

ONE SUSTAINABLE HEALTH – GENERATION EUROPE 2024

Abstract

We are facing major challenges that must be addressed holistically: the climate crisis, health crisis, energy transition, mobility, the responsible design of living spaces, and artificial intelligence. Currently, these issues are treated separately. However, we are convinced that they are inextricably linked and that only a comprehensive and holistic approach can lead to effective and future-oriented solutions. We aim to strengthen Europe's position in terms of its already renowned quality of life and make it a pioneer in innovation in mobility, urban planning, and the energy transition. The One Sustainable Health concept approaches these topics transdisciplinary, drawing on Europe's leading research.

We propose a closer cooperation of France, Germany and the European member states unifying siloed approaches to One Sustainable Health from policy makers, research and stakeholders. This can be structured in a One Sustainable Health Institute – Europe.

Definition of One Sustainable Health

One Sustainable Health refers to a holistic approach for promoting health. This includes human and veterinary medicine, environmental science including climate, mobility, urban health and social sciences. This transdisciplinary approach is a compass for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It navigates and focuses the challenges of increasing complexity of today's society to the broad topic of health, which can be communicated to, and is understood by, everybody in society. The driving idea is that there is only One Health, and everyone benefits from living equally healthy lives on a unique, healthy planet Earth.

A Holistic Vision: Rethinking Health in Society

Health is far more than medicine - we need to rethink the way we define health. It is about how we live as individuals, how we design our living spaces as a society, how we interact with the environment and animals, how we shape our working habits, etc. Health does not just play a vital role for our individual lives but also greatly affects our social structures. It affects the implementation of transport systems and how we built houses, community spaces and cities. This is why both the fellows of the Generation Europe coming from fields such as medicine and biomedical research and fellows from areas such as mobility and architecture support the implementation of joint research synergies and a holistic approach towards health. The concept of One Sustainable Health seeks to fundamentally address the complexity of health.

Research: Better synergies in common research efforts

Consequently, many of us see the urgency for synergies in research efforts and for providing effective and collaborative structures for the European research landscape. This could be structured in form of a proactive and truly collaborative network of European centers of excellence with joint administration and governance at the

European level yet integrated within the current national schemes. Such an approach is crucial for ensuring Europe remains competitive in the research sector on the global stage, while also maintaining Excellence within all member states. At present, there is this impression that Europe is teaching talented scientists but fails to retain them or to give them the means to improve our lives. If Europe works on aligning research structures, shares health care data effectively and collaborates across-borders, but also gives research and researchers the appropriate recognition and means of action, it can improve Europe's competitiveness on the world stage.

Agenda Setting

In line with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations and the EU's shared commitment, the second cohort of the Generation Europe pursued these efforts of the first Generation Europe which consolidated in group by further developing those recommendations and involving into concrete engagement, notably by actively participating in a panel discussions about a "One Health Institute" organized in Leuven, Belgium, "Healthy Cities and Sustainability" in the French Embassy in Berlin, "Towards One Sustainable Health Institutes" and "One Digital Health" at the World Health Summit in Berlin, "Next Generation for One Sustainable Health and Peace" at the Paris Peace Forum, "Catalysing the Creation of a World Network of One Sustainable Health Institutes" at the World Science Forum in Budapest and organizing the workshop "One-Health-Lab" in Berlin for the public. Another important engagement was taking part in a roundtable discussion in Brussels, aimed at preparing and supporting EU Parliament members for upcoming European Commission hearings on the One Sustainable Health approach. As a key element of our work in 2024, the Generation Europe presented a concept paper of a visualized One Sustainable Health Institute on the occasion of the state visit in May in Dresden, which was developed in collaboration with the Virchow Foundation network, the One Sustainable Health (OSH) Forum, and the "One Europe for Global Health" coalition. This message was personally delivered and handed to the French and German Presidents. The details of the OHI concept can be found in the following.

The "One Sustainable Health Institute – Europe (OSH-EU)" needs not to be built in bricks and stones, it will serve as an anchor and a catalyzer to **1/ advocate** a One Sustainable Health approach toward policy makers and scientists, **2/ unite** a siloed European research landscape, **3/ centralize** collaborative efforts for a synergistic, interdisciplinary use of existing European funding mechanisms and of the European pool of excellent experts and **4/ promote** implementation into concrete, tangible measures for the benefit of our societies e.g. by the establishment of a decentralized structure of a **OSH-EU** as a network of European centers of excellence.

Structure: *The envisioned **OSH-EU** will consist of a network of excellent European research institutes, stakeholders and policy makers with strong scientific leadership and a joint administration and governance. Financial support will be based on competitive national and European funding. Its responsibilities will include scientific cooperation on agreed specific topics in long-term networks. The **OSH-EU** will be*

organized around committees and task forces dedicated to science communication, data sharing (FAIR principles), implementation recommendations, health professionals training.

ADVOCATE – There is only one Health possible for all, on the one healthy planet Earth. This motto will be at the core of the OSH-EU communication towards the general public, policy makers at the European and national levels and key stakeholders in professional circles related to One Sustainable Health (e.g., medical and science universities, industrial partners, health professionals, environmentalists).

UNITE – Europe possesses all the assets to be competitive on a global scale on emerging challenges with planetary implications. As such, the OSH-EU will serve as an innovative role model for open and ethical research and holds the potential to reinforce trust in science through professional and homogenized communication while promoting healthy workplaces for researchers and thus, making European academic careers attractive again for talented minds.

CENTRALIZE – A shared European endeavor and centralized organization focus efforts on universal health, uniting local actions in a global perspective. The key role of the OSH-EU will be to bring research, funding, governance, and stakeholders into direct exchange. In particular, the joint administration and definition of goals, as well as the coordination of funding, promise not only efficient use of resources, but also a transparent and transnational collaborative approach.

PROMOTE – Complex topics need an interdisciplinary view and holistic approach. The OSH-EU will do so by enabling multilateral and interdisciplinary collaboration with a strong emphasis on translationality. A continuous assessment of both direct outcomes such as addressing climate change, promoting equity, and reducing pandemic risks by monitoring emerging pathogens as well as indirect outcomes including influence on public policies and fostering interregional collaboration. This will, as an ultimate goal, enable direct implications for our society.

Overall, the One Sustainable Health Institute – Europe (OSH-EU) will serve as a perfect tool for a unified, collaborative Europe on the questions related to One Health on a global scale. It will foster innovation and excellence in European's healthcare and research landscape. Furthermore, this will strengthen existing health and research structures by empowering them with better recognition and foster multilateral approaches to challenging questions. This decentralized but well-coordinated network will have to include novel ways and mechanisms of collaboration and interaction including the use of efficient digitalization and communication. Finally, it will enhance the European capacities to respond to pressing challenges in an evolving social, geopolitical, and environmental context.

As a group of young people, we see the pressing matters of sanitary crisis, climate change and European competitiveness, and we see the urgency to act now. We think it is high time to be proactive now and to coordinate European research, innovation

and policy efforts and implement a holistic perception of health into our everyday agenda.

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