

**CPME Written statement to the WHO Regional Committee for Europe
Sixty-eight session, Rome, 17-20 September 2018**

The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) represents national medical associations across Europe. We are committed to contributing the medical profession's point of view to EU institutions and European policy-making through pro-active cooperation on a wide range of health and healthcare related issues.

CPME welcomes the opportunity to submit a written statement to the sixty-eight session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe.

Report on the WHO high-level meeting, Health Systems Respond to NCDs: Experience in the European Region/Progress report on implementation of the Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases in the WHO European Region 2016–2025

CPME welcomes the progress made in reducing the burden of NCDs as the leading cause of mortality in the EU. In all relevant policy initiatives, including those outside the health policy arena, CPME aims to tackle behavioural risk factors such as tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, and harmful use of alcohol. In line with the objectives of the Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases in the WHO European Region, CPME is advocating for the implementation of evidence-based and enforceable policies at EU level:

- In the context of the review of EU legislation on excise duties applied to manufactured tobacco and the possible taxation of novel products, CPME is supportive of policy measures which follow the 'best buy' recommendation on taxation as reaffirmed in the Action Plan. CPME will therefore continue to highlight the cost-effectiveness of taxation as a tool to reduce alcohol consumption to ensure coherence between health policy and tax policy objectives.
- In the effort to reduce alcohol-related harm, CPME is calling for a review of EU legislation to require a mandatory list of ingredients and nutrition declaration on alcohol product labels too. This policy innovation would aim to further align EU laws on food labelling with WHO recommendations and replace unenforceable self-regulatory systems governed by the alcohol industry. As is acknowledged in the Action Plan, combinations of actions are important to improve effectiveness.
- Moreover, CPME is calling on the European Commission to propose a legislative limit for industrially produced trans fats in foods. In line with the Action Plan's objectives on reformulation, such a limit would not only reduce the direct harm caused by an excessive consumption of trans fats, but also combat health inequalities, by disproportionately benefitting vulnerable groups such as lower income consumers.

CPME continues to advocate for the use of the EU's legislative tools to this end, to optimise the implementation of the Action Plan.