



European Forum of National Nursing and Midwifery Associations



Statement to the 67th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe on session 5 (c) 'Towards a sustainable health workforce in the WHO European Region: framework for action'

Thank you, Chair, for giving me the opportunity to address the distinguished members of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe on behalf of Medicus Mundi International, European Public Health Alliance, Alliance for Health Promotion, Alzheimer's Disease International, Centre for Regional Policy Research and Cooperation "STUDIORUM", European Forum of National Nursing and Midwifery Associations, European organization for all Occupational Therapists, European Public Health Association, International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care, World Federation of Occupational Therapists, the European regional network of the World Organization of Family Doctors, World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) and Worldwide Hospice Palliative Care Alliance (WHPCA).

We welcome the translation of the Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health into the European regional context and framework for action. Especially since it focuses on achieving (and maintaining) a sustainable health workforce.

This is of utmost importance for many of the agenda-items discussed this week. There is no global and local health security and implementation of the International Health Regulations without a proper health workforce. Access to medicines requires a health workforce to deliver them. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development/ Health 2020 cannot do without an adequate health workforce.

Crucially, health systems and competent, sustainable, health workforces require financial investments. Less money for jobs in the health sector means unemployment. This was clearly shown in the outcomes of the 2013 meeting in Oslo, Norway, on the impact of the economic crisis on health and health systems. More money means more jobs. But we want to remind you of the WHO Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel: please stay away from quick fixes through unethical international recruitment.

In order to achieve people-centred health systems and its competent, sustainable, health workforce member states need to plan, educate, recruit and retain adequate numbers of health professionals with an appropriate skills mix inside and outside Europe. This implies leadership and competent management at all levels. Continuous professional development, including specialist training in palliative care, mental care and dementia, for example for family doctors, is crucial and requires investments. Other policies are needed as well, such as advancing the competences and roles of nurses and midwives, non-monetary incentives, peer support, inter-professional support, and high quality accreditation systems of training and education et cetera.

Only through intersectoral action and policy coherence between health, education, migration, development, employment, and economic policies, we can achieve the population health objectives of Health 2020, the longer-term health goals for Member States in the European Region and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in which we leave no-one behind.

Thank you.

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NGOs supporting this statement:

- **Alliance for Health Promotion**
- **Alzheimer's Disease International (ADI)** is the worldwide federation of Alzheimer associations, which support people with dementia and their families.
- **Centre for Regional Policy Research and Cooperation "STUDIORUM"** is a research think-tank working on health and wellbeing policies in South-eastern Europe, and partner to the South-eastern Europe Health Network (SEEHN).
- **COTEC:** The European organization for all Occupational Therapists through their National Associations, with the purpose of ensuring an adequate number of high quality occupational therapy practitioners and services in Europe. COTEC is a regional group of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT), representing more than 150,000 Occupational therapists.
- **European Forum of National Nursing and Midwifery Associations (EFNMA)** is the voice of nursing and midwifery in the WHO European Region. It unites 30 associations from 25 Member States. It represents a large proportion of the European Regional nursing and midwifery workforce of 7.3 million.
- **European Public Health Alliance (EPHA):** EPHA's vision is of a Europe with universal good health and well-being, where all have access to a sustainable and high quality health system: A Europe whose policies and practices contribute to health, both within and beyond its borders.
- **European Public Health Association (EUPHA)** – an umbrella organization for public health associations and institutes in Europe.
- **International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care**
- **Medicus Mundi International** – Network Health for All is a network of organizations working in the field of international health cooperation and global health.
- **WFOT:** The World Federation of Occupational Therapists is the official representative of occupational therapy internationally, representing 480,000 occupational therapists worldwide. WFOT through its member associations and regional groups promotes and establishes high quality occupational therapy services and education programmes.
- **WONCA Europe:** The European regional network of the World Organization of Family Doctors (WONCA) represents more than 80,000 family doctors through their Member Organisations across Europe.
- **World Federation for Medical Education (WFME)**
- **Worldwide Hospice Palliative Care Alliance (WHPCA).**