



Health Action International (HAI) Europe

HAI Europe aims to achieve universal and equitable access to affordable essential medicines of assured quality and to ensure that those medicines are used rationally.

We work towards this goal through research, policy analysis and information sharing, and by advocating for citizen-centred health policies to counter corporate interests and potential government endorsement of those interests.

What is HAI Europe?

HAI Europe is a non-profit, independent network of consumer groups, public interest NGOs, healthcare providers, academics, and individuals working on pharmaceutical policy issues in Europe. The HAI Europe office coordinates actions with, and on behalf of, its members.

Following the World Health Assembly in May 1981, NGOs from 26 countries came together and established a network of world experts in medicines policy—Health Action International (HAI)—to counteract the increasing influence of the pharmaceutical industry on public health issues and to represent the interests of consumers in healthcare policy debates.

The HAI Network

HAI Europe, located in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, is part of a larger global network with three other regional offices in Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America & Caribbean, and a Global office and Secretariat, also based in Amsterdam.

What does HAI Europe work on?

HAI monitors and advocates on policies in Europe that affect medicines on three thematic priorities: **Access to Essential Medicines**, the **Rational Use of Medicines**, and the **Democratic Governance of Medicines Policy**.

How we work

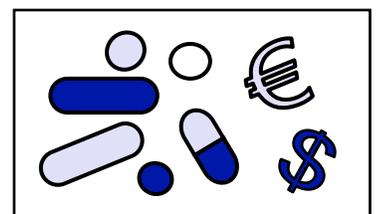
HAI Europe employs a variety of evidence-based advocacy tools to influence policy-making that affects medicines. We **research and analyse** policy and governance structures; producing technical reports, briefing papers, factsheets, and press materials. We host **public events and seminars** to raise awareness about medicines policy issues and we contribute to public debate by providing policy recommendations and expertise on the public health and economic impacts of policy. HAI Europe engages with civil society partners throughout our network and beyond, forming **issue-based coalitions** to strengthen and multiply the voices of citizen-stakeholders.

ACCESS TO MEDICINES

HAI advocates for access to essential treatments that satisfy the priority health care needs of a population. We monitor European Union (EU) trade agreements and negotiations, highlighting inconsistencies between EU commitments on development, and external trade policies that could damage public health in developing countries. We work with civil society partners across the world to prevent policies that harm access for some of the world's poorest citizens.

Today, pharmaceutical research and development is largely driven by monopoly incentives, which are not always aligned with public health priorities. As part of our goal to improve access to medicines, HAI campaigns for alternative models for medical innovation to address real therapeutic needs, and neglected and rare diseases.

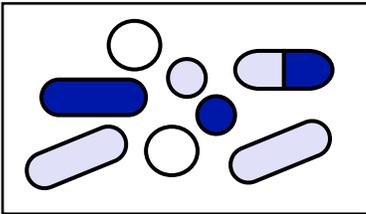
HAI Europe raises awareness amongst policymakers and the public about the importance of competition from generic medicines in promoting access to affordable treatment. Generic medicines can cost significantly less than branded medicines, which has an impact on the affordability of medicines for citizens, health insurers, and state health budgets. We monitor EU trade policies to make sure that competition from generic medicines is not inhibited.



Prescription medicines treat conditions that require the expertise and supervision of qualified healthcare professionals. Decisions about the most appropriate course of treatment should always be based on the most objective information and not the most effective promotion. HAI Europe is committed to ensuring that information about prescription medicines comes from independent sources and not from commercial entities.

RATIONAL USE OF MEDICINES

We monitor the regulations that prohibit advertising and that govern medicines information in order to prevent promotional messages about prescription medicines. We also work on medicines safety, and we believe that medicines that cause serious adverse drug reactions (ADRs) should be re-evaluated or removed from the market to protect patients.



Each patient is a unique medicines user with distinctive characteristics and lifestyle. As medicines are tested on a relatively small number of people before they are approved for use by the wider population, previously undetected reactions can emerge. HAI Europe promotes greater patient involvement in the reporting of ADRs so that harmful or ineffective medicines are identified more quickly, thereby reducing the threat to public health.

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE OF MEDICINES POLICY

As medicines are the most common health intervention, HAI Europe firmly believes that citizens should have the right and the opportunity to participate in decisions that will affect their health and well-being. Our exclusive focus on policy analysis provides us with a unique perspective amongst European health stakeholders. HAI Europe's campaigns aim to ensure that EU policies and decision-making align with wider public health and societal interests.

We advocate for the highest levels of transparency and participation in all decision-making processes in order to advance this goal. HAI monitors levels of commercially-funded representatives involved in EU policymaking to prevent commercial interests from overriding the interests of public health.

HAI Europe also represents the public health perspective on medicines issues by participating in formal consultations at the national, EU, and global levels; through membership in high-level EU platforms; and by supporting the participation of independent citizen voices in policy debates.



Membership of HAI Europe

The HAI Europe network is comprised of impartial experts, committed to promoting interest-free decision-making in medicines policy debates. The growing European regional network is represented in over half of European Union Members States. For information on becoming a HAI Europe member, please contact our office.

The Health Action International (HAI) Europe office is located at:

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Citizen-centred health policy is at the core of HAI's values and so, HAI Europe has a strict organisational policy not to accept funds or support from the pharmaceutical industry or any other commercial interests that could impact on HAI's work.

We welcome membership from a diverse range of health stakeholders. However, all members must regularly submit a conflicts of interest declaration. For more information, please contact the HAI Europe office.