



European Union

Statement

WHO

78th World Health Assembly

(19 May – 27 May 2025)

Item 13.3 – Universal Health Coverage

Geneva, 24 May 2025

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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 as well as Armenia align themselves with this statement.

Strengthening the resilience of health systems through UHC remains a key priority for the EU. Financial constraints, inequalities, discrimination, demographic transition, climate-related disasters and disruptions in access, especially for women, girls and all persons in vulnerable situations, continue to be a challenge for UHC.

UHC is essential both for the fulfilment of the right to the highest attainable standard of health, and as a precondition of global health security. Support must

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

complement domestic investments and promote integrated, equitable approaches that strengthen primary health care as the foundation of UHC.

WHO must maintain focus on essential priorities:

Investing in the Health Workforce. The projected shortfall of 11.1 million health workers globally by 2030 must be urgently addressed. We need multipronged strategies to address this challenge including by boosting the supply of health professionals, optimizing skills mix, and improving working conditions. The digitalisation of health systems will reduce the administrative burden of health workers and increase the efficiency in the system. We welcome the WHO Academy that will equip health workers with the skills needed.

Strengthening community engagement through Social Participation. Engaging communities in the design, delivery, and evaluation of health services is critical to ensuring relevance, equity, and accountability. This plays an essential role in reaching underserved populations.

Ensuring Financial Protection. We must prioritize reforms that eliminate impoverishing out-of-pocket health expenditures. The EU emphasizes the need for efficient, innovative, equitable and sustainable financing mechanisms, including domestic resources to reduce economic barriers to health services, particularly for the most vulnerable. In this regard, we commend African leadership to strengthen domestic financing for health. Complementary and coordinated international cooperation in line with the Lusaka Agenda is crucial to reduce those barriers.

Strengthening health expenditure data, analysis and tracking UHC progress. UHC requires fit-for-purpose health information systems that provide timely and reliable data. Continuing the work of WHO in assessing country progress in health financing for UHC, will therefore be key.

Achieving UHC requires a multifaceted approach. Coordinated cross-sector action and multi-stakeholder involvement are vital to address the social determinants of health and to achieve UHC. Particular attention should be paid to people living with rare diseases.

Finally, the EU calls for further support of the UHC2030 and the **UHC-Partnership**, which has enabled progress in over 125 countries so far.

As the WHO's largest donor, the EU remains committed to working with all Member States and stakeholders to deliver on the promise of UHC

Thank you.