

# The Milan Declaration on Healthy Cities



## THE WHO HEALTHY CITIES PROJECT

Health for All  
action strategies at the local level

Здрави Градове

Sunde Byer

Gezonde Steden

Healthy Cities

Terveet Kaupungit

Villes santé

Gesunde Städte

Υγιείς Πόλεις

Egészséges városok

Cittá Sane

Города Здоровья

Ciudades saludables

Ciutats Saludables

Friske Stæder

Здорові Міста

טריים בריאות



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
Regional Office for Europe  
COPENHAGEN



The Milan Healthy Cities project focuses on equity and the needs of vulnerable social groups

We, the mayors and senior political representatives from the WHO Healthy Cities network, gathered in Milan on 5 and 6 April 1990, affirm our commitment to the principles of the Healthy City project and declare that:

## 1. Cities' role in promoting health

### Health

*Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources as well as physical capacities. Health is created and lived by people in the settings of their everyday lives.*

We pledge our political support for healthy public policies and the creation of supportive environments in our cities that develop and sustain the health of all our citizens.

### Health for all policy

*Cities are key partners in the WHO health for all movement.*

We pledge our political support for the health for all policy and the attainment of its targets in our cities. This requires community participation, including, where appropriate, the decentralization of decision-making and resources to the local level.

### Sustainability

*Health depends on sustaining the world's natural resources, as well as the quality of the natural and built environments.*

We pledge our political support for the protection of the health of citizens and the quality of their environment by ensuring that urban development is environmentally sustainable.

In particular, we recognize the adverse effects of traffic on health and the environment, and the need for comprehensive urban transport planning that takes account of these effects.

### Equity

*Harmful effects on people's health arise not only from poverty but also from other kinds of social and educational disadvantage*

We pledge our political support for programmes that promote equity and reduce inequalities in health within our cities.

In particular, in this United Nations International Year of Literacy, we recognize the vital contribution that our city educational systems play in creating and promoting health.

### Intersectorality and accountability

*Health is mainly the result of society's combined action (or lack of action) on the physical and social environment. Improvements in health are due only in part to the advances of medical care systems*

We pledge our political support for the strengthening of intersectoral action on the broader determinants of health and for exploring with our city councils or other city authorities ways to make health and environmental impact assessment part of all urban planning decisions, policies and programmes.



### International dimensions

*Peace is an essential prerequisite for health. In this context, we welcome the new openness in Europe and affirm our belief that cities play an essential role in building bridges of understanding within and between countries of Europe and the world.*

We pledge our political support for the WHO Healthy Cities project within the national and international networks and organizations to which we belong, and will encourage the national and international development of the new public health movement.

## 2. Action for healthy cities

We hereby confirm our commitment to the WHO Healthy Cities project, and specifically reconfirm our commitment to take what measures we can to ensure the effective operation of the project in our cities, namely:

- establishing effective intersectoral mechanisms for developing healthy public policies,
- developing a city health plan that identifies the major health challenges and proposes a comprehensive, city-wide intersectoral strategy to address them;
- establishing an adequately staffed Healthy City organization,
- creating mechanisms for public accountability for the effects of decision-making on health,
- ensuring effective community participation in all decisions and actions affecting health.



*Healthy Cities: Facing the Future, the meeting of mayors and senior political representatives of the 30 project cities in April 1989*



*From left to right: Dr Ilona Kickbusch, Director, Lifestyles and Health, WHO Regional Office for Europe, Mr Chris Baines, chair of the meeting, the Mayor of Milan, Mr Paolo Pillitteri, and Dr Agis Tsouros, Healthy Cities Project Officer at the WHO Regional Office for Europe*



*The Mayor of Belfast, Councillor Reginald N. M. Empey, signing the Milan Declaration on Healthy Cities*



*Mr Ingemar Joseffson, Vice-Mayor of Stockholm, signing the Milan Declaration*

To ensure the long-term success of the Healthy Cities movement, we will seek to match the recent commitment of the WHO Regional Office for Europe by continuing our involvement at least until 1995.

In addition, we will explore, with our councils, participation in EXPO 1992 to be held in Seville, and EXPO 1995, to be held in Vienna and Budapest, as part of the Healthy Cities exhibit/programme intended to give high visibility to the successes of the Healthy Cities project.

We hereby pledge that, to promote the health of our cities and citizens, we will explore with our city councils or other city authorities actions that can contribute to recent WHO policy initiatives, including:

- the European Charter on Environment and Health;
- the European Action Plan on Tobacco or Health;
- the WHO air quality guidelines;
- the WHO policy on the prevention of AIDS and the care of people with AIDS.

We recognize the need for additional resources, beyond those that can be provided by our own cities and WHO, to support the further growth and development of the project. Accordingly, we call on WHO:

- to take the lead in the European Region, with other partners, in establishing joint action in urban health that will provide funding and resources with particular emphasis on the cities in Europe with the greatest problems and the fewest resources;
- to explore the establishment of increased financial support to the Healthy Cities project such as a European health fund;
- to explore and facilitate the establishment of a Healthy Cities institute to support the Healthy Cities movement;
- to facilitate the creation of a European Healthy Cities association;
- to broaden the Healthy Cities project to cities in the developing countries.

We will provide political support to WHO in its efforts to expand the resources available to the project.

We undertake to report on our progress in implementing the action

here described in our cities at the next Meeting of Mayors, which will take place at the 1992 Healthy Cities Symposium in Copenhagen.

### 3. Conclusions

We recognize health and its maintenance as major social investments.

We reiterate our commitment to the concepts and principles of health promotion as defined in the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion.

We challenge and support the WHO Healthy Cities project in its approach to address the overall ecological issues of our ways of living.

We urge cities throughout Europe and beyond to participate in the Healthy Cities movement and to join us in our commitment to a strong public health alliance.



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