



European Union

Statement

WHO

78th World Health Assembly

(19 May – 27 May 2025)

**Item 13.9 – Global Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’
Health**

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.

We are deeply concerned by the stagnation of maternal mortality rates, particularly in fragile or conflict-affected countries.

Key measures should be taken to 1/ improve access to quality maternal and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health-care services, 2/ invest in midwives, nurses, and community health workers, 3/ strengthen health system.

We must commit to the international framework on gender equality to achieve UHC. Reaching women, children and adolescents in vulnerable situations by promoting community-based and -led approaches is vital.

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

We welcome the invaluable guidance and tools generated by the Secretariat to optimize outcomes for this global strategy.

Three urgent actions must be prioritized:

1. **Expanding equitable access to healthcare products and services** particularly to combat pre-eclampsia, post-partum hemorrhage, anemia, obstetric fistula and unsafe abortion practices. We call to promote modern contraception, breastfeeding and kangaroo care, while respecting women's choice to do so;
2. **Promoting access to information and education for all women, children and adolescents, including through the lifelong training of a professional health and care workforce.** We welcome the HRP work on data collection and research, as well as the work of WHO's "Department of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research (SRH)" on production of science-based guidelines, particularly in times of misinformation and budgetary constraint. The EU and its Member States call for sustained investments in healthcare professional training, and retention. The EU remains committed to the promotion, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the outcomes of their review conferences and remains committed to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), in this context. Having that in mind, the EU reaffirms its commitment to the promotion, protection and fulfilment of the right of every individual to have full control over, and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality and sexual and reproductive health, free from discrimination, coercion and violence. The EU further stresses the need for universal access to quality and affordable comprehensive sexual

and reproductive health information, education, including comprehensive sexuality education, and health-care services;

3. **Ending all forms of discrimination and sexual and gender-based violence. We call for driving behavior change and reshaping harmful social norms**, such as female genital mutilations and early marriages, that negatively impact women and girls and hinder their access to quality, safe and effective health services.

Thank you.