



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

IFMSA Statement on Agenda Point 5 c) : Priorities for health systems strengthening in the WHO European Region 2015–2020: walking the talk on people centredness

65th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe

Dear Chairperson

Dear delegates,

IFMSA strongly believes in centring people in the strengthening of Health Systems.

We welcome this agenda point's document showcasing needed pillars of health systems across Europe:

- to ensure UHC and abolish of out-of-pocket expenses;
- to enhance health workforce availability worldwide, where IFMSA also reinforces the need of ensuring their adequate education;
- improving health information and its systems;
- to ensure access to medicines and technology;

and, enclosing everything, the great need of adapting Health Systems to the 21st century challenges.

We believe Europe is facing a serious threat to the achievement of such important values. The EU is negotiating with the USA a trade agreement - the TTIP - which, besides potential economic and social benefits, has, from our perspective, potential serious negative consequences on many areas of health systems, namely access to medicines, adequate distribution and education of health workforce, lesser tobacco control and food and alcohol labeling, extensions of intellectual properties and consequently increase in technology/medicine prices and potential overruling of governments' decisions due to an Investor State Dispute Settlement.

IFMSA calls all stakeholders to continue fighting for the insurance that trade agreements will not put European health at risk.

IFMSA calls the member states to:

- open communication channels with their Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Members of the European Parliament about this agreement
- avoid the potential negative effects of ISDS and thus promote the removal of it from the agreement
- protect public services, such as health, throughout the whole proposal.

Otherwise, many can be the negative consequences of TTIP on the social, and particularly, the health status, of Europe.

IFMSA commits to participate in the discussions related to these negotiations and we encourage member states to have more comprehensive, transparent and inclusive discussions, keeping in mind the spirit of people centeredness that we all are aiming for.