

"I am honoured to join the efforts of IDF Europe and its 70 national members in tackling the growth of diabetes by signing the Diabetes Pledge in support of the over 32 million adults living with diabetes in the EU. Many more people are at risk representing a huge human and economic burden. Therefore, we should not forget prevention. Awareness and availability of healthier food options is essential and should play an increasingly important role in food policy debates and formulation. Quality research and exchange of best practices can support these. Patients' rights are also not to be forgotten. Early diagnosis, rehabilitation, access to treatment and the right to a second opinion need to be ensured. The European region and the EU need a Europe-wide strategy to unite policy makers, parliamentarians and diabetes organisations to stop this epidemic. Change on a national level can be achieved through funded National Diabetes Plans in each country."

Sirpa Pietikäinen (Finland)