



As summarized by the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate change (IPCC) “Warming of the climate system is unequivocal.

The atmosphere and ocean have warmed, the amounts of snow and ice have diminished, sea level has risen, and the concentrations of greenhouse gases have increased. It is extremely likely that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century.” (IPCC, 2013).

The overall health effects of climate change and in particular the increase in extreme weather events (heat waves, cold spells, heavy rainfall and floods) makes this a hot topic on the public health agenda both at the local and global level. The heat wave of 2003 in Europe, caused more than 70.000 deaths, with the greatest impact in France, Germany, Spain and Italy (UNEP 2004, Robine 2008). More recent heat wave events still have significant effects on health outcomes throughout Europe.

DEP has been involved in research on the short-terms health effects of extreme weather events, over the past 15 years. Several research papers have been published on the topic and the DEP has coordinated two EU projects (PHEWE, PHASE) and national research groups (Gruppo Clima e Salute).

In terms of public health, DEP is in charge of the "National Program for the Prevention of Heat-health effects" funded by the Ministry of Health and has an ongoing collaboration with the Italian Ministry of Health for the definition of guidelines for the prevention of health effects due to heat waves.

Activities

- [Health effects of extreme weather events and climate change](#)
- [National Heat health warning system \(HHWWS\)](#)
- [Susceptibility factors and effect modifiers of the temperature-health outcome relationship](#)

Recent publications

[Changes in the Effect of Heat on Mortality in the Last 20 Years in Nine European Cities. Results from the PHASE Project.](#) (IJERPH, 2015)

[The impact of the February 2012 cold spell on health in Italy using surveillance data.](#) (Plos one, 2013)

[Effect of ambient temperature and air pollutants on the risk of preterm birth, Rome 2001-2010.](#)

To know more

- [Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change](#)

- [WHO - Climate change and health](#)