



European Union

Statement

WHO

77th World Health Assembly

(27 May – 1 June 2024)

Item 15.5 - Economics and health for all

Geneva, 30 May 2024

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EU Statement

Chair,
Director General,
Excellencies,
Colleagues,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the EU and its 27 Member States.

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

Over the past few years, there has been a strong call from Member States to discuss and redefine the relationship between health, wellbeing and the economy. The WHO Council on the Economics of Health for All reframed health as a public policy objective, putting forward visionary recommendations to ensure that economies are structured to support health and well-being. In our view, renewed actions are needed as we currently are falling short of Agenda 2030 goals, including SDG3.

The Economy of Wellbeing is not a completely new concept. Building on Health in All Policies, it emphasizes better understanding of mutually reinforcing aspects

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

of health, wellbeing and the economy. It strives to ensure that the policy measures we adopt are informed by evidence.

A sustainable economy, integrating environmental and social factors, allows to respond to the on-going national and global health challenges. In addition, policy measures ranging from gender equality to education, nutrition, health promotion and disease prevention, social protection and occupational health and safety have important macroeconomic and microeconomic impacts.

We welcome the call to shift public and private investments from activities that harm people's health and well-being towards investments that improve it. It is essential to protect the wellbeing of and enable more equal health outcomes for young people and future generations, including through gender mainstreaming.

Furthermore, a better dialogue between ministers of health, finance and economy and other stakeholders beyond health is essential to enhance public capacity and to drive public-private collaboration for health. To achieve this, WHO should strengthen its macro-economic expertise to support health ministers in making the case for investing in health.

Economy of Wellbeing can be best promoted through 'whole-of-government' and 'whole-of-society' approaches. Through public-private collaboration, an entrepreneurial spirit and investments in research and development, the ecosystem could contribute to an impactful transformation of health and care, economic growth, innovations that are transferable to many countries by design and the wellbeing of all. Civil society organizations play a significant role in people's everyday lives, strengthening meaningful engagement in society and social participation.

To conclude, we welcome the proposed resolution. It paves the way for Member States to better understand the linkages between health, wellbeing and the economy. It further mandates WHO to develop, in consultation with Member States, a strategy for Economics of Health for All. Its successful implementation will require taking into account the different country contexts. Each country will need to find their own path to implement the Economy of Wellbeing approach.

Concerning the resolution to be adopted under this agenda item, the EU flags its Explanation of position delivered with regard to the use of "those" in the wording

“those in vulnerable situation”, which the EU, following the rights-based person-centered approach, understands to refer solely to "persons".

Thank you.