

Brussels, 26 September 2014

By post  
Annex: EHLA Manifesto

Jean-Claude Juncker,  
President-elect of the European Commission  
Cc: to European Commissioner-designate Andriukaitis

Dear President-elect,

First of all, on behalf of the European Healthy Lifestyle Alliance (EHLA) I would like to congratulate you on your nomination as incoming President of the European Commission.

We welcome your commitment to strengthen economic recovery and to build a Europe that delivers growth and jobs for its citizens. Your focus on competitiveness and a healthy economy deserves full support and we wish you lots of success – together with your designated team.

“Mens sana in corpora sano” is a Latin proverb you are surely acquainted with. Translating this to the priorities of our European Alliance: a healthy economy and healthy citizens go hand in hand. That health situation of millions of Europeans in the years to come, is precisely what worries EHLA most. Obesity will be THE epidemic of the 21<sup>st</sup> century if no integrated action is taken soon. Action that – to our opinion – requires a (pro-)active stance by all parties involved: the medical community, educational and public authorities; everyone is concerned.

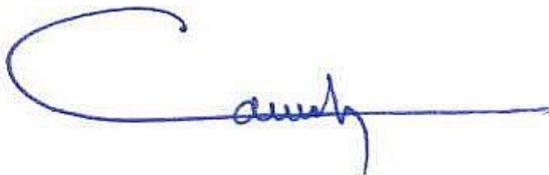
Today, more than half of European citizens are overweight or obese. The threat of this constantly growing figure goes way beyond national or individual health. Obesity has huge detrimental consequences for the European economy and society at large. Obesity represents currently 7% of public health spending and the impact on our budgets, pensions, insurances and health systems will be enormous and can undermine our common European future.

This brings me back to your priorities, President, in current communication and prioritization, our Alliance is concerned whether the theme of public health and especially the fight against obesity is sufficiently on the radar screen of the incoming Commission. Scientific research shows that policy-makers can play an extremely important role, for example through sharing of best practices, education campaigns on healthy nutrition, hydration with water and physical activity and a coordination role in cooperation with member states and all other stakeholders.

As EHLA, we have developed a set of recommendations both for policy-makers and citizens with actions that can be implemented tomorrow. If these actions are taken, lives can be saved and, together, we can make Europe a healthier and a financially more sustainable place.

We hope that you are willing to consider this in your policy priorities for the next five years and we are ready to support you with the scientific evidence required to make this a success.

Yours sincerely,



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