

A Joint Call to Advance Brain Health Through International Cooperation and Science Diplomacy

At every stage of life and in every part of the world, brain health is fundamental to the capacities that define human potential: how we think, feel, learn, perceive, move, connect with others, and engage fully in society. Its standing on the global agenda has never been more important. On the occasion of the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly, the European Partnership for Brain Health recognises the progress made in advancing brain health as a global priority and reaffirms a shared commitment to sustaining this momentum and driving global collaboration forward.

The European Partnership for Brain Health is one of the largest collaborative research efforts in the field worldwide, uniting over 64 partners across more than 36 countries - uniting researchers, clinicians, funders, policymakers and patient organisations. Building on decades of transnational cooperation, the EP BrainHealth works to advance the prevention, treatment, and understanding of brain disorders and to improve the lives of people affected by neurological and mental health conditions, in Europe and worldwide.

Brain health has earned increasing recognition on the global agenda. In 2025, brain health has been explicitly included in the United Nations' Political Declaration on Non-Communicable Diseases. In the framework of 2026 G7, scientific academies of the Science 7 urged G7 Members to acknowledge that brain health must now become a global priority. These recent developments demonstrate that brain health is now increasingly understood not only as a matter of health and research, but as a foundation of human potential, economic resilience, and sustainable development, with consequences for health systems, education, and social cohesion across the life course. The Partnership welcomes this recognition and the widening community of researchers, institutions, funders, and partners now committed to advancing it.

Since its launch in January 2026, the EP BrainHealth has extended international collaborations beyond Europe. Its official kick-off event in Paris brought together over 130 stakeholders, alongside the European Commission and representatives from national ministries, to agree on the priorities and, through a Foresight Symposium, to consider the long-term direction of the field and identified key challenges to be addressed.

This first phase of work marks the beginning of the Partnership's Global Brain Health Campaign, through which it aims to connect leading worldwide initiatives and establish Europe as a committed contributor to the global brain health landscape. During UNGA81, the Partnership advanced this ambition through a panel on global research collaboration at the Brain Days and a science diplomacy roundtable hosted by the Permanent Mission of New Zealand to the United Nations. These exchanges brought together representatives from diplomacy, research, funding, development finance, philanthropy and academia to explore how more inclusive and equitable international partnerships can accelerate progress in brain health.

Science collaboration and science diplomacy are particularly relevant to brain health as the scale, complexity and burden of neurological and mental conditions exceed what any single country, discipline or institution can address alone. They provide practical means to align priorities, connect complementary expertise, improve access to data and infrastructures, and ensure that advances in research and innovation can be translated more equitably across regions.

To sustain this momentum in a meaningful and lasting way, attention must now turn to the practical conditions that enable effective international collaboration. With this in mind, the European Partnership for Brain Health highlights the following priority actions to advance global scientific cooperation and science diplomacy in brain health:

- Use and enhance science diplomacy channels, including engagement with science attachés, embassies and science-policy forums, to open new avenues for cooperation and connect research communities with relevant international actors.
- Support inclusive and responsible collaboration grounded in ethics, equity and local relevance, so that scientific progress in brain health benefits all populations and does not widen existing disparities.
- Promote joint activities such as webinars, symposia, foresight exercises and shared statements that turn dialogue into sustained collaboration and strategic alignment.
- Strengthen structured international dialogue between funders, research organisations, infrastructures, patient communities and global partners to align priorities and reduce fragmentation across the brain health ecosystem.
- Advance interoperable, privacy-preserving and responsible approaches to data sharingⁱ, cohort harmonisation and research infrastructures to accelerate discovery and improve translation into practice.
- Expand capacity-building through training, mobility, mentoring and support for early-career researchers to enable more countries and institutions to contribute meaningfully to global brain health research.

Sustaining global momentum on brain health now requires a shared commitment to the practical foundations of collaboration: trusted partnerships, research capacity, interoperable data systems, and science diplomacy that enables knowledge to move across borders for the benefit of all.

Through the Global Brain Health Campaign, the EP BrainHealth and its partners commit to deepening this collaboration in the years ahead - across regions and sectors, and in inclusive and equitable partnership with all who share our vision to improve the wellbeing of people living with neurological and mental conditions in Europe and beyond.

ⁱ This includes, among others, the FAIR and CARE principles, as well as other relevant ethical, legal and governance frameworks for responsible data sharing.