



## EUROPE

### Regional Committee for Europe Fifty-ninth session

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16 September 2009  
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### Resolution

#### Implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005) in the WHO European Region

The Regional Committee,

Recalling World Health Assembly resolutions WHA48.7 on revision and updating of the International Health Regulations, WHA48.13 on communicable diseases prevention and control: new, emerging, and re-emerging infectious diseases, WHA54.14 on global health security: epidemic alert and response, WHA55.16 on global public health response to natural occurrence, accidental release or deliberate use of biological and chemical agents or radionuclear material that affect health, WHA56.19 on prevention and control of influenza pandemics and annual epidemics, WHA56.28 and WHA58.3 on revision of the International Health Regulations, WHA56.29 on severe acute respiratory syndrome, WHA58.5 on strengthening pandemic influenza preparedness and response, WHA59.2 and WHA61.2 on the application and implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR), and WHA62.10 on pandemic influenza preparedness: sharing of influenza viruses and access to vaccines and other benefits, as well as World Health Assembly report A62/6 on implementation of the IHR and Regional Committee document EUR/RC56/9 Rev.1 on enhancing health security: the challenges in the WHO European Region and the health sector response, all of which respond to the need to ensure global public health security;

Concerned by the challenges posed by pandemic (H1N1) 2009 and calling for individual, collective and adapted responses at a time when health systems and the livelihood of populations are under pressure as a result of the global economic crisis;

Mindful that the IHR are a key instrument in protection against the international spread of diseases and play an important role in management of the current influenza pandemic (H1N1) 2009 in particular;

Acknowledging the role of WHO in regional and global alert and response activities and that the control of international public health risks requires close collaboration, effective strategies and dedicated resources in partnership at subnational, national and international levels;

Aware of the diversity in the Region with respect to Member States' capacities for timely detection and mounting of adapted responses to public health risks;

Recognizing that the development of capacities and the implementation of the IHR are continuous processes for Member States and WHO, requiring unrelenting commitment and resources;

Having considered the background paper presented by the WHO Regional Office for Europe (document EUR/RC59/10);

1. URGES Member States in the European Region of WHO to:
  - (a) support the development and/or maintenance by 2012 of the core capacities required under the IHR for early warning and response functions at subnational, national and international levels;
  - (b) build capacities on existing resources, initiatives and structures and maximize synergies in order to detect emerging and re-emerging diseases, as well as evolving characteristics of public health risks;
  - (c) empower national IHR focal points to stimulate collaboration and dialogue between the relevant sectors and disciplines, in order to ensure that the early warning and response functions are carried out and that the risk assessment process determines the required public health actions;

- (d) empower health care workers in their capacity as a key resource of the health system, ensuring their adequate personal protection by means of infection control and fostering interaction between health care workers and public health professionals;
- (e) engage in partnership characterized by solidarity among Member States, in order to foster mutual exchanges of experience and lessons learned and thereby support capacity-building and response activities beyond national borders;
- (f) utilize the unique opportunity presented by the implementation of the IHR, including the development of a national IHR action plan, as a tool to strengthen national partnerships;
- (g) mobilize, in partnership, the resources required to develop and maintain the necessary core capacity at subnational and national levels as specified in Annex 1 of the IHR;
- (h) extract and take advantage of lessons learned from past and present health risks, including pandemic (H1N1) 2009, in order to adjust responses to future public risks and to develop and/or maintain capacities in an evidence-based manner;

2. REQUESTS the Regional Director to:

- (a) support Member States in their IHR implementation and pandemic preparedness and response in a need-driven manner and continue to monitor activities and capacities, in order to formulate regional strategies for response and long-term capacity-building;
- (b) continue to provide leadership in coordinating and prioritizing activities and provide tools and technical support for Member States, particularly those in need;
- (c) facilitate exchanges of information and experience among Member States and make regularly available to national IHR focal points information on the detection, assessment and management of events, including lessons learned in the implementation and application of the IHR;
- (d) engage in global and regional partnerships to foster coordination with other relevant intergovernmental bodies while maintaining direct communication between Member States and WHO in detection, assessment and response with regard to international public health risks;

- (e) extract lessons learned from pandemic (H1N1) 2009 in order to translate these into evidence-based recommendations for Member States and WHO in the European Region, and for strengthening capacities for detection, assessment and response in the short, medium and long terms;
- (f) collaborate with Member States and engage in global and regional partnerships, fostering coordination with other relevant intergovernmental bodies in efforts to mobilize human and financial resources for detection, assessment and response with regard to international public health risks, notably pandemic (H1N1) 2009;
- (g) provide expertise and technical guidance documentation for monitoring the implementation of national IHR action plans;
- (h) at the request of the State Party concerned, facilitate the certification by WHO of airports and ports as per Article 20 paragraph 4 of the Regulations.