

Dealing with pollution and climate change in Europe will lead to health improvement

Air and noise pollution, the impacts of climate change such as heatwaves, and exposure to dangerous chemicals cause ill health in Europe. Poor quality environments contribute to one in every eight deaths of Europeans, according to a major assessment on health and the environment released by the European Environment Agency (EEA).

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic provides a stark example of the complex links between the environment, our social systems, and our health, with factors causing the disease attributed to environmental pollution resulting from human activity.

Environment, Oceans and Fisheries Commissioner Virginijus Sinkevičius said: “There is a clear link between the state of the environment and the health of our population. Everyone must understand that by taking care of our planet we are not only saving ecosystems, but also lives, especially the ones who are the most vulnerable. The European Union is devoted to this approach and with the new Biodiversity Strategy, the Circular Economy Action Plan and other forthcoming initiatives we are on the path to build a more resilient and healthier Europe for European citizens and beyond.”

Health and Food Safety Commissioner Stella Kyriakides said: “COVID-19 has been yet another wake-up call, making us acutely aware of the relationship between our ecosystems and our health and the need to face the facts – the way we live, consume and produce is detrimental to the climate and impacts negatively on our health. From our Farm to Fork Strategy for sustainable and healthy food to Europe’s future Beating Cancer Plan, we have made a strong commitment to protect the health of our citizens and our planet.”

The report stresses that an integrated approach to environment and health policies is needed to tackle environmental risks, protect the most vulnerable and fully realise the benefits that nature offers in support of health and well-being.

Source: eureporter.co