

EU4Health Work Programme 2022 Consultation - Additional inputs

Restore operational support to health civil society and improved consultation as a key achieve the EU4Health objectives

The EU4Health Programme is a welcome opportunity to build better resourced, equal and resilient health systems. However, to achieve its objectives and to improve all European's health, while responding to their needs, it is necessary to fully involve health civil society in the development and implementation of its Work Programmes (WPs). This can be achieved by ensuring budget allocation to operating grants (OGs) for civil society organisations (CSOs) and more meaningful involvement and consultation.

Starting with the WP2022, we call on the EC to:

- **Restore operating grants for CSOs:** abandoning OGs as a financing mechanism in favour of 'Action Grants' has devastating consequences for European CSOs. This decision seriously reduces CSOs' capacity to support the achievement of many EU4Health's objectives as independent and expert key partners of the EU, able to reflect **real-life perspectives of patients and citizens**.

For instance, it strongly limits capacity to engage, meaningfully and long term, in policy development & implementation of EU health legislation, support evidence-based decision making (SO8); supporting digital transformation of healthcare (SO6) or improving access to healthcare (SO7).

The budget allocated to OGs should take into consideration the increased EU4Health overall budget and EU's heightened ambitions in the field of healthcare. It should also be in line with OG allocation included in other EU Programmes, such as LIFE, CERV and ESF+.

- **Ensure meaningful consultation:** better consultation with CSOs is essential to ensure that the WPs will better respond to real needs for a more efficient use of the budget, leaving no disease areas nor population groups behind. In accordance with article 16 of the EU4Health Regulation, the Commission has an obligation to consult with stakeholders.

In line with the statement linked below and the legislation, the method of consultation should fully inform the Commission about stakeholders' views on both the priorities and strategic orientation of the annual work programme, as well as the needs to be addressed through its implementation and the results achieved through it. The way in which the current consultation is set up, does not allow for meaningful input, but only for a prioritisation of elements included in the annex of the legislation. Although this is surely a useful exercise, the Commission needs to make it possible for stakeholders, including CSOs, to provide more concrete ideas and feedback.

For more details on the joint CSOs asks and position on EU4Health: <https://bit.ly/EU4HCSOs>