

Written statement by Iceland

WHO, Executive Board 158th session (EB158)

Agenda item 13: Report of the Expert Advisory Group on the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel

Iceland welcomes the report of the Expert Advisory Group and thanks the Secretariat for the comprehensive and timely review of the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel.

The report clearly shows that international recruitment and mobility of health personnel continue to increase, reflecting the growing interdependence of health systems globally. Iceland underlines that these developments must be considered not only from a labour market or workforce planning perspective, but also through the lens of health system resilience and global health security.

As highlighted in the report, increasingly market-driven mobility of health personnel risks widening inequalities and weakening health systems, unless it is governed in line with the principles of the Code. Ensuring that countries have the right health workforce, with appropriate skills and capacity, is essential for preparedness, continuity of services and effective response in emergencies.

Iceland therefore supports continued efforts to strengthen monitoring of health worker mobility, including evolving recruitment pathways, and emphasizes the importance of transparent and well-governed bilateral agreements that deliver mutual benefits and contribute to health workforce sustainability.

Iceland considers this work a necessary and forward-looking development and supports further strengthening of the implementation, monitoring and accountability of the Code.