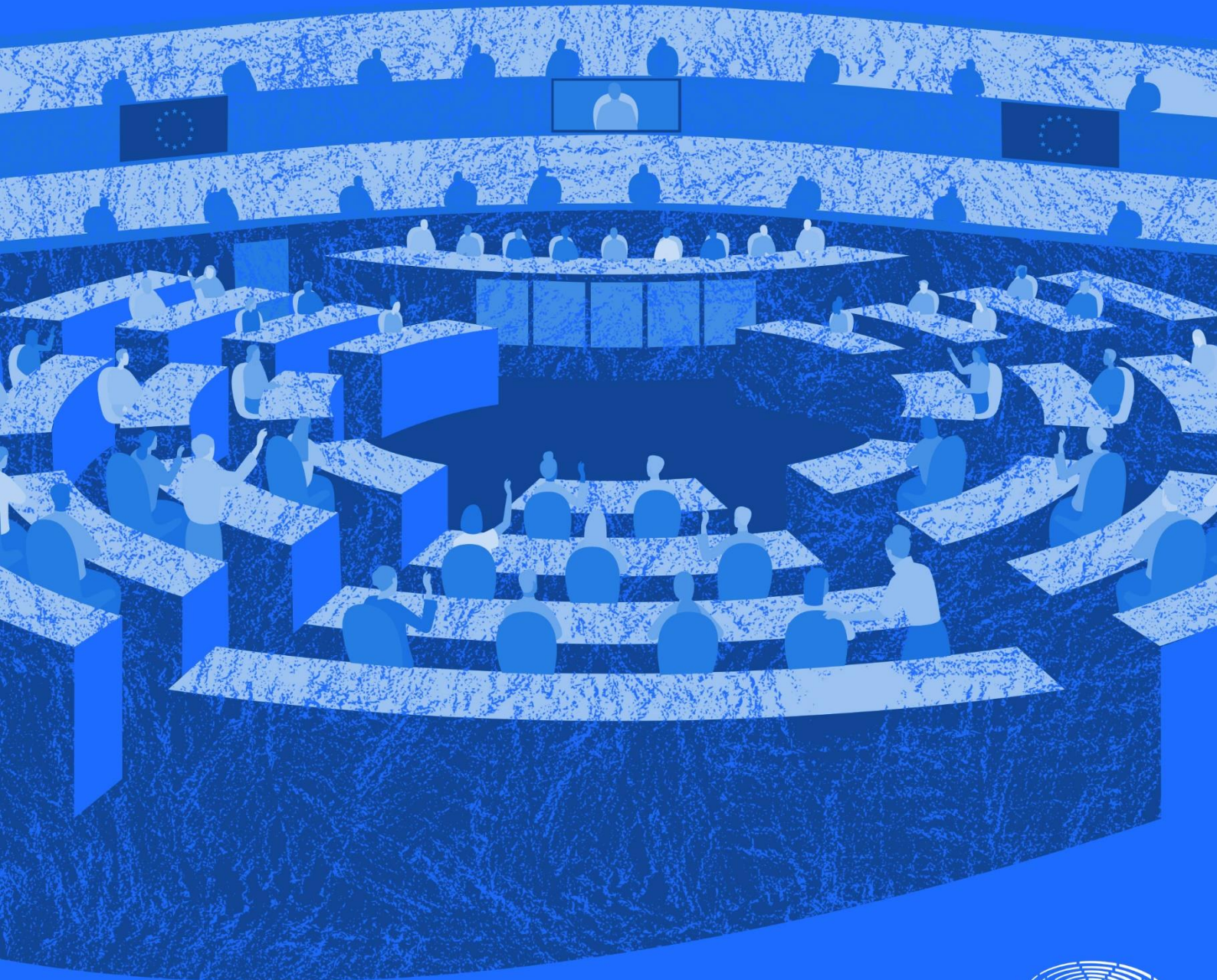


# ACTIVITY REPORT

2023\* – 2024

# SANT

Subcommittee on Public Health



\* The SANT Subcommittee was set up on 23 March 2023

## LINGUISTIC VERSIONS

This publication is available in English only.

## ABOUT THE PUBLISHER

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# Activity Report 2023–2024

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## Foreword by the outgoing Chair



The last five years have seen a significant increase in both health awareness by European citizens and their expectations regarding the role of the European Union in public health policy. When the Covid-19 pandemic started in 2020, actions taken by the European Union were crucial in the protection of EU citizens and in supporting Member States in their difficult fight against coronavirus. It was a breakthrough time for establishing the European Union's role in providing health services to its citizens.

The European Parliament decided that health matters require a dedicated parliamentary body. In 2020, Parliament set up the Special Committee on Beating Cancer

(BECA) followed in 2022 by the the Special Committee on the COVID-19 pandemic: lessons learned and recommendations for the future (COVI). Finally, in 2023, Parliament decided it was the time for a standing Subcommittee on Public Health (SANT) with broad competences in the field of public health.

The SANT Subcommittee deals with public health matters, particularly the programmes and specific actions in the field of public health, pharmaceutical and cosmetic products and the health aspects of bioterrorism. It has also a supervisory role of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). During the 9<sup>th</sup> parliamentary term, the Subcommittee had 30 full and 30 substitute Members.

I would like to thank all Members for their contributions to the Subcommittee. In particular, I would like to honour Véronique Trillet Lenoir and Michèle Rivasi who actively contributed to the early works of the Subcommittee before unfortunately passing away during the term.

I invite you to read this report summarising the work of the SANT Subcommittee during its first year of existence.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adam Jarubas". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Adam Jarubas

## Committee mandate

The Subcommittee on Public Health ([SANT](#)) was created by the European Parliament decision of 14 February 2023 on setting up a subcommittee on public health ([2023/2565\(RSO\)](#))<sup>1</sup> to the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety ([ENVI](#)). This decision also defines the competences and responsibilities of the SANT Subcommittee:

'[...] the subcommittee shall be responsible for public health matters, and particularly the programmes and specific actions in the field of public health, pharmaceutical and cosmetic products, health aspects of bioterrorism, the European Medicines Agency and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.'

While the ENVI Committee remains responsible for legislative proposals from the Commission, SANT plays the role of agenda setter by preparing own-initiative reports, commissioning studies, organising missions, public hearings and exchanges of views in order to examine, assess, reflect on and address emerging issues in the field of public health.

## EU public health context

The responsibility for organising and delivering health services and medical care lies with the Member States. The EU public health policy therefore serves to complement national policies, to ensure health protection in all EU policies and to forward a stronger Health Union.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the fragility of the national health systems and the need for coordination of national efforts to protect the health of EU citizens. For this reason, European Commission has made the creation of the European Health Union one of its priorities.

The EU can adopt legislative measures regarding public health under the [Article 168](#) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). This legislation can also be based on the Article 114 (single market) and the Article 153 (social policy) of the TFEU.

The EU health-related legislation can address:

- Patients' rights in cross-border healthcare;
- Pharmaceuticals and medical devices (pharmacovigilance, falsified medicines, clinical trials);
- Health security and infectious diseases;

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<sup>1</sup> European Parliament decision of 14 February 2023 on setting up a subcommittee on public health (2023/2565(RSO)) [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0031\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0031_EN.html)

- Digital health and care;
- Tobacco;
- Organs, blood, tissues and cells.

The main EU financial instrument for supporting public health policies is the EU4Health programme. It provides funding to improve health in the EU, tackle cross-border health threats, improve the availability and affordability of medicinal products, medical devices and crisis-relevant products and increase health systems' resilience. The EU4Health programme has been adopted as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to reinforce crisis preparedness in the EU.

During the term, the European Parliament increased its efforts to protect the health of EU citizens. In June 2020, Parliament set up the Special Committee on Beating Cancer ([BECA](#)). After 15 months of work and an unprecedented consultation process through a series of public hearings and exchanges between Members, national parliaments, international organisations and experts, Parliament adopted its Resolution on strengthening Europe in the fight against cancer – towards a comprehensive and coordinated strategy ([2020/2267\(INI\)](#)), which focused on:

- Cancer prevention;
- Equal access to cancer care across borders; and
- A European approach addressing medicine shortages.

In March 2022, European Parliament set up a special committee on COVID-19 pandemic: lessons learned and recommendations for the future ([COVI](#)). It was tasked with looking into how the Union's response to the pandemic and the lessons learned can contribute to future action. The work focused on four key pillars:

- health;
- democracy and fundamental rights;
- societal and economic impact; and
- the EU and the World.

On 12 July 2023, European Parliament adopted its resolution on the COVID-19 pandemic: lessons learned and recommendations for the future ([2022/2076\(INI\)](#)) which calls for action in four thematic blocks stemming from its mandate, i.e. health, democracy and fundamental rights, social and economic impact, and EU and the world, and includes a series of final recommendations on prevention capacity, preparedness, resilience, and open strategic autonomy.

## Files of the Committee

### 1. Introduction

This Activity Report covers the period from the first meeting of the SANT Subcommittee on 23 March 2023 until its last meeting of the 9<sup>th</sup> parliamentary term, held on 20 March 2024.

The SANT Subcommittee was created by the European Parliament decision of 14 February 2023 on setting up a subcommittee on public health (2023/2565(RSO)).

In 2023-2024, the SANT Subcommittee held 17 meetings. It prepared three non-legislative reports, organised four hearings and 11 exchanges of views, followed six presentations of studies and research results and organised one mission.

Information about reports on commission proposals in the public health area can be found in the 2019-2024 [ENVI Activity Report](#).

### 2. SANT Reports

#### Own-initiative report (INI)

Title	Reference
<b>Mental health</b>	
SANT report on mental health followed the Communication from the Commission of 7 June 2023, presenting a comprehensive approach to mental health, setting out various initiatives to alleviate mental health stress and conditions in the EU. In its report, SANT Subcommittee welcomed this important initiative and provided recommendations for mental health promotion, prevention of mental health conditions and accessibility, early diagnosis, treatment, and integration of all individuals in a mental-health-in-all-policies approach.	<a href="#">2023/2074(INI)</a>
Members tabled 524 amendments to the draft report. The report was adopted by the ENVI Committee with 59 votes in favour, 6 against and 4 abstentions, and adopted in plenary in December 2023.	Rapporteur: Sara CERDAS (S&D)  Adopted in Committee: 07/11/2023  Adopted in plenary: 12/12/2023

## Own-initiative report (INI)

Title	Reference
<b>Non-communicable diseases</b>	
<p>The report on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) stresses the importance to identify and diagnose people in high risk of developing this kind of diseases. It also aims at strengthening incentives for investments in innovation with regards to development of technologies, medicines and healthcare practises, and new and better treatments of NCDs. Moreover, the report proposes actions to prevent premature deaths, improve quality of lives of citizens and ensure EU's competitiveness.</p> <p>Members tabled 836 amendments, with an additional 21 amendments tabled by the opinion giving committee (DEVE) under the Rule 56. The report was adopted by the ENVI Committee with 63 votes in favour, 2 against and 5 abstentions, and adopted in plenary in December 2023.</p>	<p><a href="#">2023/2075(INI)</a></p> <p>Rapporteur: Erik POULSEN (Renew)</p> <p>Adopted in Committee: 07/11/2023</p> <p>Adopted in plenary: 13/12/2023</p>

## Own-initiative report (INI)

Title	Reference
<b>Implementation report on Regulation (EC) No1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods</b>	
<p>The report on the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods (NHCR), addresses the issue of the list of health claims on botanicals, whose evaluation by the Commission has been suspended for ten years. Those botanicals with unsubstantiated claims, however, continue to be on the market on the basis of the transitional arrangements of NHCR. The report emphasises the importance of setting up nutrient profiles in order to meet the objective of NHCR. The Commission and the Member States are invited to help consumers to make informed choices about food products by swiftly adopting a mandatory and harmonised EU front-of-pack nutritional label. The report further emphasises the need to address the 'on-hold' list of claims on botanicals by further evaluating these claims as an urgently required measure for consumer protection. The Commission is also asked to update the NHCR to the online environment by drafting</p>	<p><a href="#">2023/2081(INI)</a></p> <p>Rapporteur: Tilly METZ (Greens/EFA)</p> <p>Adopted in Committee: 29/11/2023</p> <p>Adopted in plenary: 18/01/2024</p>



comprehensive guidelines for the enforcement of the NHCR online.	
Members tabled 136 amendments. The report was adopted by the ENVI Committee with 70 votes in favour, 8 against and 6 abstentions. The report was adopted in plenary in January 2024.	

## Fact finding and outreach activities

### 3. Missions

Title	Date
<b>Delegation to Washington DC (USA)</b>	30 October - 2 November 2023
<p>The delegation of the SANT Subcommittee was composed of four Members representing three political groups (EPP, S&amp;D and Renew Europe).</p> <p>The purpose of the delegation was to visit public authorities that are central to the US public health policies and that have served as models for the creation of different European Union agencies and bodies and other relevant actors within the area of public health. Members of the SANT delegation were informed about the competences of federal institutions responsible for public health policies, division of powers and competences, in the area of public health, between the Federal and States levels, most urgent issues for the public health in the US and in Americas in general. The SANT delegation focused on current topics on the agenda of the Subcommittee and how these questions are addressed by US institutions.</p>	

### 4. Public hearings

Title	Date
<b>Preventing non-communicable diseases</b>	1 June 2023
<p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prof. Fredrik Nyström, Linköping University;</li> <li>• Prof. João Filipe Raposo, IDF Europe Board Member, Medical Director of Portuguese Diabetes Association;</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Milka Sokolović, Director General, European Public Health Alliance.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Mental health of youth</b></p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marie Rosenkvist Jørgensen, Headspace, Denmark;</li> <li>• Louise De Meulenaer, European Federation Psychology Students' Associations (EFPSA);</li> <li>• Andrei Şelaru, influencer, Mental health activist;</li> <li>• Cassie Redlich, technical officer for mental health, Regional Office for Europe, World Health Organisation (WHO);</li> <li>• Vinciane Quidbach, EBC Public Health&amp;Policy, Research Project Manager at the European Brain Council (EBC).</li> </ul>	30 June 2023
<p><b>Medicine shortages</b></p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prof. Jerzy Sieńko, specialist in general surgery, oncology and clinical transplantology at Pomeranian Medical University;</li> <li>• Flemming Sonne, CEO of Amgros;</li> <li>• Dr. Illaria Passarani, Secretary General of the Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union;</li> <li>• Prof. Tomasz Byrski, head of the oncology and chemotherapy clinic of the Pomeranian Medical University;</li> <li>• Charlotte Roffiaen, patient advocate at France Assos Santé (FAS).</li> </ul>	13 July 2023
<p><b>Tackling access to and security of supply of critical medicines</b></p> <p>Participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laurent Muschel, acting Director General, HERA;</li> <li>• Nathalie Moll, Director General, European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA);</li> <li>• Adrian van den Hoven, Director General, Medicines for Europe;</li> <li>• Ancel·la Santos, Senior Health Policy Officer, Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs (BEUC);</li> <li>• Anca Toma, Executive Director, European Patients' Forum;</li> <li>• Jaume Vidal, Senior Policy Adviser, Health Action International (HAI);</li> </ul>	25 October 2023

- Sylvain Giraud, Head of Unit, DG SANTE D2 Medical Products.

## 5. Exchanges of views

Title	Date
Exchange of views with Stella Kyriakides, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety.	20 April 2023
Exchange of views with Emer Cooke, Executive Director of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and Pierre Delsaux, Director General for the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA).	24 April 2023
Exchange of views on 'EU action to combat antimicrobial resistance'.	11 May 2023
Exchange of views on 'Non-communicable diseases'.	11 May 2023
Exchange of views on 'Mental health'.	1 June 2023
Exchange of views with Robb Butler, Director of the Division of Communicable Diseases, Environment and Health, WHO Regional Office for Europe.	1 February 2024
Exchange of views with Stella Kyriakides, Commissioner for Health and Food Safety.	1 February 2024
Exchange of views on 'Tackling intra-EU brain drain in the health sector and health delivery in remote/rural areas' with Matthias Wismar, Programme Coordinator, European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies.	13 February 2024
Exchange of views to mark the Rare Disease Day with Yann le Cam, CEO of Eurordis and Danielle Drachmann, Executive Director of Ketotic Hypoglycemia International.	29 February 2024
Exchange of views on 'HERA activities – past and future' with Laurent Muschel, acting Director-General of HERA.	20 March 2024
Exchange of views on 'Addressing challenges to European multi-country collaboration models for rare diseases' with Prof Kjeld Schmiegelow (University of Copenhagen).	20 March 2024

## 6. Other presentation

Title	Date
Presentation of EPRS study on 'Increasing European added value in an age of global challenges: Mapping the cost of non-Europe (2022-2032)' by Meenakshi Fernandes from the European Added Value Unit, EPRS, EP.	24 April 2023
Presentation of EPRS study on 'Health claims made on foods: Findings on the implementation and application of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006' part I: 'Health claims made on foods: Analysis of the Court of Justice of the European Union case-law on Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006' by Dr Alie de Boer and Dr Karin G.M. Lenssen from the Maastricht University.	18 September 2023
Presentation of EPRS study on 'Health claims made on foods: Findings on the implementation and application of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006' part II: 'Implementation, application and impact of health claims made on foods: Literature reviews' by Dr Marco Silano from the Italian Institute of Public Health.	19 September 2023
Presentation of the study 'Women, power, and cancer: a Lancet Commission' by Dr Isabelle Soerjomataram, Deputy Head of the cancer surveillance branch at the International Agency for Research on Cancer (WHO).	25 October 2023
Presentation of the ECDC report on health-related quality of life among people living with HIV by Teymur Noori, HIV expert at the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).	28 November 2023
Presentation of the 2023 report of the Lancet Countdown on 'Health and climate change: the imperative for a health-centered response in a world facing irreversible harm' by Dr Marina Romanello, Executive Director at Lancet Countdown.	23 January 2024

## 7. Joint meeting with the Committee on Public Health, Medical Care and Health Insurance of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine

On 20 March 2024, in Brussels, SANT Subcommittee organised a joint meeting with the Committee on Public Health, Medical Care and Health Insurance of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Five members of the Public Health Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine (including its chair Mykhailo Radutskyi) as well as Maryna Slobodnichenko, Deputy Minister of Health of Ukraine for the European Integration participated in the meeting.



The discussions focused on the current needs and problems of the Ukrainian health sector which, in addition to the day-to-day activities (including maintaining daily operations, prevention and vaccination actions, support for patients with NCDs) has to face the additional challenges of the war (access to doctors and medicines, destruction of health facilities, need for psychological support, etc.) and the future plans for the reconstruction of Ukraine and its public health system, as well as for the work necessary for the European Integration of the country and the adaptation of its health care system to the *acquis communautaire*.

## Annex

### 8. Committee composition

#### a) Bureau

Bartłomiej ARŁUKOWICZ, Chair from 23/03/2023 to 18/10/2023

Adam JARUBAS, Chair since 28/11/2023

Tudor CIUHODARU, 1st Vice Chair from 23/03/2023 to 22/02/2024

Irena JOVEVA, 2nd Vice chair since 23/03/2023

Tilly METZ, 3rd Vice-Chair since 23/03/2023

Joanna KOPCIŃSKA, 4th Vice-Chair since 23/03/2023

#### b) Coordinators

EPP	Tomislav SOKOL Stelios KYMPOUROPOULOS
S&D	Sara CERDAS
Renew	Veronique TRILLET LENOIR Catherine AMALRIC
Greens/EFA	Nicolae STEFANUTA
ECR	Karol KARSKI
ID	Aurelia BEIGNEUX
THE LEFT	Katerina KONECNA

## c) Members

### On 19/04/2024, 30 Members

Adam JARUBAS, EPP  
Irena JOVEVA, Renew  
Tilly METZ, Greens/EFA  
Joanna KOPCIŃSKA, ECR  
Catherine AMALRIC, Renew  
Aurélia BEIGNEUX, ID  
Cristian-Silviu BUȘOI, EPP  
Sara CERDAS, S&D  
COLIN-OESTERLÉ, EPP  
Maria Angela DANZÌ, NI  
Pietro FIOCCHI, ECR  
Cindy FRANSEN, EPP  
Heléne FRITZON, S&D  
Andreas GLÜCK, Renew  
Nicolás GONZÁLEZ CASARES, S&D  
Karol KARSKI, ECR  
Kateřina KONEČNÁ, The Left  
Stelios KYMPOUROPOULOS, EPP  
Sylvia LIMMER, ID  
Radka MAXOVÁ, S&D  
Dolors MONTSERRAT, EPP  
Alessandra MORETTI, S&D  
Anabela RODRIGUES, The Left  
Maria Veronica ROSSI, ID  
Tomislav SOKOL, EPP  
Susana SOLÍS PÉREZ, Renew  
Nicolae ȘTEFĂNUȚĂ, Greens/EFA  
François THOLLET, Greens/EFA  
Edina TÓTH, NI  
Tiemo WÖLKEN, S&D

### On 19/04/2024, 26 Substitute Members

Margrete AUKEN, Greens/EFA  
Milan BRGLEZ, S&D  
Christophe CLERGEAU, S&D  
Deirdre CLUNE, EPP  
Antoni COMÍN I OLIVERES, NI  
Elisabetta DE BLASIS, ECR  
Emmanouil FRAGKOS, ECR  
Anja HAZEKAMP, The Left  
Radan KANEV, EPP  
Billy KELLEHER, Renew  
Ondřej KNOTEK, Renew  
Athanasios KONSTANTINOU, NI  
Peter LIESE, EPP  
Elżbieta Katarzyna ŁUKACIJEWSKA, EPP  
Johan NISSINEN, ECR  
Aldo PATRICIELLO, ID  
João PIMENTA LOPES, The Left  
Erik POULSEN, Renew  
Frédérique RIES, Renew  
Manuela RIPA, Greens/EFA  
Silvia SARDONE, ID  
Günther SIDL, S&D  
Sara SKYTTEDEL, EPP  
Annalisa TARDINO, ID  
István UJHELYI, S&D  
Pernille WEISS, EPP

## 9. Relevant websites

Subcommittee on Public Health (SANT)

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/sant/about>

Presentations from SANT public hearings

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/sant/events/events-hearings>

Special committee on COVID-19 pandemic: lessons learned and recommendations for the future (COVI)

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/covi/about>

Special Committee on Beating Cancer (BECA)

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/beca/about>

Legislative Observatory

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/home/home.do>

European Commission, DG SANTE

[https://health.ec.europa.eu/index\\_en](https://health.ec.europa.eu/index_en)

Council of the European Union

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/?filters=1646>

EPRS – European Parliamentary Research Service

<http://www.eprs.sso.ep.parl.union.eu/eprs/auth/en/PUBHEA.html#>