



European Union

Statement

WHO

156th Executive Board

(3-11 February 2025)

**Agenda item 23.1 - Financing and implementation of the Programme
budget 2024–2025**

Geneva, 4 February 2025

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Chair, distinguished delegates,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.

The candidate countries Türkiye, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina* and Georgia as well as Armenia align themselves with this statement.

The EU recognizes and supports the crucial role of WHO. The Programme Budget 2024–2025 reflects the ambitious priorities set forth by the organization in the 14th General Programme of Work.

We commend the progress made in securing 89% of the base budget, a significant improvement compared to previous biennia. However, we remain deeply concerned about the reliance on highly earmarked contributions. This constrains WHO's ability to strategically address certain areas, hinders the timely allocation of resources and likely will have already led to serious delays or a halt in the implementation of large parts of the base programme. Hence, we reiterate our support to the Organization's funding reform to make WHO fit for purpose.

The EU urges Member States and partners to intensify their resource mobilization efforts regarding the base budget. The WHO investment round was an important step to increase the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of WHO's funding. We especially welcome that over 30 pledges in the Investment Round were from first time voluntary contributors to WHO, broadening the donor base. The EU also wants to stress the relevance of continuing the efforts to broaden the funding base of WHO. Now more than ever, we should be aware of the vulnerability for the work of WHO to be dependent on a small number of donors.

* North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

The announced withdrawal from WHO expressed by the Organization's single largest donor country may have an impact on the financing of the Budget 2024–2025 and beyond, possibly affecting the implementation schedule of critical programs and WHO's ability to respond effectively to overlapping global health challenges.

We encourage Member States and partners to collectively address this situation by reiterating the importance of providing sustainable, predictable and flexible funding, to ensure a broader donor base and by the selection and prioritization of the essential components of the base programme. Global solidarity, shared responsibility and gained efficiencies are paramount to safeguard the health and well-being of all and leaving no one behind. In this respect, we also urge WHO to be transparent about the implications and potential shortfalls and to openly consult with member states on the best way forward. We remain committed to working with WHO and all stakeholders to mitigate potential disruptions and ensure the continuity of prioritized essential programs.

The EU reaffirms its commitment to support WHO in achieving sustainable financing, further strengthening transparency of expenditures and accountability of utilization to fulfill its leadership role in global health. We remain ready to work collaboratively with all partners in this respect.

Thank you.