

Alzheimer Europe Press release:

Alzheimer Europe sets out future vision of EU dementia policy

Luxembourg, 9 December 2020 – At an online European Parliament workshop hosted by Sirpa Pietikäinen, MEP (Finland), Alzheimer Europe launched a new report “Dementia as a European Priority – A Policy Overview” which takes stock of dementia policy at an EU level and sets out recommendations for future priorities across Europe.

As the European Union is about to agree a new long-term budget and the details of the EU4Health and Horizon Europe programmes are being finalised, Alzheimer Europe reflects on the place of dementia as a political priority in Europe in recent years. This includes the different ways in which dementia policy and research have been supported by the three institutions of the EU, as well as some of the high-profile coordination and research projects which have been made possible as a result of EU funding.

In the report, Alzheimer Europe also highlights some of its key activities in campaigning for change, as well as the work it has coordinated and participated in, along with its national member associations, to raise the profile of the condition and build an evidence base to make the case for the prioritisation of dementia.

Despite the progress made and the knowledge generated, the report highlights that people living with dementia continue to face a number of challenges. These challenges, which concern wider society too, include the increase in the number of people living with dementia (estimated to double by 2050) and the societal and economic cost of dementia.

As a result, the report sets out a number of recommendations for the EU, outlining specific areas in which dementia should be prioritised across international, health, research and social policy.

Recommendations include:

- Prioritising dementia research in EU Research Programmes (including Horizon Europe), providing a fair allocation of resources and funding for existing programmes and better coordination between programmes
- Prioritising dementia within policies relating to chronic diseases, mental health and ageing, both at an EU and national level
- Supporting Member States to work towards the implementation of the World Health Organization’s Global Action Plan on Dementia 2017–2025
- Recognising dementia as a disability and including dementia in disability policies.

Commenting on the publication of the report, Alzheimer Europe’s Executive Director, Jean Georges, stated:

“Alzheimer Europe has worked with its members over the past three decades to ensure that dementia is a political priority at the European level. The policy landscape has changed dramatically during this time and we have seen considerable progress as both national governments and the EU have given dementia greater prominence within their health and research policies.”

“However, there is much still to do. The European Union and its Member States are on the cusp of historic deals on the EU budget, a greatly expanded Health Programme and the forthcoming Horizon Europe research programme. If we are to build on the knowledge,

experience and progress gained in recent years, it is vital that dementia remain a political priority at a European level across health, research and social policy.”

The full report can be accessed on the website of Alzheimer Europe:

To download (PDF): <https://bit.ly/DementiaEUPolicyOverview2020>

To view online: <https://bit.ly/DementiaEUPolicyOverview2020-online>

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Notes to editors: Alzheimer Europe is the umbrella organisation of national Alzheimer associations and currently has 39 member organisations in 35 European countries. The mission statement of the organisation is to change perceptions, practice and policy to ensure equal access of people with dementia to a high level of care services and treatment options.

To support people with dementia, carers and Alzheimer’s associations during the COVID-19 pandemic, the organisation has dedicated a special section of its website to useful resources and links: <https://www.alzheimer-europe.org/Living-with-dementia/COVID-19>