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**To the Representatives of the
“All Policies for a Healthy Europe” initiative
E-mail: communications@ap4he.eu**

Brussels, **23. 07. 2019**
ARES (2019)

Dear Representatives of the “All Policies for a Healthy Europe” initiative,

Thank you for your letter and the annexed manifesto to President Juncker, who has asked me to reply on his behalf.

Throughout my mandate, I have greatly valued the dialogue with the European health community and the significant contribution of local, national and European stakeholders to a healthier Europe. In your letter, you refer to health and wellbeing as a core value of the European Union. Indeed, promoting the well-being of Europeans is one of the key aims of the EU, enshrined in Article 3 of the EU Treaty. Also, Article 168 of the Treaty states that “a high level of human health protection shall be ensured in the definition and implementation of all Community policies and activities” and in that context, the EU has an important role to play in improving public health.

Integrated and coordinated approaches have been an essential aspect of the Commission under the leadership of President Juncker, putting a strong emphasis on cutting across policies and establishing synergies, where needed. Within the Health and Food Safety portfolio, I have worked closely with fellow Commissioners and other EU institutions, to enshrine health in all relevant EU initiatives.

A 'Health in all policies' approach is already a key tool in the European policies. We have taken this a step further in our efforts to support Member States with regard to achieving equitable health and accessible, high quality and sustainable public health institutions and medical services, health care and cure systems.

In the Steering Group on Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases, the EU Member States and relevant Commission services discuss joint challenges rising from the State of Health knowledge cycle, the European Semester as well as the European Pillar of Social Rights. Common challenges can then be addressed through concrete actions and transfer of evidence-based best practices across countries and regions. This kind of concrete work not only helps the Member States to tackle health problems where needed, but also allows for an improved coordination of using EU funds and programmes. The Steering Group also has a pivotal role in exploring the health policy perspective of other policies and support mechanisms.

The Steering Group's efforts are complemented by online resources. DG SANTE's 'Best practice portal' presents practices collected under Health Programme's co-funded actions. The Promotion and Prevention Knowledge Gateway hosted by the Joint Research Centre summarises the latest science on key health promotion and disease prevention issues. In order to facilitate and support dialogue among health stakeholders the Commission has also created the EU Health Policy Platform.

I see parallels between the various mechanisms we have put in place and the various suggestions you share in your letter as regards knowledge sharing, best practice implementation, dialogue, coordination and of course, maximising opportunities to advance health via all policies.

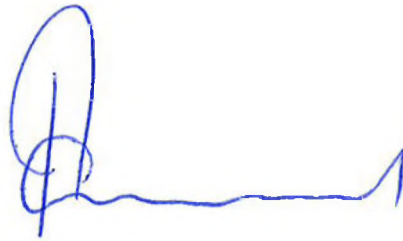
The Commission proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027 encompasses a number of Programmes (e.g. Horizon Europe, European Social Fund Plus, European Regional Development Fund, Digital Europe, Single Market Programme) which can contribute to supporting health.

Finally, in your letter you refer to the Finnish EU Presidency, notably to their focus on the economy of well-being. I agree this is a timely choice that will provide the Member States and the Commission with the opportunity to explore further synergies between health, social and economic

policy agendas. Given the record of accomplishment of the work of Finland in the field of health in all policies, I am looking forward to exploring new avenues.

I would like to thank you for your views and support for a strong role of health in the next Commission.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'P' followed by a long, horizontal, wavy line that ends in a small upward stroke.