



European Union

Statement

WHO

156th Executive Board

(3-11 February 2025)

Agenda item 23.2- Proposed Programme budget 2026–2027

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

The EU thanks the Secretariat for the proposed programme budget for 2026–2027.

The announced withdrawal from WHO expressed by the organization's single largest donor country, may have an impact on the ongoing programme budget process. Amid tightening funding, we must balance realism and ambition.

We may use this wake-up call to reflect and discuss on how to protect and sustain WHO's core functions in line with the 14th General Programme of Work. We are looking forward to a transparent process, engaging all Member States, leading up to the adoption of the revised budget at the WHA. In these difficult times, we stand by the side of WHO.

We must aim to improve support quality by increasing flexibility and predictability, prioritize core functions, and enhance efficiency while maintaining WHO's essential role in global health. Additionally, building on the important steps already taken, sustained efforts to improve and enhance governance reform is paramount.

Advancing along these interconnected avenues is crucial to achieving WHO's mandate and ensuring the Organization can respond effectively to current and ever-increasing threats to public health. Important steps have been taken to this end through WHO's Investment Round and the increase of assessed contributions, as agreed at WHA75. We reiterate our support to

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

these funding reforms to make WHO fit for purpose. These steps are key to sustainably financing WHO and to making WHO less dependent on earmarked contributions. Further AC increases are subject to considerations outlined by the Working Group on Sustainable financing. We welcome that WHO has initiated a discussion with Member States, on implications and next steps and underline the importance of transparency going forward.

We need to reflect on the options available to address this difficult situation, which may impact global health architecture. This aspect should be carefully analyzed as we navigate this crisis.

The EU recognizes the pivotal role of global technical centers and the effect of the loss of cooperation with a number of these centers may have on the work of WHO. The WHO Hub for Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence in Berlin and the WHO Academy in Lyon enhance WHO's capacity to address global health threats and strengthen health systems worldwide. We welcome the dedicated budget line for such initiatives, that are entirely funded by voluntary contributions.

The EU urges all Member States to align with the priorities and key performance indicators outlined in GPW 14 and the programme budget, upholding solidarity and the shared commitment to Health for All. Due to budget constraints, we consider it premature to co-sponsor any resolution at this stage. The EU has paused co-sponsorships while awaiting the revised 2026-2027 Programme Budget. We request an updated cost overview of all resolutions, considering the available financing under the revised budget proposal, to guide our future sponsorship decisions.

Chair,

The EU and its Member States remains committed to collaborating with WHO and Member States to implement a budget that capacitates the Organization to address the critical health needs of all persons, everywhere.

Thank you.