobility; and the protection of biodiversity. We fully commit to using the wealth of experience available within our networks in working towards the common vision of increasing the empowerment of people and communities and, thus, improving health, well-being, and sustainable and equitable development for all.

We, the WHO European Healthy Cities Network, together with the WHO Regions for Health Network, adopt this statement as an annex to the 2017 Healthy Cities Pécs Declaration, resulting from the WHO European Healthy Cities Network Annual Business and Technical Conference, Pécs, Hungary, 1–3 March 2017. We commit to taking forward this agenda in the spirit of the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in Ostrava, 13–15 June 2017 as impetus for further engagement, collaboration, and action.