



EUROPE

STATEMENT

Designing Healthier and Safer CITIES: the Challenge of Healthy Urban Planning

Mayors and Political Leaders Statement of the WHO Healthy Cities Network

and

The European National Healthy Cities Networks

23 September 2005, Bursa, Turkey



Dedicated to promoting health and sustainable development through improving the living conditions and quality of life of all our citizens, we, Mayors and Political Leaders of WHO European Healthy Cities, declare that:

We are becoming increasingly aware that the policy decisions we take can have a positive or a negative impact on the physical and mental health and well-being of our citizens, and on the social capital and vibrancy of our communities;

We are ready to put health considerations at the heart of all urban planning and generate political commitment and resources to achieve this goal.

We acknowledge scientific evidence that good urban spatial planning can shape people's health, through the design of environments that address key 'determinants of health' by providing:

- Opportunities for healthy active lifestyles (especially regular exercise)
- Access to affordable, high-quality housing
- Opportunities for social cohesion and supportive social networks
- Access to diverse employment opportunities
- Access to high quality facilities (educational, cultural, leisure, retail, health and open space)
- Opportunities for local food production and healthy food outlets
- Accessible, ecological and safe transport systems.
- An attractive environment with acceptable noise levels and good air quality
- Good water quality, sanitation and waste disposal
- Reduction in emissions that threaten climate stability
- Emergency planning and community safety
- Equity and poverty reduction

We also understand that success will require close cooperation between health and planning agencies; robust partnerships with public, private and voluntary sectors; active and democratic citizen participation processes; and strong political support from the top tier of the city government.

Recognising our key advocacy and leadership role in addressing these determinants that influence the health of our citizens, **we therefore commit** ourselves to the following objectives and priority actions:

1. Raising local awareness and creating a common understanding of the concept of healthy urban planning and all that it implies as key to changing practice
2. Gaining local practical experience from the application of healthy urban planning principles and approaches in the following five priority areas:
 - Transport and mobility
 - Healthy Ageing and accessibility
 - Urban design and physical activity
 - Neighbourhood planning
 - Long term strategic and master plans
3. Mainstreaming healthy urban planning through appropriate and feasible institutional and technical solutions.

We call upon our fellow Mayors in the wider healthy cities networks across Europe and beyond to follow our example and take up the challenge of healthy urban planning, to promote solidarity and cooperation, and to share knowledge and experience.