



## EUROPE

### Regional Committee for Europe Fifty-ninth session

Copenhagen, 14–17 September 2009

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### Resolution

#### Health in times of global economic crisis: implications for the WHO European Region

The Regional Committee,

Recalling resolution EUR/RC58/R4 on stewardship/governance of health systems in the WHO European Region, related to the Tallinn Charter adopted at the WHO European Ministerial Conference on Health Systems: “Health Systems, Health and Wealth”;

Recalling resolution EUR/RC57/R2 on the Millennium Development Goals in the WHO European Region;

Mindful of the reports of the global high-level consultation on the financial crisis and global health, held in Geneva on 19 January 2009, and of the meeting on health in times of global economic crisis: implications for the WHO European Region, held in Oslo on 1 and 2 April 2009 and whose recommendations are attached as Annex 1;

Having reviewed document EUR/RC59/7 on Health in times of global economic crisis: implications for the WHO European Region;

1. ACKNOWLEDGES the risks for health and health systems, and the main opportunities for action that the ongoing global economic crisis entails, as well as the positive reaction of Member States and different stakeholders in the health sector in responding jointly to it;

2. TAKES NOTE OF the recommendations for action made by the meeting held in Oslo in April 2009;

3. URGES Member States to ensure that their health systems continue to protect those most in need (the poor, the elderly, the sick and frail), to demonstrate effectiveness in delivering personal and population services, while cooperating with other sectors to encourage health equity considerations to be taken into account, and to behave as wise economic actors in terms of investment, expenditure and employment;

4. INVITES Member States to continue collaborating in the context of the work of the WHO Regional Office for Europe by:

- (a) stepping up the monitoring and analysis of ongoing changes in living conditions, social norms and values, lifestyles, health status and access to health care, keeping in mind the shared values of solidarity, equity and participation;
- (b) assessing health system performance in a systematic way in order to attain equitable health gain, financial protection, responsiveness and efficiency improvement, noting the particular importance of fair financing, universal access to health promotion, disease prevention and health care;
- (c) articulating realistic policy options aimed at responding to the negative impacts of the economic crisis on health and health systems, while seizing opportunities to introduce any necessary adjustments into their decision-making mechanisms, entitlements, rules, functioning, organizational architectures, etc.;

5. REQUESTS the Regional Director to:

- (a) provide leadership to Member States in their efforts to minimize the negative impact of the crisis on the health of their populations by offering services tailored to specific country needs;
- (b) produce health intelligence as well as conduct innovative, value-adding policy dialogue with countries by means of voluntary benchmarking, networking among interested countries on specific topics, sharing of information by all, and the production of a minimum set of relevant common indicators for follow-up;
- (c) report back to the Regional Committee at its sixty-first session in 2011 on the lessons learned at regional level in the handling of the economic crisis.

## *Annex 1*

The recommendations presented below are the outcome of the high-level Conference that took place in Oslo on 1–2 April 2009.

1. Distribute wealth based on solidarity and equity.
2. Increase official development assistance (ODA) in order to protect the most vulnerable.
3. Invest in health to improve wealth; protect health budgets.
4. “Every minister is a health minister”.
5. Protect cost-effective public health and primary health care services.
6. Ensure “more money for health and more health for the money”.
7. Strengthen universal access to social protection programmes.
8. Ensure universal access to health services.
9. Promote universal, compulsory and redistributive forms of revenue collection.
10. Consider introducing or raising taxes on tobacco, alcohol, sugar and salt.
11. Step up the education of health professionals and ensure ethical recruitment.
12. Encourage active public participation in the development of measures to mitigate the effects of the economic crisis on health.