

- **MEP Tomislav Sokol**, EPP Group, Croatia

"The EU Safe Hearts Plan is an important opportunity to strengthen cardiovascular prevention across Europe, including by recognising the role vaccination against respiratory infections can play in protecting cardiovascular health, particularly among older adults and people with chronic conditions.

As Co-Chair of the MEPs Interest Group on European Patients' Rights and Cross-Border Healthcare, I believe effective health policies must be grounded in scientific evidence and developed in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders.

Our Interest Group has worked closely with Active Citizenship Network and other patient and civic organisations to ensure that citizens' needs are reflected in European health policy. As former European Commissioner for Health Stella Kyriakides rightly noted, "civil society plays a crucial role in reaching out to our citizens."

This event is a valuable opportunity to strengthen cooperation and turn European health commitments into better prevention, improved access to care and tangible benefits for citizens."