



Joint statement by EAACI and EFA to mark the opening of the Written Declaration by the European Parliament on allergies

Europe's Leading Patient and Academic Groups urge the EU to Tackle Burden of Allergic Disease

*Proposed European Parliament **Written Declaration** calls for coordinated European action ¹*

23.10.2013 Brussels, Belgium - Allergic diseases affect over 150 million Europeans, of whom some are affected by severe, debilitating diseases, but these are neglected as a public health concern. Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) now have an opportunity to call on the European Commission and EU Member States to take action by signing a [Written Declaration on Recognising the Burden of Allergic Disease](#), which opened for signatures in October 21st and will remain open for 3 months.

Professor Nikos Papadopoulos, the President of the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI), said:

"EAACI welcomes this Parliament initiative. The adoption of this **Written Declaration** by MEPs would be an important signal that comprehensive action is needed to tackle the burden of allergies. Current public health policies overlook these diseases, causing great cost to society through hospital admissions and lost work days, but also to individuals by diminishing their quality of life and making many live with a constant fear of death."

Breda Flood, President of the European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients' Associations (EFA), said:

"EFA welcomes the news that the European Parliament is willing to recognise the burden of allergic disease. We urge MEPs to sign up and support the health of patients with allergy and respiratory diseases and prevention in Europe. The Written Declaration is perfectly in line with our Manifesto for the European Parliament elections and patients, especially children, need the MEPs support."

Allergies are commonly perceived as trivial, but they can lead to lost work days, poorer academic performance and restricted social interaction due the symptoms and the need to avoid certain allergens. In addition, allergies trigger 80% of all cases of asthma, which

¹ **Written Declaration**

The proposal for a European Parliament Written Declaration on Recognising the Burden of Allergic disease has been proposed by: Elena Antonescu (EPP, Romania), Nessa Childers (NI, Ireland), Elisabeta Gardini (EPP, Italy), Françoise Grossetête (EPP, France), Philippe Juvin (EPP, France), Antonia Parvanova (ALDE, Bulgaria), Sirpa Pietikäinen (EPP, Finland), Frédérique Ries (ALDE, Belgium), Claudiu Ciprian Tănăsescu (S&D, Romania), Rebecca Taylor (ALDE, UK), Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR, UK). It is open for signatures until 21 January 2014 and must be signed by a majority of the Members of the European Parliament to be adopted.

is the most common cause of emergency room visits by children. Food allergies can be life-threatening in the worst cases.

The proposed **Written Declaration**, put forward by eleven MEPs from a cross-section of political groups, calls for the implementation of national programmes, better medical training and more scientific research to achieve a better management of the disease, in order to limit its evolution and cost to society.

“The European Parliament can make a real difference to the lives of European citizens by drawing attention to and calling for action on an underestimated public health need. Cost-effective solutions do exist but we need the support of the European Parliament, to ensure that Member States will implement them” concluded Professor Papadopoulos.

For more information contact:

EAACI:²

Macarena Guillamón
EAACI Headquarters
Genferstrasse, 21
8002 Zurich - Switzerland
Tel: + 41 44 205 55 32
Mobile: +41 79 892 82 25
macarena.guillamon@eaaci.org
www.eaaci.org

Information on the Written Declaration: <http://www.eaaci.org/activities/written-declaration-on-allergies.html>

EFA:³

Roberta Savli
EFA
35, rue du Congrès
B-1000, Brussels
Tel: + 32 2 227 27 12
roberta.savli@efanet.org
www.efanet.org

Sign our Manifesto for the European Parliament elections: manifesto.efanet.org

² EAACI

The European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, EAACI, is a non-profit organisation active in the field of allergic and immunologic diseases such as asthma, rhinitis, eczema, occupational allergy, food and drug allergy and anaphylaxis. EAACI was founded in 1956 in Florence and has become the largest medical association in Europe in the field of allergy and clinical immunology. It includes over 7,800 members from 121 countries, as well as 42 National Allergy Societies.

³ EFA

The European Federation of Allergy and Airways Diseases Patients' Associations (EFA) is a non-profit network of allergy, asthma and COPD patients organisations, representing 35 national associations in 22 countries and over 400,000 patients. EFA is dedicated to making Europe a place where people with allergies, asthma and COPD have the right to best quality of care and safe environment, live uncompromised lives and are actively involved in all decisions influencing their health.