

# Active Citizenship Network

## Action Plan 2022 – 2023

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## PREAMBLE

Active Citizenship Network policy and, consequently, this Action Plan are based on the following four pillars: rights & duty, empowerment, cross-border related issues, sustainability.

Moreover, the majority of the here proposed activities represent the follow-up of initiatives already started in the last years. All have in common the following pre-conditions:

- The promotion of alliances & multi-stakeholder partnership;
- A long-term commitment instead of just spot initiatives;
- The need to guarantee a balanced dialogue and the involvement of experts coming from different EU countries, in order to avoid to limit the interaction with the EU Institutions only to the “Brussels bubble”.

This Action Plan inevitably takes into account the following factors:

- a) The impact of the pandemic in all dimensions (health, economic, social, etc.) in all sectors of society (from the business world to the third sector, etc.) and at all levels (local/national/European/global) and the measures taken or to be taken in terms of digitalization, new work models, new healthcare treatments, etc.
- b) The priorities of the European institutions: the EU’s long-term budget coupled with NextGenerationEU & NRRPs, EU4HEALTH, the New Green Deal, and in general all the instruments that are helping rebuild a greener, more digital and more resilient post-COVID-19 Europe.
- c) The external political agenda and the internal agenda of our association linked to activities carried out at the national level (Italy).
- d) A new *modus operandi* to realize advocacy activities, with very few chances of organizing/attending in-person events and, consequently, with the need to strengthen all communication methods, starting from reinforcing the media partnerships to the interaction with specialized media & peer-review journals. Also, the new ACN website will be online by the end of 2022.

This document is composed by three main sections:

1. Our priorities in the health field;
2. The activities we’ve already carried out in Italy that could be widespread and realized also at the European level;
3. Our commitment in the context of the Agenda 2030.

## 1) OUR PRIORITIES IN THE HEALTH FIELD

### A. EUROPEAN POLICY DIALOGUE

- **MEPs INTEREST GROUP “EUROPEAN PATIENTS’ RIGHTS & CROSS-BORDER HEALTHCARE”, SECOND TERM (2019-2024)**

Promoted on 2015 by ACN and endorsed by 34 MEPs and almost 100 associations across Europe, the [Interest Group](#) has renewed its commitment to be a place of dialogue – a sort of citizens’ agora about healthcare related issues - for the development of the policy making process at EU level. In line with the activities carried out during the first mandate (11 events realized + 6 in the second term), the objective is to increase - with a multi-stakeholder perspective – the cooperation among EU Institutions, citizen & patient organizations, experts, private sectors. Its work is focused on the [priorities](#) underlined by the EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety Stella Kyriakides, the promotion of the patients’ rights & the reduction of health inequalities, as underlined by the "[Position](#)



[Paper on prevention, innovation and a new health governance for the new EU Institutions](#)", drafted by ACN with the endorsement of 18 associations.

#### - EUROPEAN PATIENTS' RIGHTS DAY, EUROPEAN HEALTH UNION & GLOBAL HEALTH

Launched by ACN, the European Patients' Rights Day (EPRD) was established on 18 April 2007 at the European Parliament to highlight a number of patients' rights, drafted in the [European Charter of Patients' Rights](#), that should be recognized, respected and implemented all around Europe and, over the years, it has been included in the European political agenda (some examples: [2013](#), [2014](#), [2017](#), [2018](#), etc.). Also thanks ACN's constituency, it is celebrated every year at local, national and European level ([here](#) there are some examples of the celebrations in the recent years).



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Global health & the [WHO's most urgent global health challenges](#); the Covid-19 outbreak & the need to guarantee more resilient healthcare systems (here you can find [our commitment](#) about Covid-19 pandemic); Civic society & PAGs participation on health issues & the creation of a European Health Union, in line with the [Manifesto](#) launched in November 2020 by the former EU Health Commissioner Andriukaitis and the one launched in 2021 by ACN titled "[Addressing non-covid patients: COVID-19 lessons learned for more resilient Health Care Systems. 10 Concrete recommendations towards a European Health Union](#)": these topics could represent the main strategic drivers of the conferences in the coming years. As a consequence, we are confident that the European Patients' Rights Day will continue to be one of the main Forum where to discuss the future of European healthcare and the crucial role of patients' rights for a better EU.

In 2022, ACN has started a new project aimed at drafting a "[Global Health Charter](#)", starting from a civic perspective, with the intent of building a holistic and conscious reading of health and contributing to providing effective solutions to the crisis and the health needs of each individual at the global level.



#### B. A CITIZENS & PAGs VISION FOR A HEALTHIER EUROPEAN UNION: OUR SUPPORT FOR THE EU4HEALTH 2021-2027

From the interruption of vaccinations to the postponement of cancer screenings, the Covid-19 pandemic seriously undermined the scientific progress made in 20 years by preventive medicine. As a [Member](#) of the [Health Policy Platform](#), the EU platform dealing with health and patient's rights led by the EU Commission's [DG Health and Food Safety](#), our efforts are focused on building a safer healthcare by increasing the awareness of patient associations & advocacy activities, starting from a civic monitoring of the public resources and expenditure on health. Our attention is, in fact, guided by the European Union's Programme of action in the field of health for the next years. We welcomed the Programme that aims to "increase protection against global health threats", "reduce inequalities in accessing health care" and "advocate prudent and efficient use of medicines such as antimicrobials". However, we agree that the Programme - as stated in the document adopted by the European Parliament last 13 November 2020 - should, among other things, "promote research and the development of new medicinal products, with particular attention to be given to antimicrobials and vaccines to tackle AMR and vaccine-preventable diseases, promote incentives to boost the production capacity for antimicrobials, personalized treatment and vaccination, and foster the digital transformation of healthcare products and platforms for monitoring and collecting information on medicines". Our expectation is, on the one hand, to identify concrete and adequate forms of patient & citizen engagement for the development of the Programme and, on the other hand, to monitor how the resources



will be used, at EU and national level, starting from the implementation of National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRPs) across Europe.

## - VACCINATION POLICIES

As a member of the Technical Advisory Group committed to increase vaccine coverage, led by the [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control](#) (ECDC), we are very dedicated on the topic, both at the national level and at the EU level, as you can [read](#).

In the coming years, our commitment will continue strengthening the informal network of civic and patient associations, advocacy groups, think tanks, etc.

able to unite and valorise the actors that promote vaccination, recognizing its fundamental importance, struggling against vaccine hesitancy, encouraging the exchange of information and the collection of data, and ensuring greater coordination in joint advocacy activities at the European level.

Recent achieved goals:

- we have gained the opportunity to officially become a collaborating stakeholder of the [EU-JAV - European Joint Action on Vaccination](#);
- the opening of the [Coalition for Vaccination](#) (promoted by the EU Commission) to the civil society's representatives engaged on the topic, and not only to the European healthcare workers and students' associations as initially planned.
- the [Involvement in the Scientific Committee for the surveillance of covid-19 vaccines](#), led by AIFA, the Italian Medicines Agency.

For 2022-2023 in particular, our commitment will be focused especially on adult vaccination through the following initiatives:

- a) a public event supporting the need for strengthening adult vaccination in Europe by giving examples of shingles vaccination, flu, pertussis and pneumococcal vaccination (about pneumococcal vaccine, see [our commitment at national level](#)). Moreover, health system preparedness against vaccine preventable respiratory diseases (VPRDs), including pertussis vaccination, will be discussed.
- b) a training session on increasing awareness and identifying advocacy activity to better ensure sustainable access to vaccines preventing respiratory diseases, beyond COVID-19 not only flu, but also pertussis containing vaccines, pneumococcal vaccines as well as access to vaccines preventing cancer; vaccine & AMR (involving [AMR Patient Alliance](#) & [AMR Stakeholder Network](#)); the value of adult's boosters uptake and administration.
- c) a communication campaign including a manuscript to be published in a peer-reviewed international journal to underline the main info & suggestions coming from the 2021 surveys and 2022 activities.
- d) an evaluation European event to celebrate the 2022 EU Vaccination Day, hosted by the [MEPs Interest Group "European Patients' Rights and Cross-border Healthcare"](#).

More in general we will continue to work in the following directions:

- e) contribute – starting from citizens' and healthcare stakeholders' perspective - on understanding the impact of COVID-19 pandemic (and related new vaccines) on national immunization plans and to prepare and support the COVID-19 vaccination landscape and protect, at the same time, the uptake of the routine immunization schedules.
- f) increase health literacy on vaccination and life-course immunization: work to build a proper vaccine culture in particularly to overcome the idea that vaccination is only needed at early ages, and to shift to a life-course vaccination approach.



- g) promote the institutional dialogue between citizens' associations and EU institutions for a political approach on vaccination, encouraging also the National Drug Agencies to involve citizens' representatives in the committees for the evaluation of the anti-Covid-19 vaccination plan.
- h) a combination of surveys followed by webinars will be organized by ACN. As a follow-up, will be produced a list of recommendations to be shared through a EU social media campaign.

**- PATIENT SAFETY, HEALTHCARE ASSOCIATED INFECTIONS (HAIs), ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE (AMR)**

[As you can read](#), Cittadinanzattiva and Active Citizenship Network have worked continuously to advocate for safer healthcare both at national and at European level, starting from some of the rights listed in the [European Charter of Patients' Rights](#).

In the fight against antimicrobial resistance, in 2019 ACN has been recognized as official [collaborating stakeholder](#) of the European Joint Action on Antimicrobial Resistance and Healthcare-Associated Infections (EU-JAMRAI) and has been invited to join the jury of the EU-JAMRAI's [contest](#) "Be a change maker: craft your own symbol, wear it with pride and raise awareness about antibiotic resistance".

As a follow up of the [14<sup>th</sup> edition of the European Patients' Rights Day](#), titled "ONE health approach, MULTIPLE answers: Citizens' engagement & stakeholders' actions to tackle antimicrobial resistance and sustain EU progress", our commitment to fight the AMR paradoxes in the age of COVID-19 will be focused on the following activities:

- a) to support the existing AMR Patients' alliances (like the ones promoted by [IAPO](#) and [EPHA](#)) with the aim of enlarging its constituency and to move, towards a citizen AMR alliance, in line with the One Health Approach.
- b) to organize a European training seminar on the theme of the Antimicrobial Resistance open to the leaders of civic and patient associations coming from EU Member States and beyond.
- c) to develop targeted communication strategies to increase AMR risk perception.
- d) To monitor the implementation of AMR national plan across Europe with the direct involvement of PAGs & citizen organizations.



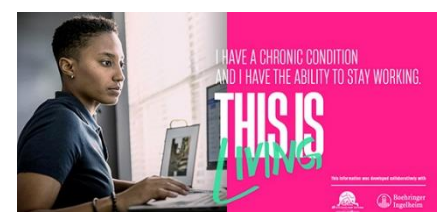
**- NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Oncological and chronic patients have been left almost alone for a while and, at the end of the emergency situation due to the pandemic, we will count not only the dead for Covid-19, but also the number of people who died because they didn't have a chance to receive adequate treatments. For instance, in Italy, according to the Italian Society of Cardiology, the fear of infection has tripled the mortality rate due to heart attacks. A situation confirmed also at the global level by the European Society of Cardiology, that in early June of 2020 denounced that the number of heart attack patients seeking urgent hospital care has dropped by more than 50% during the Covid-19 pandemic. Also for this reason, Cittadinanzattiva-Active Citizenship Network, as done for the past 15 years, will continue to increase its contribution for the prevention of cardiovascular diseases, raising consciousness and access to treatment, aiming at reducing their burden across Europe, as you can read on our website ([EN](#) - [IT](#)).



For the next 2022-2023, ACN will focus:

- a) To support the ["This is living"](#) communication campaign, which is focused on the protection and empowerment of patients suffering from a chronic condition at the global level.
- b) To promote a special focus on diabetes, in order to make enforceable the rights written in the ["Manifesto of the rights and duties of diabetic](#)



"patients" (a declination of the European Charter of the Rights of Patients' Rights) such as, for example, the continuous education of diabetic patients and the dialogue with specialists, diabetes prevention, etc.

## - DOCTOR-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP: NEW MODEL, SAME THERAPEUTIC ADHERENCE'S VALUE

The problematic management of the Covid-19 pandemic has made the limits of the current care paradigm, which is too focused on a specialist and/or hospital perspective, even more evident, so that the management of the territory is emerging strongly as the key turning point for healthcare in terms of prevention and care for the whole population, whether affected by chronic conditions or pandemics.

The classic management model based mainly on a face-to-face doctor-patient relationship, will have to give way to an important development of remote patient management. In order to guarantee high level of therapeutic adherence we need to support the relationship of trust while developing the diagnostic activity and remote management in the doctor-patient relationship. In light of the effects of the pandemic and the responses put in place, we'd like to promote the following initiatives:

- To update and expand the ACN's European communication campaign titled "[From Therapeutic Adherence to Therapeutic Alliance](#)" realized in 2018 with the direct involvement of 11 national advocacy groups & patients associations leaders, as well as two umbrella organizations.
- To carry out a tailored initiative in several EU Countries: for instance, a "Civic Consultation on the National Plan on chronicity", where groups of experts will analyse links and barriers between chronic conditions and therapeutic adherence. The goal is to compare the situation between countries and find together proposals and gather impressions, suggestions and advices on that aspect.
- To share recent achievements and collect good practices at EU and national level regarding therapeutic adherence in different therapeutic areas.
- To contribute to enrich the [EU Best Practice Portal](#) with the initiatives that we have gathered so far and to include "therapeutic adherence" as a key word of the Portal to enable people to easily find initiatives connected to this topic.
- To promote a Manifesto for the rights of patients living with multimorbidity and to define and suggest concrete actions for its implementation: Patients with multimorbidity have complex health needs but, due to the current traditional disease-oriented approach, they frequently experience fragmented care, which increases the risk of negative outcomes. And this is not acceptable anymore.



The proposed activities are in continuity with our multi-annual commitment aimed to highlight the value of therapeutic adherence for patients and the healthcare sustainability. [Here](#) you can find a summary of our commitment on the topic.

## - PAIN MANAGEMENT

With regards to the Patients' Right to Avoid Pain ( [the right n.11 of the European Charter of Patients' Rights](#)), for many years we have been very active at the national (Italy) and the EU level, as you can read on [our website](#).

In the last years, we have launched the [first European Prize of Good Practices in the fight against pain](#) (I°, II° and III° Edition), gathered over 100 good practices





from [2014](#) to date, become official partners of one of the most important multi-stakeholder initiatives ([SIP- Societal Impact of Pain](#), Editions [2016](#) , [2017](#) , [2019](#)) and won an [international Award](#).

Above all, we have contributed to increase the attention and the commitment of the European institutions on the issue: chronic pain is mentioned in the 2017 [Conclusions of the Council of the European Union](#); [the European Union has recently allocated more funds for research dedicated to the topic](#); [DG-Santè has opened its EU Health Policy Platform to a group of experts on the subject](#); the European Parliament hosts an Interest Group and [initiatives](#) on the subject; etc.

Starting from the good practices collected, our objectives for the coming years are:

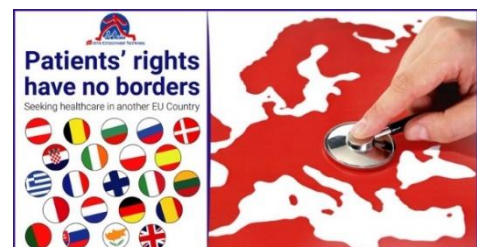
- a) To encourage a better cooperation with the European Commission, in order to:
  - value the good practices in order for them to be hosted within the [EU Best Practice Portal](#) promoted by EU Commission, as well as to expand the “Area/Topic of interest” search list on the EU Best Practices Portal by adding a new specific subject area: Pain/Chronic Pain (Cancer and non-cancer related).
  - [develop the topic of chronic pain in the context of the European Pillar of Social Rights](#), with particular attention to the need of citizens suffering of (low) back pain.
- b) To contribute to better identify how to mitigate the COVID – 19 pandemic consequences on chronic pain patients’ life.
- c) To deepen the connection between digital health & pain, not only by using the most recent innovations but also considering what is the level of empowerment that is required from pain patients to be able to take full advantage of these tools.
- d) As [members of the SIP](#) platform, our commitment is to continue supporting the political initiative Societal Impact of Pain at the European level and across Europe: [Joint statement](#), [SIP at the national level](#), etc.
- e) As board members of [Pain Alliance Europe](#) (PAE), we aim to promote coordinated activities to better advocate on the topic of pain.
- f) To realize, together with [Sine Dolore - European Pain Foundation](#), the annual meeting of the [Pain Euro-Mediterranean Coalition](#): the first civic hub-incubator of best practices against pain across Europe. This community is an informal network of manager & operators of best practices to facilitate the exchange of knowledge that every year is enriched by the participation of the winners of the Award. Here you can read the Annual Meeting realized in [2018](#) and [2019](#) in Spain.
- g) To promote common initiatives with our European and international partners, the [European Network of Fibromyalgia Associations](#) (ENFA) and the [World Federation of Incontinence and Pelvic Pain](#) (WFIP), with whom we have signed official agreements of cooperation.
- h) To open a dialogue on the topic of pain and to exchange experiences with Extra-EU representatives (including US representatives), as we are actually starting to collect good practices from outside the EU.

## - CROSS-BORDER HEALTHCARE, ATMPs, GENE THERAPIES AND PERSONALIZED MEDICINE

[Our commitment](#) to implement patients’ rights in cross-border healthcare (CBHC) started many years ago, supporting the drafting first, and then the implementation, of the Directive 2011/24/EU. The MEPs Interest Group [“European Patients’ Rights & Cross Border Healthcare”](#) and the widespread Communication Campaign [“Patients’ rights have no borders”](#) are some relevant examples.

In line with the [EU4Health Programme](#), our proposal is aimed:

- a) to support the [European Reference Networks \(ERNs\)](#), also thanks to a more active role of a broader constituency of advocacy groups and patient associations, in terms of raising awareness among European citizens, facilitating the dialogue, the exchange of



experiences, the collection of data & of good practices, and removing barriers & obstacles. About it, please read our [article](#).

- b) to encourage – for each ERN - the establishment of a multi-stakeholder forum. This group should be opened to all the actors already involved in the CBHC context and in the implementation of its Directive, with particular attention to the unmet needs of patients with severe genetic and rare diseases, potentially interested to the development of Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMPs).

For 2022-2023 we will focus on advanced therapies, which constitute the most innovative horizon that scientific research has produced so far, with the aim to guarantee and increase access to care. In particular, ACN will:

- a) involve ACN constituency in training seminars and communication activities focused on the value of Personalized Medicine and the concrete access to innovation linked to the ATMPs, a group of therapies for human use which are based on genes, tissues, and cells.
- b) propose a policy dialogue with European institutions in order to advance a concrete proposal to change the economic valuation related to high-value health treatments from an expense to an investment. This is fundamental because around advanced therapies, access is a fundamental issue.
- c) carry out a Call to Action at a European level to persuade policymakers to a change in accounting that envisages health expenditure no longer concentrated on the year, but aligned with long-term benefits, therefore: from accounting for current expenditure to that of investment expenditure with multi-year payment upon achievement of health improvement objectives.

## - ONCOLOGY

Since 2016 Cittadinanzattiva has constantly increased its commitment, at national level, in the oncology field. In order to boost and support what has been already achieved, ACN recently joined forces with [All.Can](#), an international multi-stakeholder not-for-profit organization, working to improve the efficiency of cancer care by focusing on what matters to patients. As well as Active Citizenship Network, All.Can works believing that keeping patients at the center of each healthcare process, with a bottom-up approach, is the key to a more sustainable and efficient healthcare system. To know more, read about our commitment on the topic at the national and EU level ([EN](#) – [IT](#)).

Trends in Medicine



Short Communication

ISSN: 1594-2848

Europe's beating cancer plan & citizens' engagement - The case history of the civic monitoring of onco-hematological Day Hospitals across Italy

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## - HEALTH DATA MANAGEMENT- Innovative Medicines Initiative (IMI)

- ACN is one of the partners of the European project [FACILITATE \(FrAmework for Clinical trial participants' data reutilization for a fully Transparent and Ethical Ecosystem\)](#) officially started on January 1, 2022. FACILITATE aims at developing an ethical, legal, and regulatory framework that allows the return of clinical trial data to study participants (patients) and other health professionals involved in their care and wants to create a process that allows the data collected to be reused also in future research. The project thus wants to allow not only the portability of patient data, but also

### ERNs Multi-Stakeholder Forum to Enhance Patients' Rights and to Enhance Cooperation on Cross-border Healthcare

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change the role of patients in the strategy and design of clinical trials (with many new rights and responsibilities). It is a project funded under the Innovative Medicines Initiative, a public-private partnership that funds research and medical innovation with the European Horizon 2020 program and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries (EFPIA). Cittadinanzattiva in particular is responsible for the interaction and involvement of stakeholders (patients and their associations, healthcare professionals, pharmaceutical companies, national European institutions, civic advocacy communities, ethics committees, regulatory authorities, and principal investigators ...): our task is to involve them and help in the development, evaluation, and adoption of the project results. We also participate in communication and dissemination activities.

## 2) A “BRIDGE” BETWEEN THE NATIONAL AND THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION

The following policies and areas of interest on health, pursued for years in Italy by Cittadinanzattiva, could represent an additional bridge between the national and the European level. Indeed, Active Citizenship Network is interested in promoting in Europe these other activities that Cittadinanzattiva has carried out at national level since many years.


Towards the “pharmacies of services’ ([EN](#) – [IT](#))

Maternity & natality protection ([EN](#) – [IT](#))

Health Technology Assessment (HTA) ([EN](#) – [IT](#))

[Healthcare services' evaluation](#)

[Desert healthcare services in the inner areas](#) ([EN](#) – [IT](#))



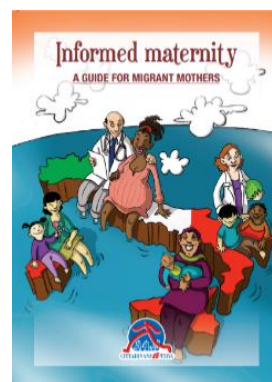
**CIVIC AUDIT®: A METHODOLOGY FOR CIVIC ASSESSMENT OF HEALTH POLICIES & SERVICES**

**BACKGROUND:**  
Civ. Audit® is a useful tool for helping Italian citizens in assessing health policies and services. It encourages them to identify problems in their local communities, analyze contrasting factors, propose solutions, influence policy, and develop long-term change.

**OBJECTIVES:**  
• Mobilize citizens to identify problems relating to healthcare policies and services  
• Build alliances of concerned stakeholders  
• Take measurements and collect data  
• Analyze the results, and identify strengths and weaknesses  
• Implement improvements and monitor them

**METHODS:**  
Civ. Audit® uses a systematic approach, with five steps designed to meet the above mentioned objectives. After identifying concrete needs, networks and partnerships are built up (bottom-up) and/or top-down (top-down) to launch the project. Relevant experts are chosen for further investigation, and surveys are related to obtain citizens' insights on the problem. Finally, citizens participate actively in defining, discussing and approving a project intended to solve the problem.

**Examples of problem identified in an Emergency Room:**  
• Long waiting times  
• High number of accesses  
• Inappropriate locations  
• Lack of attention paid to patients



## 3) THE AGENDA 2030 & THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

Citizens at the global level are united by a common language, the one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which should shift from being a simple language to being a shared “culture of doing”.



### - INTER-INSTITUTIONAL GROUP “SDGs FOR WELL-BEING AND CONSUMERS’ PROTECTION”

Just after the 2019 European elections, Active Citizenship Network has decided to promote - together with other actors - a political initiative that aims at the creation of an informal group composed by members of the European Institutions. [Read more.](#)

Announced on March 2019 at the EU Parliament, the [Inter-institutional Group "SDGs for well-being and consumers' protection"](#) has been officially launched on February 2021 and it is in line with European Commission's initiatives as the ["New Consumer Agenda"](#) and the annual "Consumer Day", organized on December 1st, 2020 by DG for Justice and Consumers, titled: ["Consumer policy in the service of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda"](#). The aim is to highlight the connection between the European dimension and the protection of the EU citizens as users and consumers, to support a EU policy dialogue on topics such as circular economy, energy transition, climate change, economic/social/environmental sustainability. As board member of the ["European Consumer Union"](#) and [consumer association](#) appointed to represent the Italian consumer organization to the EU Commission, the initiative is coherent with our commitment on [climate change, fight against waste, responsible consumption, water, environment, air pollution & health, energy transition](#), participation in the [World Environment Day](#), [The European Week for Waste Reduction \(EWWR\)](#), [the European Sustainable Energy Week \(EUSEW\)](#), the Citizens' Energy Forum and [our role as associated partners of the European Mobility Week](#) since many years.

SPECIAL FEATURE: EU CITIZENS & THE SDGs

### The citizens at the heart of Europe

MEP Ros Sempere spoke to The Innovation Platform's Clifford Holt about how the European Parliament will continue to play a key role in Europe's transition to a more sustainable future by including a clear focus on citizens and consumers.

The Inter-Institutional Group "SDGs for Well-being and Consumers' Protection", which is being promoted by Cittadinanzattiva/Active Citizenship Network (ACN), the European Consumer Union (ECU), and the Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development (ASviS) and supported by 47 associations from 24 European countries, is designed to promote consumers' rights, and support the European Commission's priorities as outlined in the European Green Deal.

With many of the priority areas for the EU now being further highlighted by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, Europe's institutions need to act to secure both Europe's sustainable future, and,



This interview is part of an EU initiative focused on Sustainable Development Goals created by Cittadinanzattiva/Active Citizenship Network and realized in partnership with The Innovation Platform.

Achieving a digital transition. It is important that Next Generation EU starts to function as quickly as possible, as this will be crucial to enabling Europe to successfully emerge from the

SPECIAL FEATURE: EU CITIZENS & THE SDGs

### Citizens and institutions – the path to Europe's future

The Innovation Platform spoke to MEP Jose Gusmao about the role of EU citizens and institutions in achieving the UN's SDGs

The European Union is working to transition towards a more sustainable and resilient future. With the European Green Deal, as well as the Next Generation EU programme, there is every hope that the bloc will emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic stronger and more unified than ever before, and with frameworks in place that will go some way to ensuring that the effects of any future crises can be weathered in a more robust way.



This interview is part of an EU initiative focused on Sustainable Development Goals created by Cittadinanzattiva/Active Citizenship Network and realized in partnership with The Innovation Platform.

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For 2022-2023, as a follow up to the Conference on the Future of Europe, ACN is interested in promoting, through a multi-stakeholder vision for a more sustainable European Union, a cycle of EU webinars titled: «SDGs at the Heart of the Future of Europe», hosted by the Inter-institutional Group "SDGs for well-being and consumers' protection".

Inter-Institutional Group  
SDGs for well-being and consumers' protection

*"I am pleased to support the initiative promoted by the European branch of Cittadinanzattiva, the European Consumer Union and ASviS because I consider essential the dialogue between citizens and institutions and crucial the role of civil society in achieving the goals of sustainable development, in the interests of today's and future generations"*

MEP Aldo Patriciello  
(Italy), PPE

www.interestgroupsdgs.eu

Inter-Institutional Group  
SDGs for well-being and consumers' protection

*"The achievement of UN's Sustainable Development Goals, is not only an EU's priority but a necessity for a prosperous, safer and more equal world. In order to succeed in our efforts we need the reinforcement of social dialogue between the European Citizens who are also the main recipients of the consumers' protection policies, the European Institutions and the Social Partners. The Inter-Institutional Group "SDGs FOR WELL-BEING AND CONSUMERS' PROTECTION" gives us the framework to better work and facilitate the discussion."*

MEP Nikos Androulakis  
(Greece), S&D

www.interestgroupsdgs.eu

- **SUPPORT TO THE EU INSTITUTIONAL ACTIVITIES TO RAISE CITIZENS' AWARENESS OF EU POLICIES**

ACN is committed to support the EU policies also thanks to its participation in EU Programmes and related projects which over time have allowed us to work on healthcare, sustainable mobility, energy transition, civic participation, resilience etc.

**Ongoing EU projects funded by public resources**

Programme and Project Titles	Project Descriptions
   <p data-bbox="188 1019 513 1093">  <b>Horizon 2020</b>            European Union Funding            for Research &amp; Innovation         </p>	<p data-bbox="710 555 1495 1019"> <a href="#">FACILITATE</a>, FrAmework for Clinical trial participants data reutilization for a fully Transparent and Ethical ecosystem, is a IMI2 Project built on a patient-centred, data-driven, technological platform where an innovative data sharing and re-use process allows the returning of clinical trial data to study participants within a GDPR compliant and approved ethical framework. FACILITATE starts-off by providing clear rules in a trusted ethical, legal and regulatory ecosystem before engaging patients as data generators. This avoids the current situation where clinical data are siloed in separate repositories without any possibility to be used beyond their original single-sided purpose. Within the consortium, Cittadinanzattiva/Active Citizenship Network will support the stakeholder engagement.         </p>
  <p data-bbox="363 1624 630 1697"> <b>Horizon 2020</b>            European Union Funding            for Research &amp; Innovation         </p>	<p data-bbox="710 1115 1495 1825">           The project <a href="#">NIGHTINGALE</a> (Novel InteGrated toolkit for enhanced pre-Hospital life support and Triage In ChallenGing And Large Emergencies) will develop and validate an innovative set of integrated tools for the response to large Medical Emergencies: a multi-technological toolkit that networks the different actors involved in the emergency management, and that serves emergency physicians and non-medical civil protection agencies (firefighters, police, but also volunteers and citizens). The goal is to ensure a substantial improvement to pre-hospital life support and triage. The tools developed will allow a shared response between emergency medical services, non-medical civil protection personnel, volunteers and citizens by increasing their "field of vision", information sharing and communication between teams and with victims. Cittadinanzattiva, in particular with Active Citizenship Network, will be an active part of the project bringing a civic perspective, ensuring that the solutions developed meet the needs of citizens and enhance their skills. We will participate in the dissemination and communication of the project results thanks to the wide network of "civic" (but not only) contacts in Italy and Europe.         </p>
	<p data-bbox="710 1848 1495 2058">           The Project <a href="#">AHEAD</a> addresses the challenge of medical deserts and medical desertification in Europe in an effort to help reduce health inequalities. The approach applied in this Project aims to build knowledge, encourage (digital) innovation in health service delivery to improve access and apply a participatory approach to public health policymaking. The Project will be carried out in         </p>



 <p><b>AHEAD</b> ACTION FOR HEALTH AND EQUITY ADDRESSING MEDICAL DESERTS</p>  <p>Co-funded by the Health Programme of the European Union</p>	<p>Romania, Serbia, Moldova, Italy (represented by Cittadinanzattiva/Active Citizenship Network) and the Netherlands and will benefit health policymakers, patients' organizations, health professionals' organisations, affected communities and more. The ultimate impact at society and EU level is better access to health services, especially in underserved areas, and more equitable access to sufficient, skilled and motivated health workers, starting with the countries involved in the Project. The main objective of this project is to provide knowledge and tools to a group of relevant policymakers in selected Member States and other eligible countries to define, design and implement evidence-based reforms in the health workforce field that specifically aim to counteract medical deserts and/or prevent medical deserts.</p>
 <p><b>NUDGE</b> Nudging consumers towards energy efficiency through behavioural science</p>  <p>Horizon 2020 European Union Funding for Research &amp; Innovation</p>	<p>The <a href="#">NUDGE Project</a> aims to systematically assess and fully unleash the potential of behavioural interventions towards achieving higher energy efficiency, paving the way to the generalized use of such interventions as a worthy addition to the policy-making toolbox. The project, which has a planned duration of 36 months, is carried out by a multidisciplinary team of 10 partners and trials take place in 5 different EU countries. Taking into consideration the Italian situation with regard to matters concerning renewable energies and also given the EU's position on the importance of energy efficiency, Cittadinanzattiva decided to join the NUDGE consortium as the only Italian participant, with the aim to contribute to achieve the adoption of behaviourally tested policy interventions at the local, regional, national, and EU levels.</p>
 <p><b>engage</b> Engage Society for Risk Awareness and Resilience</p>  <p>This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 882850</p>	<p>The <a href="#">ENGAGE</a> project (Engage Society for Risk Awareness and Resilience project) addresses research and innovation on resilience as an intrinsic capacity of an organization to adjust its operations during adverse events of change and actively support operations before, during and after disasters. The project aims to provide solutions to support the engagement of citizens, communities and authorities in an integrated approach, starting from the knowledge, skills and social capital existing in all levels of society. It links the informal resilience naturally inherent in citizens with the formal work done by authorities to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. As part of the research activities of the ENGAGE project, Cittadinanzattiva played a key role in interviewing citizens of the city of L'Aquila, in Abruzzo (Italy) who experienced the 2009 earthquake, with the aim to contribute to the study for the best solutions to offer European societies to make their communities more ready to face adverse events of change and therefore safer.</p>

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Erasmus+

The Erasmus project BLISS wants to respond, with an integrated intervention from both the educational and social point of view, to the "need for health" and the related need to have the digital tools necessary to find, analyse, and understand the news about health. Active Citizenship Network, thanks to its broad knowledge on health issues, was involved by EGINA to cover a leading role in the EU project. BLISS aims at responding to the horizontal priority related to the promotion of innovative pedagogical strategies in the context of digital transformation, offering a training course aimed primarily at teachers but which will then benefit students of secondary schools in six European countries. The project's main goal is to strengthen students' ability to move with awareness and confidence in the world of online health information. This will enable the citizens of tomorrow to better manage their health, improve prevention, enable more accurate diagnosis and treatment, and facilitate communication with health professionals, ultimately contributing to a greater development of health literacy in Europe through targeted training, documentation, and testing in schools.

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### Participation in initiatives supported by EU institutions

Invited by [DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion](#), since January 2020 we are officially recognized as an Ambassador of the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#), a vital instrument to achieve social justice and equality in the EU. Our role is to support communication initiatives to spread the 20 principles of the Pillar and the importance of a social European dimension. [Read more](#) about our commitment.



In coherence with our [Statute](#), since 2020 we are also officially recognized as an Ambassador of The European Citizens' Initiative, that enables Europeans to take an active part in EU policy-making by calling on the European Commission to propose new laws on issues they care about.



As an official member of "[Active Citizenship Structured Dialogue Group](#)", led by the EU Commission-DG Migration and Home Affairs, the EU platform dealing with civic participation, we are committed to support the Europe for Citizens Programme.



As a Board member of the [European Movement](#) in Italy, we are committed to the development of the Conference on the Future of Europe, a proposal of the European Commission and the European Parliament, announced in the end of 2019 with the aim of looking at the medium to long-term future of the EU and what reforms should be made to its policies and institutions.



In particular, ACN, along 2021, has promoted a cycle of EU Webinars titled «Health at the heart of the future of Europe» with the aim to feed the debate of the Conference for the Future of Europe. Starting from 2022, is interested in its follow-up.

## MEDIA

For 2022-2023, Active Citizenship Network aims at strengthening even more its already consolidated media activity through:

- Since 2012, the publishing of a monthly newsletter with the aim to keep its readers updated on all the activities, events, initiatives, campaigns, etc. carried out by Active Citizenship Network at the national and EU level. To read all the newsletters realized by ACN, [click here](#).



- The enhancement of scientific publications with international peer-reviewed journals. In 2020-2021, ACN published more than 20 manuscripts and is committed to continue increasing its media activity also in 2022-2023. To have a look at them, [click here](#).

### Some examples:

**Geneft**  
Epidemiology and Public Health Research

Review Article

**Addressing non-Covid patients' unmet needs to the Global Health Summit: Covid-19 lessons learned for more resilient Health Care Systems. Ten recommendations towards a European Health Union**

Mariano Votta<sup>1\*</sup>, Daniela Quaglia<sup>2</sup>, Bianca Ferraiolo<sup>3</sup>

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Received: May 22, 2021; Accepted: July 20, 2021; Published: July 30, 2021

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**yncSci**  
Adv Health Behav, 2021, 4(1): 164-170  
DOI: 10.25082/AHB.2021.01.002

COMMENTARY

**Actions and re-actions of civic society and Patients Advocacy Groups across Europe during Covid-19 pandemic: Sharing good practices for more resilient Health Care Systems**

Mariano Votta<sup>1\*</sup>, Bianca Ferraiolo<sup>2</sup>

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Check for updates

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Received: July 1, 2021; Accepted: July 28, 2021; Published: July 29, 2021.

Abstract: The recent pandemic seriously affected national health systems worldwide. The focus of the 2021 edition of the European Patients' Rights Day was on patient organizations' concrete reactions to it, offering answers to people and actions that should be put in place in order to have more resilient healthcare systems, starting from the 14 rights stated in the European Charter of Patients' Rights. From their experiences emerged the great reforming force of civic organizations and Patient Advocacy Groups, capable of responding promptly to new needs by managing services, building alliances, quickly signalling necessary normative or procedural changes, mobilizing resources (both human and economic), introducing and

**yncSci**  
Resour Environ Econ, 2021, 3(1): 239-244  
DOI: 10.25082/REE.2021.01.003

COMMENTARY

**SDGs and the engagement of EU citizens: The role of behavioral science in the energy transition**

Mannuela Amadori<sup>1</sup>, Mariano Votta<sup>2\*</sup>

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Received: March 6, 2021; Accepted: March 8, 2021; Published: March 8, 2021

Editor: Amadori M and Votta M. SDGs and the engagement of EU citizens: The role of behavioral science in the energy transition. Resour Environ Econ, 2021, 3(1): 239-244. https://doi.org/10.25082/REE.2021.01.003

Abstract: The EU's ambitious targets to increase energy efficiency and cope with the challenge of climate change have pushed several stakeholders, including public authorities and Distributed System Operators (DSOs), to actively invest in the energy transition and improve energy efficiency. Although a significant part of this investment concerns digital infrastructure (i.e., smart meters) allowing citizens to monitor and better manage their consumption of energy, it is pivotal to recognize the necessity for changes in the overall energy-related behavior of consumers. Against this background, the NUDGE project seeks to first analyze the behavior of European citizens with concern the energy consumption and to consequently design and test nudging interventions on different segments of the population, in the hope to derive recommendations tailored to each country and to design more general policies at European level. Hence, pilot projects will be carried out in households, energy communities, and schools in five different EU countries, while a general profiling survey will be disseminated online across the EU. Indeed, in order to profile users and assess the impact of an intervention, NUDGE takes a

**PAST**  
KNOWLEDGE PEOPLE

ISSN: 2474 - 9206

Journal of Anesthesia & Pain Medicine

Research Article

**Selecting Good Practices to Advance towards a European Network of Experts Fighting Against Chronic Pain**

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Submitted: 01 Oct 2021; Accepted: 05 Oct 2021; Published: 13 Oct 2021

©itation: Mariano Votta, Daniela Quaglia, Gianluca Bruzzese, Maira Cardillo (2021) Selecting Good Practices to Advance towards a European Network of Experts Fighting Against Chronic Pain 6(2): 11- 15.





## The role of collaborative, multistakeholder partnerships in reshaping the health management of patients with noncommunicable diseases during and after the COVID-19 pandemic

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Received: 19 April 2021 / Accepted: 20 June 2021  
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## The Role of the Pharmacies and Their Relationship with Citizens during the Covid-19 Emergency: The Italian Case History

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Received date: 26 July 2021; Accepted date: 31 July 2021; Published date: 05 August 2021

Citation: Votta M, Vitale M, Cardillo M, Papavero M (2021). The Role of the Pharmacies and Their Relationship with Citizens during the Covid-19 Emergency: The Italian Case History. SunText Rev Case Rep Image 2(3): 127.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51737/2766-4589.2021.027>

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### ABOUT US

[Active Citizenship Network](#) (ACN) is one of the most widespread and flexible European citizens' networks. Established in 2001, it is the European branch of [Cittadinanzattiva](#), the Italian non-profit organization founded in 1978, independent from any political affiliation, trade unions, private companies and public institutions.

The main objectives of ACN are the promotion of civic activism and participation in the political arena, and the protection of citizens' rights, which are both the strength and the uniqueness of ACN.

ACN is deeply involved and active in the European and national debate on citizens' rights and it has a concrete interest in improving their protection across Europe, as showed by its long-lasting commitment on the topic. In the recent years, ACN has been able to involve in its initiatives 206 civic, patient and user organizations coming from 34 Countries, plus 22 European/Global network/umbrella organizations. [Read more](#)



