



European Union

Statement

WHO

77th World Health Assembly

(27 May – 1 June 2024)

Item 17 – Draft fourteenth General Programme of Work, 2025-2028

Geneva, 27 May 2024

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EU Statement

Chair,
Director General,
Excellencies,
Colleagues,

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the EU and its 27 Member States.

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina* and Georgia, the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Armenia align themselves with this statement.

The EU welcomes the growing inclusiveness undertaken to develop the 14th General Programme of Work, which has included more stakeholders than in the past. We appreciate the clear focus on WHO's comparative strengths, such as its normative and standards setting abilities as well as the provision of science-based knowledge. The relevance of WHO to all Member States and most importantly to the realization of global health is important and its standard-setting function is essential. It must be preserved.

Many interrelated factors such as economic distress, conflicts and wars, climate change, poverty and increasing inequality and gender inequity, unsustainable

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

financing and the risk of future pandemics have informed and influenced the development of GPW 14. We welcome the overarching goal of GPW 14 (promoting, providing and protecting health for all) and its 6 strategic objectives, as a robust framework and response. Considering the most recent data on the lack of further progress and even backtracking in some countries and regions in the area of sexual and reproductive health, we encourage WHO to stay invested in a human rights-based approach to this area.

Furthermore, we would like to emphasize the importance of WHO guidelines, as they are based on methodologically rigorous, up-to-date and quality-assured scientific findings while helping member states and their health systems to address dis- and misinformation. We welcome the ambition to translate scientific and technical progress into actual improvements in health care services by developing health workforce skills.

We believe that a health-focused approach in all policy areas, together with a ‘One Health’ approach, is key to effectively address the most important challenges. For this reason, we support WHO's leadership and ongoing collaboration with other relevant actors in the global health ecosystem, as well as efforts to transform internally WHO so that it is best equipped to adapt and face our changing world. We consider the appropriate strengthening of WHO's capacities at national and regional levels to be a priority. We also reiterate our support to the cooperation with governments, civil society and communities at national, sub-national and local levels.

Finally, we would like to emphasize the importance of adequate, sustainable and predictable funding of the WHO budget for 2025-2028. We hope that the upcoming Investment Round and its close link to GPW 14 will encourage multiannual unearmarked voluntary contributions.

Thank you.