



ENRF Briefing Note on Climate change and Health: Overview on National Policies in Europe!

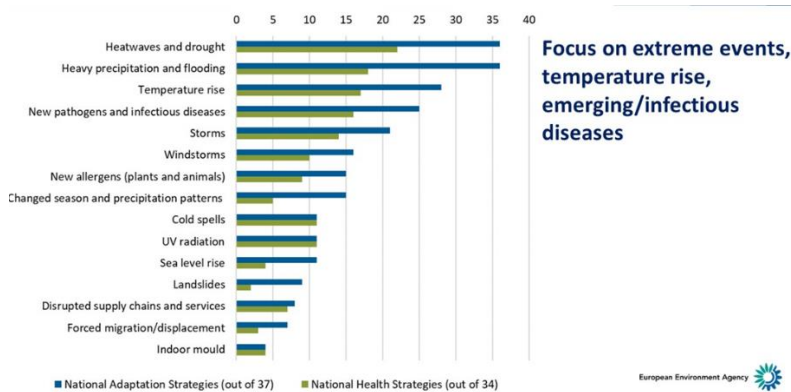
The [European Climate and Health Observatory](#), a partnership between the European Commission, the European Environment Agency (EEA), and several other organisations, contributing to the [European Green Deal](#) and the [EU4Health](#) vision for a healthier European Union, published a report entitled [“Climate Change and Health: the national policy overview in Europe”](#). This report summarises the findings of a study conducted in EEA-38 countries in which National Adaptation strategies and plans and National Health Strategies were reviewed.

National adaptation strategies, plans and climate risk assessments are national policies (NASs) to address the impacts of major changes on health. The effects of climate change on health are more commonly addressed in NASs rather than National Health Strategies (NHSs). Health impact assessment and response strategy are often integral parts of national adaptation policies. Few countries have a specific sectorial climate adaptation strategy for health, as in:

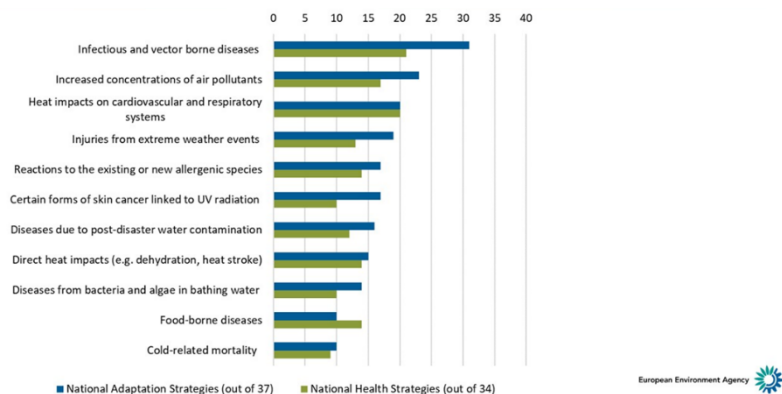
- 🇫🇮 Finland ([Climate Change Adaptation Plan for Health and Social Sectors](#))
- 🇮🇪 Ireland ([Sectorial Adaptation Plan for Climate Change](#))
- 🇲🇰 North Macedonia ([Climate Change Health Adaptation Strategy](#))
- 🇸🇪 Sweden ([Public Health in a Changing Climate - Swedish Public Health Agency's Goals and Action Plan on Climate Change Adaptation 2021–2024](#))

Areas through which climate change impacts on health:

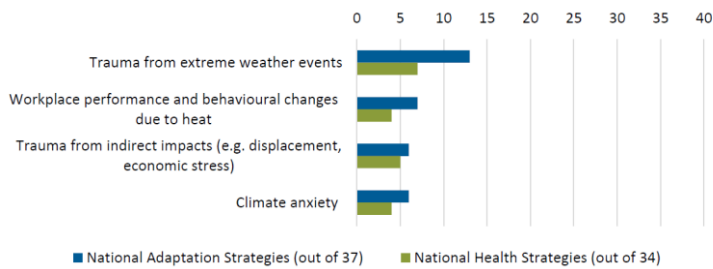
❖ Climate-related hazards to human health



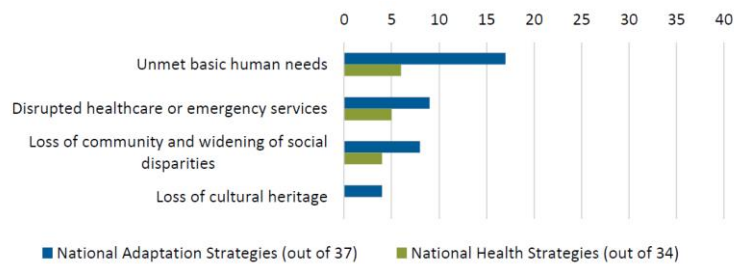
❖ Physical health impacts



❖ Physical health impacts



❖ Social health impacts



Most frequent policy measures planned*



* Education and training of health professionals on climate change impacts on health is the 4th most frequently included measure in NHSs, whilst for NASs changes in governance structures, including setting up of new working groups, are at the 4th place.

What has emerged from this study?

National Adaptation Policies are key for driving protection of human health in the context of climate change. According to this report, few countries have specific adaptation strategy for the health sector. Here the [map of country profiles](#).

What is needed to change this?

Collaboration and **resilience** are key words. It is necessary to increase all the efforts for climate adaptation and to create a sharing system for implementing successful actions to address climate change and its adverse effects on human health. The study showed that climate change impacts on health are commonly addressed in national adaptation strategies, but less frequently in national health strategies. It is therefore crucial to address this in an effective way through actionable national policies and health strategies.

Interesting readings:

- ✚ UNDP's project [EU4Climate](#) - that helps governments in six EU Eastern Partner countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, and Ukraine) to take action against climate change and towards a low-emissions and climate-resilient economy.
- ✚ [Briefing](#) from the European Environment Agency on the access to green spaces.
- ✚ [“Health in the Global Environmental Agenda: a policy guide”](#) - Technical guide on sustainable development focused on the health–environment nexus from the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), an independent think tank working to accelerate solutions for a stable climate, sustainable resource management, and fair economies.
- ✚ [Nurses Climate Challenge Europe](#) - Aiming to mobilise nurses across the Europe to educate health professionals on the impacts of climate change on human health.

Climate change is not a new phenomenon, and neither is its negative impact on human health. For this reason, it is essential to act through a more coordinated and collaborative approach that will impact national policies. In this context, nurse researchers can play a key role in raising awareness on the serious health damage of climate change and in spreading reliable information and best practices. This is an emergency that should not be underestimated. It is vital to act in a concrete and timely manner!

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