



# Our commitment to the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals

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We, the European Respiratory Society (ERS), European Lung Foundation (ELF) and Lungs Europe (LE) pledge a commitment to the United Nation's (UN) Sustainable Development Goals – aligning our strategies and policies to complement the wider international agenda for environmental and social sustainability.

## Our organisations

ERS, ELF and LE are organisations which prioritise the improvement of respiratory health and healthcare. We have dedicated structures in place which focus on environment and health, promoting public health, raising public awareness, providing education and supporting scientific research in this field. Our activities and resources are available to many stakeholders, including policymakers, clinicians, scientists, patients and the public.

## The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals

The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests.

# 17 areas identified for global action by the United Nations



# How ERS, ELF and LE actively contribute in each area

Last reviewed October 2025

## We contribute to 1. NO POVERTY by:

### **Making health education accessible to all groups | Advocating for and supporting environmental initiatives | Supporting vulnerable groups**

- Educating children on health and environment (e.g. Healthy Lungs for Life for Schools and Healthy Lungs for Life for Kids).
- Maintaining free access to advocacy webinars, events and all materials.
- Making participation in activities affordable for all (free content, bursaries and financial support).
- Advocating for and supporting environmental initiatives of the EU and civil society (most of the world's poor live in rural areas and depend on natural resources).
- Supporting vulnerable groups in conflict zones (ERS and ELF activities on Ukrainian crisis).
- Supporting vulnerable groups, with a focus on TB, via the WHO mHealth project.

## We contribute to 2. ZERO HUNGER by:

### **Advocating for sustainable food crops (vs tobacco) | Encouraging climate smart and safe agriculture**

- Supporting World Health Organization (WHO) World No Tobacco Day campaigns (which have included a focus on growing sustainable food crops instead of tobacco).
- Collaborating with partners, such as Health and Environment Alliance, to encourage climate smart and safe agriculture.

## **Promoting Healthy Lungs for Life and other EU projects | Advocating for improvements in lung disease prevention (tobacco, air quality) | Caring for professional and patient psychosocial wellbeing**

- Healthy Lungs for Life campaign, which provides information on keeping lungs healthy for a lifetime.
- Advocating for higher standards in EU environmental legislation, specifically in the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive (AAQD), EU European Vehicle emissions standards (EURO7), and the National Emission Ceiling Directive (NECD).
- Support local initiatives for healthy urban living (for example C40 cities).
- Advocacy work related to the EU noncommunicable diseases (NCD) programme (“Healthier Together Initiative”).
- Advocacy work related to the EU environmental research agenda.
- Participating in EU projects to improve lung health (e.g., [LungHealth4Life](#)).
- Dedicated efforts to fight cancer (advocacy on the EU Cancer Recommendation, involvement in dedicated projects such as SOLACE and OPTIMA).
- Engagement in FRESHAIR4LIFE project to promote healthy lifestyle to youth and prevent NCDs.
- Being a part of research projects to tackle global epidemics and crisis preparedness, such as the ERS Clinical Research Collaboration [PANTHER](#).
- Creating healthy working conditions and incentives for employees and wider Organisational networks (members, patients, activities around Congress etc.) to support well-being initiatives (mental health, physical health, safe work environments).
- Organising events to raise awareness on healthy lungs, public health etc. with the MEP Lung Health Group.
- Providing expert support and input to EU institutions on health policies (stakeholder meetings, consultations, etc.).
- Sessions on the ERS Respiratory Channel and at the ERS International Congress on burn out and time management.
- ERS publications publish articles on a wide range of topics, including TB, communicable diseases, air pollution, inequalities in healthcare, vaccines, tobacco control, management of global health risks, etc.

## Providing many and varied educational opportunities for all stakeholders

- ERS International Congress held annually – the largest lung health conference in the world with online, onsite and hybrid access to the programme.
- Skills, knowledge and soft skills courses and training programmes for healthcare professionals (HCPs).
- Conferences and Congress programmes for HCPs best practice.
- Asynchronous respiratory educational content produced and disseminated.
- Continued medical education (CME) points for continuing professional development.
- HERMES programme and exam for adult/paediatric respiratory medicine - made accessible in and outside of Europe in English and Spanish. Other languages are under consideration.
- Healthy Lungs for Life for schools – educating school children about the importance of lung health.
- LungHealth4Life – an EU4Health-funded project that brings together lung function testing, health promotion and disease prevention in schools.
- Production of evidence-based patient information for people living with lung conditions.
- Educating professionals about the needs of patients
- Conferences for people living with lung conditions.
- European Patient Ambassador Programme (EPAP) – preparing patients to get more involved in healthcare.
- Continuous staff training opportunities.
- "Translating" advocacy and policy priorities to relevant activities for health professionals and vice versa "translating" medical/scientific evidence to policy priorities for policymakers.
- Making project and research outcomes accessible - disseminating to all groups of stakeholders via events and materials.
- Industry partners provide education on lung health and therapy on our independent platforms.
- Delivering education to a global audience and supporting knowledge sharing and interaction on a virtual platform via ERS Satellites - free of charge.
- Other language sessions made available at the ERS International Congress.
- Translating congress sessions, educational and scientific live programmes in up to 60 languages online.

## Auditing our activities to ensure diversity and inclusion | Championing unrepresented groups

- Diversity plan in place which covers gender with an objective of 50:50 faculty in programmes.
- Work on visibility of women with COPD, including art contest and publications.
- Presenting ERS gender equality plans and programmes at international events.
- Publishing articles on gender equality in medical associations.
- Advocacy statement of the European Respiratory Society on women and respiratory diseases.
- SOLACE EU project: special outreach to women with lung cancer.
- Women in leadership sessions.
- Publications on women in respiratory health.
- Awards programme: ensure recognition of women, introduction of career break considerations.
- Other programmes Diversity Equality and Inclusion Policy (DEI) policies, communication and promotion.
- No tolerance policy for sexist behaviour.
- ERS publications aim to have more representative editorial boards.
- Active implementation of gender and race information in the manuscript submission systems to allow tracking of progress and trends.

## Advocating for change | Taking practical actions

- Advocacy efforts on EU Green Deal.
- Activities through Tobacco Control Committee (TCC) and Environment and Health Committee (EHC) on plastic pollution, pesticides etc.
- Provision of free tap water at our events.

## Explaining the link between clean energy and lung health | Optimising our own use of energy

- Healthy Lungs for Life – #breathecleanair and #fightclimatechange.
- Advocating for higher standards in the EU Ambient Air Quality Directive (AAQD).
- Advocating for higher standards in the EU European Vehicle emissions standards (EURO7).
- Optimising the use of energy at all offices (lighting, insulation, heating system and solar panel improvements).
- Working with partners such as Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL) and European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) to ensure good implementation of policies on clean energy.

## Raising awareness of the importance of lung health in the workplace | Providing a safe and fair place of employment

- Contributing to the economy as a fair employer.
- Healthy Lungs for Life for companies.
- ELF Occupational lungs tool – protecting lung health in the workplace.
- Advocacy work on occupational risk factors (EU consultations, events).
- ERS staff vaccination campaign supporting wellbeing amongst our employees.
- Smoking cessation support for ERS employees.

## Supporting innovation and green practice

- ELF Occupational lungs tool – protecting lung health in the workplace.
- Supporting and advocating for greener modern technology and approaches in the field of respiratory care and healthcare overall.
- “Green” patient as the core of pharma and MedTech.
- Supporting precision medicine and other advances in the field.

## Highlighting and addressing inequality in lung health | Facilitating access for all

- Diversity plan in place which covers inequalities.
- Leading the International Respiratory Coalition (IRC) – which seeks to address inequalities in national respiratory plans.
- SOLACE: will produce guidelines on lung cancer screening for hard-to-reach populations with involvement of those individuals.
- Contributing to the development of major EU legislation, such as European Health Data Space, EU Pharmaceutical Strategy, Orphan Medicines and Paediatric Medicines Regulation, that have great potential to improve equal access to care across the EU.
- Continuing to address risk factors of disease development, such as air quality, climate change, tobacco etc. via advocacy work.
- Fighting stigma around many health conditions and diseases, such as TB.
- Providing remote participation and online access to educational events and materials.
- Creating awareness by working on joint programs with partner organisations.
- Bursaries and travel grants for events and activities.
- Equality beyond gender in programmes.
- Joint sessions with national societies.
- Endorsement of national events.
- Exchange of experts in programmes among national societies.
- Supporting lower income countries to attend ERS Congress and other events.
- Socially Developing Countries (SDC) programmes for fellowships.
- SDC programme for scientific awards.
- Minimizing nepotism/corruption/bias via a robust code of conduct.
- Healthy Lungs for Life for Schools – plans to roll out across Europe with a future focus of marginalised groups such as Roma peoples and groups in deprived localities.
- Building event programmes to complete the translational pathway to implementation and population health.

## Partnering with local cities to promote lung health

- Healthy Lungs for Life – action in Congress cities (free lung function testing, partnerships with local organisations).
- Healthy Lungs for Life - grants for communities globally to do free lung function testing and other lung health promoting events.
- Calling for industry defossilisation, green electricity, circular business models and recycling together with partner environmental organisations.
- Partnering with Eurostar to promote train travel for congress delegates.
- Offering free bike rentals for train travellers attending the ERS Congress.

## Championing the concept of sustainable respiratory care | Making an active commitment to reducing our carbon footprint

- “Green” patient activities – working to make healthcare more sustainable for people living with lung conditions.
- Responsible events and office policies.
- Commitment to carbon calculation and offset.
- Reduced carbon footprint enforced on industry exhibition.
- Implementing office waste-sorting/recycling, plus waste management training.
- Increasing vegetarian catering to 50% during our Congress

## Supporting science and discussion around climate change | Raising awareness of the link between climate change and lung health | Taking practical action on reducing carbon footprint

- All the materials around Healthy Lungs for Life climate change – infographics, webpage, ELF award, patient voice.
- ERS Climate Change and Respiratory Health statement.
- Contribute to reforestation campaigns (Congress city or location of the office).
- Recycling efforts (Congress city and event/office policies).
- Sessions on climate, environment, sustainability on Respiratory channel and during the ERS Congress.
- Paper free / recycling paper policy .
- Carbon footprint compensation for travel.
- ERS publications publish articles on air pollution and climate change, which target respiratory clinicians but also policymakers.
- Raising awareness around sustainable choices (booth at Congress).

## (Cont'd) We contribute to 13. CLIMATE ACTION by:

- Completing the ERS Headquarters carbon-footprint assessment with myclimate, supported by Swiss local authorities.
- Establishing Eco-Teams across all offices to drive staff engagement, internal awareness and coordinated emission-reduction actions.
- Awarded the Engaged for Impact label by the climate protection foundation myclimate for the period 2024/25, recognising that ERS has calculated emissions from its three offices and compensated them through certified climate-protection projects.

## We contribute to 14. LIFE BELOW WATER by:

### Advocating for change

- Advocacy efforts on EU Green Deal.
- Activities through TCC and EHC on plastic pollution, pesticides etc.

## We contribute to 15. LIFE ON LAND by:

### Undertaking carbon offsetting activities

- Providing funds for projects looking at forest conservation/efficient cook stoves.
- Contributing to reforestation through tree planting to offset carbon emissions.
- Tackling AMR affecting humans and animals (raising awareness, expert support to EU, project research and CRC, organising events).

## We contribute to 16. PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS by:

### Being a trusted partner for the EU and other institutions |

### Having strong ethics at our core

- ELF Occupational lungs tool – protecting lung health in the workplace.
- Work supporting advocacy at the Brussels level on lung health.
- Contributing to MEP Lung Health group.
- Engagement as stakeholder to EU expert and public consultations.
- Advocating for and exercising transparency and accountability at all levels (as department, organisation and up to EU level).

## (Cont'd) We contribute to 16. PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS by:

- Establishing and ensuring responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.
- Focus on involving developing countries in decision-making and all processes.
- ERS Ethics committee and ethics committees on projects.
- Regular review and revision of staff policy and values, education of staff.
- Regular review and revision of the DEI policy, regular update, dedicated responsibility.

## We contribute to 17. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS by:

### **Having all our stakeholders and partners share our vision and drive our activities | Partnering with organisations to help us improve our environmental impact**

- ERS Conference of Respiratory Societies (CERS).
- ERS groups and assemblies.
- Forum of International Respiratory Societies (FIRS).
- ELF patient organisation network, Patient Advisory Committee (PAC) and Patient Advisory Groups (PAGs).
- Multistakeholder engagement in the International Respiratory Coalition (IRC).
- Member of Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL).
- Member of International Association of Patient organisations (IAPO).
- Member of Biomed.
- Member of European Chronic Disease Alliance (ECDA).
- Member of European Public Health Alliance (EPHA).
- World Health Organization (WHO) collaboration.
- European Board for Accreditation in Pneumology (EBAP).
- Transport and Environment collaboration.
- Partnership with tobacco control community: European Network for Smoking Prevention (ENSP), Smoke Free Partnership (SFP).
- European Medicines Agency (EMA) collaborations.
- MEP Lung Health Group and European Lung Health Group.
- Stakeholder in EC DG HERA (Health Emergency Preparedness and Response).
- Stakeholder in various European Commission health initiatives (e.g. NCD Initiative).
- Audit of ERS emissions by third party organisation myclimate.
- Partnering with Forestami, an organisation contributing to reforestation projects.

## Cont'd We contribute to 17. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS by:

- Participating in an international working group under the Net Zero Carbon Events (NZCE) Pledge, contributing to the development of a shared roadmap to guide event organisers in achieving net zero emissions.
- Contributing actively to the AC Forum Sustainability Working Group, exchanging best practices and aligning sustainability strategies with other international scientific and medical associations.