

Active Citizenship Network

Action Plan 2023 – 2024

(Last update January 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 limiting the interaction with the EU Institutions only to the “Brussels bubble”.
- The willingness to denounce what doesn’t work, but also the ability to valorise good practices. Read our policy on good practice ([EN](#) – [IT](#)).

This Action Plan takes into account the following factors:

- The long-term 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).
- 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.
- The European political agenda and the priorities of our association, also related to activities carried out at the national level (Italy).
- In particular, the ACN’ activity of 2023 is thought in function to draft a pre-electoral manifesto to be presented to the next candidates for the 2024 European Parliament elections.

To know more about our milestones and achievements please click [here](#).

This document is available for free download in the new Active Citizenship Network new website in the session “[Our Priorities](#)”



1 - EUROPEAN POLICY DIALOGUE

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



Promoted in 2015 by ACN and endorsed by 32 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), the objective is to increase during this second mandate - 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



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 and it is recognized as one of the main EU Forum where to discuss the future of European healthcare and the crucial role of patients’ rights for a better Europe. Also thanks to 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).

The European Patients' Rights Day has at its heart, as always, the theme of recognizing and strengthening patients' rights as set forth in the [European Charter of Patients' Rights](#). In particular, the 2023 edition will focus on the patients' right to access care, with special reference to the unmet needs of patients who need access to special therapies.

For this reason, the 2023 edition of the conference will be dedicated to the topic of the Advanced Therapies Medicinal Products (ATMPs), aiming at being a collector of the best and most relevant existing experiences at the European level, bringing together leading professionals and the highest institutional authorities who are touched by the topic in their areas of responsibility and intervention.

Advanced therapies are becoming not only a hope but a reality of cure for patients suffering from serious diseases who have not yet found a concrete therapeutic answer. From the research towards a growing number of ATMPs, to their use once approved, the unifying themes seem to be essentially the following: sustainability, innovation, access, equity.



To these, from our point of view, two additional elements should be added and considered as drivers in making decisions concerning ATMPs: respect for and reinforcement of patients' rights. To know more, click [here](#).



HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE: OUR SUPPORT FOR THE NEW COMMISSION'S DEPARTMENT



Within the [HERA Advisory Forum](#) we were selected in the [HERA Civil Society Forum](#) which brings together patient associations, consumer associations and healthcare professionals. The other piece of the forum is represented by the industrial component.

The HERA Consultative Forum provides a mechanism for exchanging information on medical countermeasures preparedness and response and sharing knowledge. It ensures close cooperation between HERA and the competent bodies of the Member States, in particular with regard to the planning and implementation of HERA's scientific, health and industrial activities.

Specifically, however, the task of the Civil Society Forum is to report the opinions of the main stakeholders of civil society, and we are committed to contribute on that issue. Read our recent article "[How can we optimise emergency preparedness and response?](#)".

2 - 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. 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". Our expectation is, on the one hand, to identify concrete and adequate forms of patients & citizens 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.

In addition, at the end of 2022 we were selected as a member of the EMA stakeholder database. So, for 2023, we'll be more directly involved in regulatory discussions on medicines for use in the EU.

GLOBAL HEALTH

Global health & the [WHO's most urgent global health challenges](#); the Covid-19 outbreak & the need to guarantee more resilient healthcare systems; Civic society & PAGs participation on health issues, and 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 activities in the coming years. In coherence with this goal, we have just drafted 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. From 2023, our intention is to raise awareness citizen about the "global health" concept and its determinants. Read our recent article "[Towards the 'Global Health Charter' from a citizen's perspective](#)".



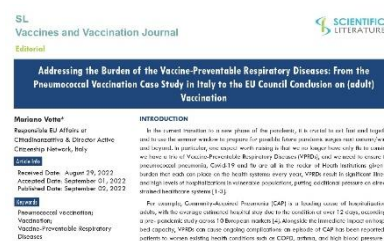
3 - OUR PRIORITIES IN THE HEALTH FIELD

VACCINATION POLICIES



Our commitment, over the years, on this topic (you can read [here](#)) has been appreciated and recognized by several national and European health stakeholders. At the institutional level ACN has, in fact, been appointed:

- in the Technical Advisory Group, dealing with vaccine coverage, of the [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control \(ECDC\)](#). In 2022 we contributed in shaping the [ECDC e-learning course](#) on online vaccine misinformation.
- in the [Coalition for Vaccination](#) (promoted by the EU Commission) as civil society's representative engaged on the topic (obtaining to include among the participants not only the European healthcare workers and students' associations as initially planned).
- in the [European Joint Action on Vaccination EU-JAV](#) as a collaborating stakeholder.
- in the [Scientific Committee for the surveillance of covid-19 vaccines](#), led by AIFA, the Italian Medicines Agency.



Moreover, our work and appeal to the EU institutions and Czech Presidency of EU, along the 2022, contributed to prioritise also the adult immunization importance in the [European Council Conclusions on vaccination!](#)

ACN is also member of several non-institutional working groups on vaccination, such as:

- [Adult Immunization Board](#) (promoted by the Department of Health Sciences, University of Florence and the Centre for the Evaluation of Vaccination, Vaccine and Infectious Disease Institute, University of Antwerp).
- [Steering Group on Influenza Vaccination](#) (promoted by Vaccine Europe).
- Advisory Committee for the [IFA](#) Adult Vaccination Education Program.
- [DRIVE](#) (Development of Robust and Innovative Vaccines Effectiveness), as patient collaborator representative.
- [VAC4EU](#) (Vaccine monitoring Collaboration for Europe).

In the coming years, our commitment will continue empowering the informal network of civic and patient associations, advocacy groups, think tanks, etc. to improve the collaboration and dialogue with all the health-related relevant stakeholders.

We will work engaging citizens' and patients' associations across Europe to better know and implement vaccination policies, encouraging the exchange of information and the collection of data, ensuring greater coordination in joint advocacy activities at the European level, with the final goal of improving vaccination uptake.

In the last years in particular our work focused on activating stakeholders to engage with EU institutions and inform EU policy, to support the need for strengthening the life-course approach to vaccination in Europe and spreading the value of routine immunization and its gains.

For 2023 in particular, our commitment on vaccination will be linked especially to adult vaccinations, non-communicable diseases, antimicrobial resistance, vaccine-preventable respiratory diseases (VPRDs), through the following initiatives:



- Training sessions on increasing awareness and identifying advocacy activities to better ensure sustainable access to vaccines. Because each one of us, when well-informed, represents a good antidote to the spreading of fake news.
- Targeted communication campaign co-created with the direct involvement of associations and experts.
- European institutional events, in the second half of the year to look at 2024 EU elections.

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

- contribute – starting from citizens’ and healthcare stakeholders’ perspectives - to understanding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic (and related new vaccines) on national immunization plans and to support at the same time, the uptake of the routine immunization schedules.
- increase health literacy on vaccination and life-course immunization: work to build a proper vaccine culture, particularly to overcome the idea that vaccination is only needed at early ages, and to shift to a life-course vaccination approach.
- promote the institutional dialogue between citizens’ associations and EU institutions.

Read our recent articles: [“Towards the next Council conclusions: are we doing enough for adult immunisation?”](#) and [“EU Health Ministers aim to improve vaccination at all ages”](#).

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



[As you can read](#), Cittadinanzattiva-Active Citizenship Network has worked continuously to advocate for safer healthcare both at the national and at the 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 14th 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 have been focused on the following activities:



Active Citizenship Network
One of the most widely used and flexible European citizens networks.

On 14th November 2020, in the context of the 14th European Patients' Rights Day, the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Council adopted the 'EU Charter of Patients' Rights'.

Active Citizenship Network, with its network of citizens' associations, has been recognized as an official collaborating stakeholder of the European Joint Action on Antimicrobial Resistance and Healthcare-Associated Infections (EU-JAMRAI).

Active Citizenship Network is a grassroots initiative of health and social activists.

More information: [http://www.cittadinanzattiva.org/active-citizenship-network](#)



- to support multi-stakeholder coalition and 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. At the end of 2022 we have officially join the [AMR Patient Group](#) led by HFE.
- to promote and support training seminars on the theme of the Antimicrobial Resistance open to the leaders of civic and patient associations coming from EU Member States and beyond. Here some examples, in [2022](#) and 2023 (in [Italy](#) and [abroad](#)).
- to develop targeted communication strategies to increase AMR risk perception.
- to monitor the implementation of AMR national plan across Europe with the direct involvement of PAGs & citizen organizations.
- to promote tailored actions to raise awareness on the issue of AMR also for all citizens as consumers: What is behind the "antibiotic-free supply chain" message?

Read our recent article "[Urgent policy change needed to tackle antimicrobial resistance](#)".

Review Article **World Journal of Clinical & Medical Images**
Civil Society Engagement in The Fight Against AMR: From the New National Plan in Italy To the AMR Patient Alliance at The European Level
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CROSS-BORDER HEALTHCARE, ATMPs, GENE THERAPIES, PERSONALIZED MEDICINE, RARE DISEASES



[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:

- 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](#).
- 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

Focus on Medical Sciences Journal
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ERNs Multi-Stakeholder Forum to Enhance Patients' Rights and to Enhance Cooperation on Cross-border Healthcare
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Equitable patient access to advanced therapies



Mariano Votta, Director of Active Citizenship Network, explores the need to support patient access to advanced therapies across Europe.

attention to the unmet needs of patients with severe genetic and rare diseases, potentially interested to the development of Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products (ATMPs)

Our intense efforts in 2022 to increase access to advanced therapies for all European patients resulted in the following activities: a [European webinar](#) for leaders of EU civic and patients' advocacy carried out in May 2022 with almost 100 participants; a ["Call to action"](#) signed by 43 patient associations; an institutional dialogue [event at the European Parliament](#) on 24 October 2022 followed by more than 100 people.

For 2023-



we will focus again on advanced therapies in order to ensure a high focus on the topic in the next legislative term and, at the same time, to provide the leaders of civic associations and patient advocacy groups the opportunity to participate in an EU debate about this important issue.

Read our recent articles: ["The value of investing in Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products"](#), and ["Equitable patient access to advanced therapies"](#).

NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, CHRONIC CONDITIONS, CAREGIVER



Oncological and chronic patients have been left almost alone for a while and, at the end of the emergency situation due to the Covid-19 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 NCDs & chronic patients, not COVID-19 patients.



In particular, our intention is to continue to cooperate 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](#)). In particular for the next years, ACN will be engaged 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.

- promote a special focus on diabetes, in order to make enforceable the rights written in the "[Manifesto of the rights and duties of diabetic](#)", based on the EU Charter of Patients' Rights;
- in coherence with our [cooperation](#) for the "[Charter on Urban Obesity](#)", will be committed on the obesity field, also thanks our partner European Association for the Study of Obesity (EASO);
- We'll contributed to increase the attention and the commitment of the European institutions on the issue on pain: also thanks our efforts, 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. [Here](#) you can find our long-term commitment on the topic.
- From 2023 Active Citizenship Network will be also involved in new challenges advocacy for people with ostomy in Europe.

HEALTH LITERACY & OUR COMMITMENT TO FIGHT PANDEMIC



Evidence collected during the COVID-19 crisis shows that the pandemic has had a significant impact on health services, clinicians, and patients. For instance, oncological and chronic patients struggled to access vital care, especially during the first wave of the pandemic.

Exactly three years after the widespread lockdowns, the situation has thankfully changed for the better. However, despite the enormous progress, we are not free from COVID-19. It is therefore important, as we return to some semblance of normality, that messaging about the virus is clear. The COVID-19 pandemic has posed significant challenges to patient communities, and Active Citizenship Network, in continuity with its [commitment to fighting COVID-19](#), is committed to helping find solutions to these challenges. In particular, continuing to bring attention to the issue and ensure COVID patients do not continue to experience the neglect and abandonment that non-COVID patients experienced during the pandemic, Active Citizenship Network has decided – through two different EU projects – to invest along 2023 in health literacy to better help mitigate the effects of COVID. Fostering opportunities for discussion allows leaders of civic organisations and Patient Advocacy Groups (PAGs) to better share their needs, concerns, and best practices in the prevention, management, treatment, and follow-up of COVID-19. This will enable us to improve the current situation of care for patients with this disease. Health literacy thus becomes a very powerful tool for individual and public health assurance that allows us to understand that health is a public good to be preserved through individual preventive actions that become even more effective the more we follow them.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us how much damage an uninformed citizen and patient - who perpetrates unhealthy health-related behaviour - can cause and how much, on the other hand, an informed and educated citizen and patient can make a difference not only to his or her health but to public health in general. As declared by [experts](#), the COVID-19 infodemic (an excessive amount of information about a problem that is typically unreliable, spreads rapidly, and makes a solution more difficult to achieve) showed that low health literacy of a population is a globally underestimated public health problem. For example, in Europe, nearly half of the adults reported having problems with health literacy and lacked relevant skills to take care of their health and the health of others. Two new projects "[Improving health literacy for better public and patient](#)

[involvement in mitigating COVID-19 pandemic using interactive and intuitive educational tools](#)” & [“Protecting the value of access to care during - and after - the COVID-19 pandemic across Europe: focus on antivirals”](#) – tailored to representatives of Patients Advocacy Groups (PAGs) & civic associations coming from the EU - will allow to provide a common set of updated information, to share information, to identify lessons learned but also to get feedback from PAGs. Read our recent article: [“Improving health literacy in mitigating COVID”](#).

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 led by EU Commission 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.



In this context, between the second half of 2021 and 2022 ACN carried out the European project “Therapeutic adherence during the COVID-19 pandemic across Europe: impact, experiences and perspectives from PAGs & relevant stakeholders” ([Edition 2021](#) – [Edition 2022](#)) which led to a European survey, realised with the direct involvement of 38 PAGs across Europe, and the publication of the article: *Encouraging Across Europe the Civic & Patient Advocacy Groups’ Engagement in The*

Implementation of National Resilience and Recovery Plans to Reduce the Burden of Covid-19 Pandemic on NCDs Patients’ Therapeutic Adherence.



To continue its commitment to the topic, in 2023 ACN intends to realise a European webinar, addressed to leaders of patient associations, experts and representatives of professional groups and academia, institutions and industry representatives, to present the results of the research carried out

during the project and promote an EU policy dialogue on therapeutic adherence, with the aim to better contribute – starting from citizens’ and patients’ perspective - on understanding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the therapeutic plans for chronic patients, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the actions and reactions implemented by PAGs and relevant stakeholders in front of the community of experts and institutions.

The above-mentioned 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 both at the national and European level.

ONCOLOGY

Trends in Medicine

Short Communication

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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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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](#).

EUROPEAN HEALTH DATA SPACE & CLINICAL TRIALS DATA

Cittadinanzattiva-Active Citizenship Network 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 change the role of patients in the strategy and design of clinical trials (with many new rights and responsibilities). It is a project funded



Let's FACILITATE

To Facilitate Access to Clinical Trial Data and to Manage Its Reuse

27 January 2023, 4-5 pm CEST

[Register now](#)

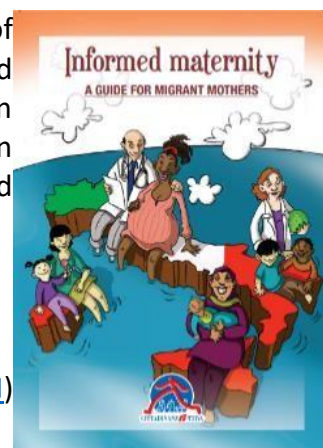


under the Innovative Medicines Initiative, a public-private partnership that funds research and medical innovation with the European Horizon 2020 program and the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries (EFPIA). Cittadinanzattiva in particular is responsible for the interaction and involvement 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. [Read more.](#)

A “BRIDGE” BETWEEN THE NATIONAL AND THE EUROPEAN DIMENSION

The following policies and areas of interest on health & protection of citizens’ rights, 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 initiatives in line with activities that Cittadinanzattiva has carried out at national level since many years on the following topics:

- Towards the “pharmacies of services’ ([EN](#) – [IT](#))
- Maternity & natality protection ([EN](#) – [IT](#))
- Health Technology Assessment ([EN](#) – [IT](#))
- Healthcare & Public services' civic evaluation at the national level ([EN](#))
- Immigration policies at the national level ([IT](#))
- Alternative Dispute Resolution ([EN](#) - [IT](#))



4 - 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". Here you can find our commitment in the context of the Agenda 2030.



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 (2016-2019), the initiative is coherent with our commitment on [circular economy](#), [responsible consumption](#), [fight against waste](#), [water](#), [environment](#), [air pollution & health](#), our support and active 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.

In particular, here you can find more details about our commitment on:

- Energy policies at the national & at the EU level ([EN – IT](#))
- Climate change at the national & at the EU level ([EN – IT](#))
- Sustainable mobility & public transportation: at the national & at the EU level ([EN – IT](#))



For 2023-2024, 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”.
- A policy dialogue initiative at the EU Parliament to better explore the energy crisis from the citizen perspective & promoting nudging approaches, as well a more relevant role of energy communities and purchasing groups in combatting the energy crisis. Read our recent articles: [“How can we ensure citizens are safeguarded from rising energy prices?”](#), and [“European Citizens Energy Forum: Understanding energy consumers’ behaviour to design nudging interventions”](#).





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

5 - SUPPORT TO THE EU INSTITUTIONAL ACTIVITIES TO RAISE CITIZENS’ AWARENESS OF EU POLICIES


ACN is committed to supporting 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. Here you can find the list of the ongoing EU projects funded by public resources.

PROJECT FUNDED BY PUBLIC RESOURCES

Programme and Project Titles	Project Descriptions
  <p>Funded by the European Union</p>	<p>2022/2025 BIORECER - Biological Resources Certifications Schemes</p> <p>The project BIORECER aims at assessing and complementing current certification schemes for biological resources according to the new EU sustainability goals to enhance bio-based circular systems. This will be achieved by including new criteria into guidelines for certifying biological resources’ sustainability, origin, tracking and traceability, and by ensuring applicability at EU and global scale. By promoting the sustainability and trade of biological resources, BIORECER will increase the added value, use, as well as social acceptance of bio-based products. In BIORECER, Cittadinanzattiva-ACN will work in WP4 and WP8, mainly dedicated to communication and dissemination and consumers’ involvement. Read more.</p>

  <p>Horizon 2020 European Union Funding for Research & Innovation</p>	<p>2022/2026 PROPHET - PeRsOnalized Prevention roadmap for the future HEAlThcare</p> <p>The project PROPHET aims to develop a Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) for Personalized Prevention, in order to support the implementation of innovative, sustainable and effective personalized programmes to prevent common chronic diseases. PROPHET will be centred around stakeholder engagement and the SRIA co-creation process. Cittadinanzattiva-ACN is particularly involved in raising awareness among citizens and patients on the potential of Personalized Prevention, specifically on the quality of life and health outcomes improvement, and the possibility of engaging them to define personalized preventive services accepted and used by the public. Read more</p>
  <p>Horizon 2020 European Union Funding for Research & Innovation</p>  	<p>2021/2025 FACILITATE - Framework for Clinical Trial Participants' Data Reutilization for a Fully Transparent and Ethical Ecosystem</p> <p>The project FACILITATE aims to develop an ethical, legal and regulatory framework that allows the return of clinical trial data to trial participants and other health professionals involved in their care, it also wants to create a process that allows the data collected to be reused also in future research.</p> <p>Cittadinanzattiva-ACN is responsible for the interaction and involvement of stakeholders: patients and their associations, healthcare professionals, pharmaceutical companies, European and national institutions, civic advocacy communities, etc. We also actively participate in communication, including digital, and dissemination activities. Read more.</p>
 <p>NIGHTINGALE</p>  <p>Horizon 2020 European Union Funding for Research & Innovation</p>	<p>2021/2024 NIGHTINGALE - Novel InteGrated toolkit for enhanced pre-Hospital life support and Triage In ChallenGing And Large Emergencies</p> <p>The project NIGHTINGALE is committed to develop and validate an innovative set of integrated tools for the response to large Medical Emergencies. The goal is to ensure a substantial improvement to pre-hospital life support and triage. Cittadinanzattiva-ACN is playing an active part of the project bringing a civic perspective, ensuring that the solutions developed meet the needs of citizens and enhance their skills. Read more.</p>

 <p>ACTION FOR HEALTH AND EQUITY ADDRESSING MEDICAL DESERTS</p>  <p>Co-funded by the Health Programme of the European Union</p>	<p>2021/2023 AHEAD - Action for Health and Equity: Addressing medical Deserts</p> <p>The Project AHEAD addresses the challenge of medical deserts and medical desertification in Europe in an effort to help reduce health inequalities. The main objective 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 healthworkforce field that specifically aim to counteract medical deserts and/or prevent medical deserts. Cittadinanzattiva-ACN is the leader of WP6, which is about the Policy Dialogue at the national and EU level to ensure a joint reflection on practical, feasible, and acceptable policy measures to prevent and counteract medical deserts among national and European key stakeholders and relevant decision-makers. Read more.</p>
 <p>Nudging consumers towards energy efficiency through behavioural science</p>  <p>Horizon 2020 European Union Funding for Research & Innovation</p>	<p>2020/2023 NUDGE - NUDging consumers towards energy Efficiency through behavioral science</p> <p>The project NUDGE aims to implement behavioural interventions for long-lasting energy efficiency behaviour changes, paving the way to the generalised use of such interventions as a worthy addition to policy making. Through NUDGE, Cittadinanzattiva-ACN aims to contribute to the implementation of an end-to-end approach and to achieve the adoption of behaviourally tested policy interventions at local, regional, national, and EU levels. More specifically, the main tasks to which Cittadinanzattiva-ACN will contribute include: the collection and analysis of survey-type data about a large set of consumers throughout Europe; the organization of dissemination events. Read more.</p>
 <p>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>2020/2023 ENGAGE - Engage Society for Risk Awareness and Resilience</p> <p>The project ENGAGE 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. Cittadinanzattiva will facilitate the connection with citizens and civil society organizations, bringing their point of view and facilitating the connection with the various stakeholders, with the aim of making the tools and solutions produced representative of the needs and possibilities of use of the citizens themselves. Read more.</p>

 	<p>2022/2024 BLISS - Boosting health Literacy for School Students</p> <p>The 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, analyze, and understand the news about health. 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. Cittadinanzattiva is playing an active part of the project bringing a civic perspective, ensuring the engagement of school at the national level (Italy). Read more.</p>
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PARTICIPATION IN INITIATIVES SUPPORTED BY EU INSTITUTIONS

<p>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. To know more about commitment, please click here.</p>	
<p>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. Our role is to support communication initiatives at the national level that focus on participation/democracy/civic engagement on the topic, for instance, in the framework of the annual celebration of the "Festival della Partecipazione", co-organized in Italy every year by Cittadinanzattiva.</p>	

<p>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.</p>	
<p>As a Board member of the European Movement in Italy, we are committed to the development of the follow-up 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 2023, is interested in its follow-up.</p>	
<p>Since 2010, Cittadinanzattiva-Active Citizenship Network is official member of “Health Policy Forum”, later called “Health Policy Platform”, the EU platform dealing with health and patients’ rights led by the EU Commission-DG Health and Food Safety.</p>	

To know more about our support to European Institutions initiatives, [click here](#). In our website you can also find our involvement in [institutional](#) and [not institutional](#) working groups promoted at the national or European level who have asked Cittadinanzattiva/ACN to participate.

6 - MEDIA



For 2023-2024, Active Citizenship Network aims at strengthening even more its already consolidated media activity through:

- A totally renewed [website](#), online since the end of 2022.
- The promotion of media partnership. [Here](#) you can find the list of our media partners.
- Our social media channels: [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Youtube](#).
- 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. From 2021 to date, ACN has published more than 25 publications in more than 10 different peer-reviewed journals. To have a look at them, [click here](#). Some examples:

ADITUM International Journal of Epidemiology and Public Health Research
Open Access Research Article

Encouraging Across Europe the Civic & Patient Advocacy Groups' Engagement in The Implementation of National Resilience and Recovery Plans to Reduce the Burden of Covid-19 Pandemic on Ncds Patients' Therapeutic Adherence

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Abstract:
In 2022, Active Citizenship Network (ACN) [1], together with organizations from 15 EU countries, established the European Charter of Patients' Rights [2]. Since then, the Charter has become a reference for establishing and strengthening EU citizens' rights in nations' healthcare, linking the adherence to therapy to several of the 14 fundamental patients' rights listed by the Charter: the right to access to care, the right to information, the right to preventive measures, the right to consent and the right to personalized treatment. Furthermore, the Charter has acted as a milestone for the drafting of the "European Charter on Adherence to Therapy" [3] in November 2016, recognizing not only the fundamental role of Europe and its Member States in

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COMMENTARY

Isolated but not alone: the response to the pandemic in the story of PAGs from the Italian case history to the Global Health Summit "Rome Declaration"

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Abstract: Struggling with practical problems such as the sudden cancellations of scheduled visits and exams and a sense of abandonment and uncertainty. This is how the "ordinary" patients lived the period of the health emergency in Italy. At the same time, civic and rights protection associations, since the beginning, have been active with a sense of responsibility, creativity, and energy, often revealing themselves to be the only point of reference and the only service available to citizens. This is the double side of the coin, in the implications of the pandemic on chronic and rare patients, which emerged from the XVIII National Report on Chronic Policies of Cittadinanzattiva, presented on October 13th, 2020, and entitled: "Isolated but not alone: the response to the pandemic in the story of Patients Advocacy Groups (PAGs)" [1]. The Report arose from the story of 34 Italian associations of patients with chronic and rare diseases who adhered to the National Coalition of Associations for Patients suffering Chronic Diseases (CoA-MC) [2] of Cittadinanzattiva [3]. This experience thanks to Active Citizenship Network [4] was first socialized on the occasion of the 15th European Patients' Rights Day held on May 5th & 6th, 2021 [5], and then brought to the attention of the leaders of the G20 and other states, gathered together with the heads of international and regional organizations on the occasion of the Global Health Summit held in Rome on May 21, 2021 [6].

Keywords: patients with chronic and rare diseases, Patients Advocacy Groups, Chronic Policies, Italy, European Union, civic participation, citizens' engagement, patients' rights

Geneft Clinical Cardiology Updates
Short Communication

Prevention and Care of Cardiovascular Diseases during the Covid-19 Pandemic: Will the National Resilience and Recovery Plans help in reducing its burden?

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ABSTRACT

The coronavirus pandemic has revealed a need to work together to build stronger health systems and protect physical and mental health worldwide. At the European level, patients with cancer and with chronic diseases were left behind, and this has had serious public health consequences, causing not only the deaths caused by Covid-19, but also the number of people who died prematurely because they did not have a chance to access the care that they needed. Evidence and data collected during the pandemic show that Covid-19 has had a significant impact on patients with cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) too. Even before the outbreak, the burden of CVDs was greater than that of any other

International Journal of Virology & Infectious Diseases

Research Article

Addressing the Challenges of COVID-19 Pandemic on the Routine Vaccinations across Europe: Focus on Flu Vaccination - 8

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7 - 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.

Active Citizenship Network's constituency is extremely broad, contemplating associations with which we have signed a formal Memorandum of Understanding, entities with which we have formalized an agreement limited to a specific initiative, thematic networks we promoted, etc. Also numerous are the formal and informal working groups and networks in which we are involved. To know an overview of the heterogeneous composition of the "N" of Active Citizenship Network, please click [here](#).

To know more about Cittadinanzattiva APS and its EU branch Active Citizenship Network, click [here](#).



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