

Statement by Romania at the EB156, Geneva, 3-11 February 2025

Item 12

Health and care workforce

WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel

Distinguished Chair,

Romania aligns with the statement of the EU on behalf of its Member States and would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

Romania welcomes the comprehensive report on the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel and commends the increasing engagement of Member States in reporting on the matter. The findings confirm the urgency of ethical recruitment, sustainable workforce policies in both source and destination countries, and stronger international cooperation to address the challenges of health and care workforce migration.

We fully support the report's recommendations, particularly the need for bilateral agreements that ensure mutual benefits and stronger data sharing on migration and return trends. The spirit of the recommendations ensure that international mobility does not compromise access to healthcare in source countries.

Romania's experience exemplifies both the challenges and solutions in health workforce migration. Since joining the EU, we have faced significant outflows of health and care professionals. However, a combination of salary increases, expanded medical education, investments in infrastructure and strategic workforce policies has slowed migration and increased retention. Notably, the number of doctors per capita in Romania has risen from 282 per 100,000 in 2015 to 374 per 100,000 in 2022— which is a promising trend. Yet, geographical imbalances remain a concern and a focus of our work.

Our experience underscores that financial incentives alone are insufficient, but comprehensive policies addressing working conditions and equitable workforce distribution are essential. We stand ready to share our lessons learned and collaborate with Member States in strengthening the implementation of the WHO Global Code of Practice.

Additionally, we are fully aware of the need for prioritization and reform in view of the latest discussions on the financial implications of all draft resolutions on the sustainability of WHO. We congratulate the Philippines and Morocco for their leadership in conducting the negotiations on the draft resolution on the Accelerating action on the global health and care workforce by 2030 and we express the hope that this document will be relevant for future discussions on the matter.

Thank you.