

Chair,

Bulgaria welcomes DG report and shares its stance on the guiding questions as follows:

1. Experience in other countries shows that investments in sustainable research capacity are the most effective. Policies that encourage multidisciplinary research combining epidemiology, clinical medicine, public health, behavioral sciences, economics, sociology, and anthropology, as the effectiveness and impact of public health and social measures cannot be adequately assessed from a biomedical perspective alone.

2. Among the key opportunities are the growing volume of scientific data and digital tools, including the Public Health and Social Measures Knowledge Hub, which facilitate access to global and local evidence. At the same time, there is still a significant gap as regards limited capacity to interpret and apply evidence, insufficient consideration of social and cultural context, and a lack of systematic mechanisms for tracking public attitudes and behaviour.

In this context, the implementation of social listening mechanisms—including analysis of public attitudes, trust, misinformation, and behavioural responses—can complement quantitative epidemiological data and support more adaptive and timely decision-making and contribute to the design and targeting of social measures.

3. The Secretariat can play a crucial role by assisting Member States in building competencies for conducting PHSM policy-oriented research.

In conclusion, WHO could also present a systematic, multidisciplinary, and community-oriented approach, combined with innovative tools such as social listening. It is essential for building a reliable evidence base and making effective, fair, and contextually appropriate decisions on measures in future health emergencies.