

MEPs launch blueprint to renew EU agenda for allergy and asthma prevention and care

BRUSSELS, 20th March 2019 – The European Parliament Interest Group on Allergy and Asthma has launched a ‘blueprint’ to encourage the future Parliament to adopt a renewed EU policy agenda on allergy and airways diseases.

A Blueprint reaffirming commitment to forward-looking EU policies on allergy and asthma

The Interest Group on Allergy and Asthma [Blueprint](#) was presented at the European Parliament by Member of the European Parliament Sirpa Pietikäinen, co-chair of the Interest Group, in a context where allergy and asthma have increased to alarming proportions in Europe, becoming a major public health concern. The environment we live in and the limits of care and medical research are drivers behind figures such as the 150 million Europeans living with allergy and 70 million living with asthma.

During the launch event, MEP Pietikäinen, said: “The high prevalence of allergy and airways diseases has important socio-economic consequences for our people and societies”.

The development or worsening of allergy and asthma is triggered by many factors. The Interest Group Blueprint pinpoints the links between allergy and asthma and industry sectors such as transport, the environment, agriculture, food and consumer products. While focusing also on the links with research and digital technologies, the Blueprint recommends establishing European Centers of Excellence to help improving patients’ quality of life through programmes and best practices.

The Blueprint sets the tone for potential work areas of the Interest Group after the EU elections in May. It reiterates the groups’ commitment to forward-looking EU policies in prevention, care and research for the benefit of people living with allergies and asthma in Europe, considering that:

- Allergy is the most common chronic disease in children. In many European countries, annual costs for childhood asthma range from **100 to more than 300 million Euro**.
- Sensitization to grass pollen and food allergens is widespread and further increasing: by 2025, **half of all Europeans** are expected to be **affected by allergies or asthma**.

A Blueprint launched with top European decision-makers and patient leaders

The blueprint was launched during an event which allowed an interactive discussion with officials of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), European Commission Directorate General for Environment (DG ENV), World Health Organization (WHO) and the Finnish Permanent Representation, who reflected on the situation and way forward.

In her opening speech, Prof. Ioana Agache President of the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI) stressed the importance for Europe to adopt a “one health approach” and called for progress in the implementation of precision medicine, access to medicines, and environmental legislation.

President Mikaela Odemyr from the European Federation of Allergies and Airways Diseases Patients’ Associations (EFA) presented #ShowLeadership, a patient-driven campaign encouraging action among those decisions-makers who could help allergy and asthma patients live better lives.

Closing the event, Interest Group member and co-host MEP Pavel Poc noted that getting used to living with chronic diseases is not the right approach. Protecting people against the root causes of the diseases should be the priority, both at EU and national levels.

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Notes to editors:

The **European Parliament Interest Group on Allergy and Asthma** is an informal group of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) committed to address unmet needs of allergy and asthma at EU level and improve prevention, care and research to the benefit of people living with allergy and asthma in Europe.

For more information visit <https://allergyasthmaparliament.eu>, follow us on twitter ([#EPAllergyAsthma](#)) or contact office@allergyasthmaparliament.eu