

EN
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Answer given by Ms Kyriakides
on behalf of the European Commission
(20.11.2024)

The ‘Healthier Together’ EU non-communicable diseases (NCDs) initiative¹ is the main strategic framework to support Member States in preventing NCDs, including cardiovascular diseases (CVDs). It takes a holistic approach, focusing on health promotion and disease prevention, and addressing health determinants and inequalities.

EUR 53 million is available via the EU4Health programme for Member States to work together in the joint action JACARDI on CVDs and diabetes², and EUR 76 million supports the joint action PreventNCD on health determinants³.

The political guidelines presented by the President of the Commission call on the Commission to build on the work already started under Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan and to step up work on preventive health, to ensure a comprehensive approach to health promotion and disease prevention across the life course. This work includes addressing CVDs. It will be for the incoming Commission to decide on the most appropriate measures to take, taking into account the responsibilities of the Member States in such areas.

The Occupational safety and health Framework Directive⁴ states the duty of the employer to ensure the safety and health of workers⁵ and to take the necessary measures to that effect⁶. It sets minimum requirements that apply to all workers and sectors of activity⁷. Particularly sensitive risk groups must be protected against the dangers specifically affecting them.

The European Agency for Safety and Health at Work provides analyses, guidelines, and tools to support the protection of workers’ health. These include a paper on the link between psychosocial risks and CVDs⁸ and an overview under preparation of tools and good practice for the prevention and management of occupational circulatory diseases⁹.

¹ https://health.ec.europa.eu/document/download/d843d53e-c1c1-4664-b31e-febf618d011a_en?filename=eu-ncd-initiative_publication_en_0.pdf

² <https://jacardi.eu/>

³ <https://www.preventncd.eu/>

⁴ Council Directive 89/391/EEC of 12 June 1989 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers at work. OJ L 183, 29.6.1989, p. 1.

⁵ Article 5(1).

⁶ Article 6(1).

⁷ Article 2(2) of this Directive contains very limited exceptions as regards certain public service activities (such exceptions are to be interpreted restrictively, see case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union, for example, Case C-303/98, para 34-35, Case C-132/04, para 22-28 and C-742/19, para 56-71), but even in those situations, the safety and health of workers must be ensured as far as possible in the light of the objectives of this Directive.

⁸ https://osha.europa.eu/sites/default/files/Links-exposure-work-related-psychosocial-risks-at-work-and-cardiovascular-diseases_EN.pdf

⁹ <https://osha.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/20230105%20Final%20SPD%202024-2026-FINAL.pdf>