



**European Committee
of the Regions**



**World Health
Organization**
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR **Europe**

**ACTION PLAN
BETWEEN
THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS
AND
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE**

Whereas the **World Health Organization** (hereinafter referred to as "WHO"), an intergovernmental organisation established by its Member States, is the specialized agency for health within the United Nations system. It is responsible for providing leadership on global health matters, shaping the health research agenda, setting norms and standards, articulating evidence-based policy options, providing technical support to countries and monitoring and assessing health trends. In the WHO European Region, encompassing 53 countries, WHO operates through its Regional Office for Europe (hereinafter referred to as "WHO/Europe"), represented by Regional Director Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge, headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark, and supported by decentralised centres and country offices staffed with public health, scientific, and technical experts.

Whereas the **European Committee of the Regions** (hereinafter referred to as CoR), is the European Union's assembly of local and regional representatives that provides sub-national authorities with a direct voice within the EU's institutional framework. Established in 1994, the CoR is the voice of regions and cities in the European Union (EU) consisting of regionally and locally elected representatives from the 27 EU countries. Its six thematic commissions, including the Commission for Natural Resources (NAT), cover competences in policy areas based on the EU Treaties, including health.

Whereas the parties recognise health as a major investment for sustainable human, economic and social development as well as the importance of local and regional authorities for addressing current and future public health challenges, and hence express their commitment to strengthening collaboration in areas of mutual interests to support health policy dialogue and action at local and regional levels;

Reminding that cooperation between both parties was initiated in 2016 and that a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between both organisations on 4 February 2021, setting out the general principles and objectives for this cooperation and the main areas for cooperation.

Considering that the start of a new mandate and the development of respectively a new WHO European Programme of Work 2025-2030 (EPW 2) and the CoR political priorities 2025-2030, are a timely occasion to renew and update the cooperation between both parties.

Now therefore, the parties have agreed as follows:

Article I: Aims of Cooperation

- 1.1. The objective of this Action Plan is to enhance cooperation between both parties and to identify areas of mutual interest with a view to:
- deepening mutual understanding of the main priorities and activities of both parties' new mandate in order to foster inter-sectoral cooperation towards the achievement of the health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular Goal 3 "Good Health and Wellbeing";
 - identifying potential joint initiatives of common interest, building on each other's comparative advantages, in order to support and strengthen health policy dialogue and action at regional and local levels and to enhance their visibility;
 - ensuring knowledge sharing and support exchange of good practices and experiences;
 - promoting contacts between representatives of both parties and create learning opportunities;

Article II: Areas and forms of cooperation

- 2.1. Without prejudice to cooperation in any other health-related fields, the following thematic priorities of joint interest have been identified for cooperation between both parties:
- Health security (health emergency preparedness, response and resilience)
 - Digital health;
 - Non-communicable diseases;
 - Shortages in healthcare resources, including workforce and medicines;
 - Climate change and health resilience
 - Mental health
 - Healthy ageing
 - Women's health
- 2.2. The cooperation around these and other topics can take various forms, as deemed appropriate, including:
- Technical support and expert inputs by WHO/Europe into the activities and discussions of the NAT Commission (or any other Commission as deemed relevant);
 - Sharing of knowledge and experience through events, discussions and consultations organized by any of the parties, including study visits and on-site workshops;
 - Organisation of joint sessions, such as in the context of the European Week of Regions and Cities, World Health Day;
 - Invitation of CoR representatives to the WHO/Europe's Regional Committee meetings;
 - Exchanges and collaborations with the WHO/Europe's Regions for Health Network, the Coalition of Partners on Health and Tourism, the Healthy Cities Network, the CoR's Interregional Group on Health and Wellbeing;
 - Contributions to research and publications on health topics;
 - Visibility and awareness raising actions through social media, e-material or publications;

Article III: Modalities of cooperation

- 3.1. Unless specified otherwise, the terms and conditions specified in the Memorandum of Understanding between both parties shall remain in effect.
- 3.2. In the implementation of activities under this Action Plan, the parties shall act in accordance with their respective rules, regulations and policies, including the use of the respective parties' name, acronym and emblem.

- 3.3. For the implementation of the Action Plan, the WHO Representation to the EU will act as focal point on behalf of WHO/Europe, and the Secretariat of the NAT Commission will act as focal point on behalf of the CoR.
- 3.4. The parties will hold regular meetings between their designated focal points, or their representatives, to review the outcomes and issues arising from their cooperation, to agree on priorities and issues for future cooperation and to identify new areas of collaboration.
- 3.5. The parties will make every effort to inform each other of all issues that might affect the implementation of this Action Plan and the activities to be implemented.
- 3.6. Nothing in this Action Plan shall be deemed to represent a financial or legal implication or commitment on any of the parties.

Article IV: Entry into force, amendment and termination

- 4.1. This Action Plan will enter into force on the date of its signature by both parties. It will remain in effect until 31 December 2026.
- 4.2. This Action Plan can be renewed before or after this date by written agreement of the parties.
- 4.3. This Action Plan can be terminated by either party six months prior written notice to the other party. No such termination will affect contractual obligations already entered into force by either party under this Action Plan. may be renewed by written agreement of the parties before 31 December 2026.
- 4.4. Any amendment to this Action Plan will be effectuated by mutual agreement of the parties through an appropriate exchange of letters.

Article V: Privileges and Immunities

- 5.1. Nothing in or relating to this Action Plan shall be deemed to represent a waiver of the Privileges and Immunities of either WHO or CoR.

Agreement and acceptance of this Action Plan are indicated by the signature of the duly authorised representatives of the parties.

Done at Brussels (Belgium), the 26th day of March, 2025.

On behalf of the CoR



Piotr Calbecki
Chair of the CoR NAT commission

On behalf of WHO/Europe



Hans Henri P. Kluge
Regional Director