

Report of the Subgroup on Governance

15 May 2015

Introduction

1. Governance reform has been a key concern of both the Standing Committees and Regional Committees for Europe since 2010, with the establishment of successive Subgroups of the SCRC to review selected governance issues. The present Subgroup of the 22nd SCRC is the 3rd consecutive working group thus established, consistent with the Regional Committee's decisions in Resolutions EUR/RC60/R3 and EUR/RC63/R8 which requested the SCRC "to initiate a cycle of comprehensive reviews of governance in the WHO European Region and to report back to the Regional Committee on lessons learned in this regard as such intervals as the Standing Committee itself deems appropriate."

2. A summary of all governance reform initiatives undertaken in the European Region from 2010 to 2015 was recently developed as a contribution to the on-going global governance reform discussions. A copy of that document is attached to the back of the present report as an Appendix, in order to place the work of the present Subgroup in its right context and perspective.

3. The Terms of Reference, membership and schedule of meetings of the present Subgroup of the 22nd SCRC are as per Annex 1. Issues reviewed have focused on the following:

- Nomination procedures for the Executive Board and the Standing Committee;
- Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee regarding nomination procedures for the Regional Director;
- Framework for Engagement with non-State Actors and involvement of NGOs at future RC sessions;
- Conference Declarations;
- Unified formats/templates for policy papers.

4. At its 3th meeting, the SCRC furthermore, asked the subgroup to advise the SCRC on alignment of global and regional action plan and their respective reporting times.

Nomination procedures for the Executive Board and the Standing Committee

5. The Subgroup considered further refinements to the new nomination tool already pilot-tested in May 2014, with a view to improve the transparency and objectivity of current procedures for the EB and the SCRC.

6. The Subgroup recommended, and the SCRC agreed, that the weights assigned to the various elements in the tool should remain as per the draft developed in 2014 as far as nominations for 2015 was concerned. Modifications to these could later be introduced, if practical experience were to indicate a need for a different weighting structure.

7. The Subgroup also confirmed that countries nominating candidates for the EB or the SCRC or both should not participate in the scoring process or deliberations of the SCRC for that or those governing bodies.

8. On the question of transparency, the Subgroup recommended that the tool should not be used as a formal deciding criterion, but rather as a supporting mechanism to the SCRC's discussions on nominations. It had been developed as an objective and transparent tool to make the nominations explainable. However, as further clarification is needed on the use of the tool. As such, the tool is considered still in a pilot phase, and therefor the results of the model would will not be made available. A feature of the new nomination tool was the recommendation by the Subgroup, and decision of the SCRC, that candidatures for the EB and the SCRC should be supported by a Letter of Intent. Guidance on format and content should in future be attached to the Regional Director's Call for Nominations-letter for the various committees.

9. The Letter of Intent should meet the following characteristics:

- Be written in one of EURO's official languages in order to facilitate timely translations;
- Be no longer than 2 pages (600 words);
- Focus on the following three issues:
 - Key elements of the Member State's relationship with WHO;
 - WHO priorities of particular relevance to the country concerned;
 - The role the country intended to play as a member of the committee in addressing those priorities.

10. The use of the new nomination tool would not have any impact on prevailing Rules of Procedure of the RC and the SCRC. The inclusion of the letter of intent in the Rules of Procedures is attached in Annex 2.

Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure of the RC regarding nomination procedures for the Regional Director

11. Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee describes in detail the provisions for the nomination of the Regional Director for the European Region. The basic provisions were introduced already in 1994, but extensive amendments were introduced as a result of reviews undertaken by the SCRC and its Subgroups in 2010 and 2013.

12. Further modifications were discussed by the present SCRC Subgroup, focusing on the following specific issues:

- Membership and quorum of the Regional Evaluation Group;
- How to handle the issue of medical examination of candidates for RD; and
- Arrangements for oral presentations of candidates at a meeting where all European Member States could be present.

13. Modifications to the text of Rule 47 as a result of the Subgroup's discussions have been cleared by the Legal Department at HQ. The revisions in track change mode are attached as Annex 2.

14. The modifications in Annex 2 will be presented to RC65 as a draft resolution annexed to the Report of the 22nd SCRC to the RC, in the same manner as was done for the 63rd Regional Committee in 2013.

Framework for Engagement with Non-state Actors and involvement of NGOs at future RC sessions

15. Significant difficulties had arisen during the discussions in January 2015 in both the 22nd Programme Budget and Administration Committee of the Board (PBAC) and the 136th session of the Executive Board regarding the Non-state Actors (NSA) issue.

16. The Subgroup had noted with concern that the issue of NSAs had demonstrated clearly opposing regional views and positions. While the Group was briefed by the Regional Director of the Director-General's firm commitment to have the Framework on NSAs adopted at this year's 68th Assembly, members of the Subgroup expressed concern that the process seemed to be getting increasingly out of hand.

17. The view was expressed that the Director-General's Office urgently needed to develop a clear scenario on how the discussions in the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Meetings should be structured and chaired. The Subgroup felt that the focus should now be on a minimum set of key issues, rather than try to develop a detailed and fully comprehensive framework, which would seem a nearly impossible task prior to the Assembly.

18. The idea of building coalitions with other like-minded regions was advanced as a possible means of advancing the process. The Subgroup recommended that this idea could be explored by the Regional Director with her colleagues in the GPG, and also taken forward on an informal basis by the European Working Group members Estonia

and the Russian Federation, during the forthcoming meetings. A go-it-alone approach by EURO on this issue might however well backfire, and should be avoided.

19. On the related subject of involvement of NGOs in future sessions of the RC, the Subgroup recalled that a comprehensive review of this issue would need to await the outcome of the global process regarding NSAs, as already decided by the SCRC. Improvements had however already been made on NGO involvement in the European Regional Committees over the last few years, and those initiatives would continue.

Conference Declarations

20. A draft proposal by Estonia was discussed by the Subgroup on the issue of conference declarations. It was recalled that there were 2 types of conferences: Ministerial and High-level. Both were important, but served different purposes. Conference declarations and outcome documents are adopted on both types of conferences. Often these documents are proposed to be adopted per capsulam at following governing body meetings.

21. The Subgroup concluded that a procedure and criteria for bringing conference declarations and outcome documents to governing body meetings should be established and the SCRC would need to be actively involved in advising on the consultative process required during the preparatory stages for conference declarations.

22. Following the Rules of Procedures of the Regional Committee and of the Standing Committee of the Regional Committee, the Regional Director would put forward the agenda item for the Regional Committee. The SCRC should be involved in discussing if a declaration should go forward to the RC in the form of a draft resolution - in which case it would constitute a commitment on the part of Member States - or just be referred to the RC for general information. The following criteria would normally be taken into account:

- The drafting process for the declaration and outcome document was transparent and inclusive (all countries have received draft text and had the opportunity to comment and propose amendments, all countries have received the final draft for second round of comments before the conference)
- Sufficient time (at least 3 months) was allowed for consultation and negotiation of the draft declaration or outcome document with member states before the conference
- The conference was organised toward high level attendance (ministerial or other high level)
- The conference was attended by at least two thirds of Euro countries
- SCRC was involved in drafting process of the declaration and outcome document having discussed it in the SCRC meeting before the conference

23. The proposed criteria will be piloted for the WHO Ministerial conference on the life-course approach in the context of Health 2020 in Minsk, Belarus in October 2015.

Uniform formats/templates for policy papers

24. The Subgroup considered the difficult issue of developing criteria and structures for various types of policy papers used by the Organization, such as Action Plans, Strategies, Roadmaps, Frameworks, etc.

25. Preliminary work had been performed by Estonia on that issue. The Subgroup agreed that clear criteria, structures and templates for such various papers would facilitate Member States' review, and consequently also improve on the quality of guidance which Member States could offer the Secretariat on policy issues submitted to them.

26. An important first step in that work would be to clarify and standardize the terminology. That issue was not however restricted to the European Region, but was one which would require an Organization-wide response. Headquarters and the other regions also needed to be involved in order to come up with a set of terminology and criteria which could be applied systematically throughout WHO.

27. It was agreed that the Secretariat would prepare for the September meeting of the SCRC an overview of definitions used within WHO, including resolutions, decisions, declaration, charter, strategies, action plans, roadmap, framework. It was also agreed that the Secretariat would do a mapping of existing global and regional action plans especially focusing on their alignment following the WHO reform. It is proposed that this topic will be taken forward by the next SCRC.

Reporting requirements of RC resolutions

28. During its meeting in March, the SCRC requested the subgroup to look into the reporting requirements of RC resolutions in order to avoid a too heavy reporting burden and to better plan the agenda of future RCs.

29. Taking into consideration the document on the review of the status of resolutions adopted by the Regional Committee and recommendations for sunseting and reporting requirements (EUR/RC63/17 Rev1) and its updates with newly adopted resolutions, the Subgroup agreed that, in principle, the reporting time lines of regional action plans should be as much as possible be aligned with those of global action plans. The mapping exercise mentioned above would allow a more detailed review. It was further agreed that, if no global action plan exists, a regional action plan should, normally, be reported on to the RC, after 3 year as a progress report and after 6 year as full agenda item.

Annex 1. 22nd SCRC Sub-group on Governance Terms of Reference

Background

Governance reform has figured prominently on the agendas of both the Standing Committees and Regional Committees for Europe for the last 5 years. In fact, the 60th Regional Committee, in Resolutions EUR/RC60/R3 and EUR/RC63/R8 requested the SCRC “ to initiate a comprehensive review of governance every five years and report back to RC68 in 2018.”

At its 64th session, the Regional Committee heard a report on governance issues covered by the Sub-group of the 21st SCRC, and was also presented with an extensive list of all governance reform initiatives taken in the European Region from 2010 to 2014. In light of the positive experience gained through this work, the 22nd SCRC decided at its first meeting on 18 September 2014 that the Sub-group on Governance should continue its work also during the 2014-2015 biennium, with revised terms of reference.

Issues

The following outstanding work will be undertaken:

1. Nomination procedures for the Executive Board and the Standing Committee

Extensive work was carried out by the governance sub-group of the 21st SCRC to develop a tool which increases transparency, objectivity and fairness in future nominations to the EB and the SCRC. While the 21st SCRC endorsed the overall thrust and main principles developed by the sub-group, further fine-tuning of the tool would be required before it could be consistently applied in practice. The sub-group on governance has consequently been tasked by the 22nd SCRC to conclude this work at an early date, in order to allow its application already for the 2015 nominations.

2. Regional Evaluation Group

Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Europe sets out the provisions governing the mandate, timeline and functions of the Regional Evaluation Group in the nomination process for Regional Director. Those provisions were last amended and updated in 2010, through resolution EUR/RC60/R3. Following the nomination by RC64 of the Regional Director for a new term of office, the Regional Committee requested the SCRC to propose recommendations to the RC65 on the following suggestions of the Regional Evaluation Group:

- In relation to “healthy” as a criterion for candidates for the post of Regional Director for Europe, the Group was of the view that this criterion should be assessed through an appropriate mechanism involving a medical evaluation that is handled in a manner consistent with the process for election of the Director-General.

- As to the designation of the Regional Evaluation Group, the Group was of the view that consideration should be given to changing the applicable rules so as to establish a Regional Evaluation Group composed of six (6) members, with a quorum for the conduct of business and decisions of three (3) members.
- Regarding the convening of time-limited oral presentations by candidates, the Group was of the view that candidates, irrespective of number and including cases where there is only one candidate, should generally be provided with the opportunity to make such presentations before all Members States of the Region, in the interests of good process and transparency.

3. Involvement of NGOs at future RC sessions

The 21st SCRC's sub-group on governance discussed several potential initiatives which could be taken to facilitate a more active involvement and participation of NGOs in Regional Committee meetings. The new sub-group was tasked by the 22nd SCRC to further follow up in the light of the outcome of the global discussion on framework for engagement with Non State Actors.

4. Conference declaration

The SCRC requested the subgroup to propose recommendations on the process of preparation of WHO/EURO conference declarations and options for their discussion at Regional Committee meetings.

5. Unified format for technical documents

The 21th SCRC requested the subgroup to propose recommendations for a more structured format and definitions for technical documents such as strategies, policies, action plans, roadmaps etc and how to differentiate between such key issues.

Membership of Sub-group

The composition of the sub-group will include the following SCRC members: Estonia (Chair), Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Latvia, Malta (ex officio)

Timing

- Draft Terms of Reference to be circulated to members of the sub-group for comments and amendments by 1 December 2014;
- First meeting of sub-group, to review ToRs and develop preliminary work programme, 8 December 2014, Helsinki;
- Approval of Terms of Reference by the 22nd SCRC, at its 2nd meeting, 9-10 December 2014, Helsinki;
- Presentation of draft report of sub-group to 3rd meeting of SCRC, 17-18 March 2015, Copenhagen;

- Final draft report circulated to sub-group members for comments by mid-April 2015;
- Presentation of final report of sub-group to the 4th open SCRC meeting in May 2015, immediately prior to WHA68;
- Main conclusions and recommendations of sub-group to be integrated into the report of the 22nd SCRC to RC65.

Annex 2.

Part 1. Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Europe

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Rule 14

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14.2.2 The rules set forth below shall apply for determining the membership of the Standing Committee.

Not less than eight months before the date fixed for the opening of the next annual session of the Regional Committee, the Regional Director shall inform each Member State of the Region that he or she will receive nominations for membership on the Standing Committee. Nominations shall be made by Member States notifying the Regional Director six months before the date fixed for the opening of the Regional Committee session of their interest in having a representative on the Standing Committee. Member States shall submit with their nominations (1) curricula vitae, in a standard format, of the representatives they intend to appoint if elected to the Standing Committee, and (2) a letter of intent explaining the relationship of the Member State with WHO, its commitment to WHO priorities at the global and regional levels, and the contribution that it would make as a member of the Standing Committee. The Regional Director shall notify all Member States of the Region prior to the start of the World Health Assembly of the nominations so received and shall send to all Member States the curricula vitae of the intended representatives and the letters of intent.

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Rule 47

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47.1 At its session preceding the one at which a person is due to be nominated as Regional Director, the Regional Committee shall appoint a Regional Evaluation Group composed of ~~three~~ six members chosen from delegations of the Members attending the Regional Committee, based on equitable geographical representation, to make a preliminary evaluation of candidates for nomination in the light of the criteria specified by the Regional Committee and to perform related functions as set out in this Rule. ~~The Regional Committee shall also appoint three alternates to the Regional Evaluation Group. Four members shall constitute a quorum for the Regional Evaluation Group to conduct its business.~~

47.2 The rules set forth below shall apply for determining the composition of the Regional Evaluation Group.

- (a) The selection of the members and alternates of the Regional Evaluation Group shall be carried out, *mutatis mutandis*, in accordance with the procedure set forth in Rule 14.2.2. In view of the Standing Committee's oversight role vis-à-vis the Regional Office, ~~one~~ two members of the Regional Evaluation Group should normally be a persons having either recently served on the Standing Committee or currently representing ~~his or her~~ their countries on that Committee. In the

event of an election being held pursuant to Rule 43, the allocation of seats for members ~~and then alternates~~ shall be made in accordance with the order in which members received the majority votes.

- (b) The members ~~and alternates~~ shall cease to serve on the Regional Evaluation Group if a candidate is presented by the Member on whose delegation they served at the Regional Committee when they were appointed. ~~Alternates appointed to the Regional Evaluation Group shall replace members when the latter are unable to complete their term for any reason.~~

47.3 Not less than eleven months before the date fixed for the opening of a session of the Regional Committee at which a person is due to be nominated as Regional Director, the Director- General shall inform each Member of the Region that he or she will receive proposals of names of candidates for nomination by the Regional Committee as Regional Director. Copies shall be sent to the Regional Office's list of official contacts, as well as to the Chairperson of the Regional Evaluation Group.

47.4 Any Member of the Region may propose the name or names of one or more persons, each of whom has indicated willingness to act as Regional Director, submitting with each proposal particulars of the person's qualifications and experience. Member States shall be mindful of the Code of Conduct adopted by the Regional Committee and shall bring it to the attention of such persons. Such proposals shall be sent to the Director-General so as to reach him or her not less than seven months before the date fixed for the opening of the session. This time limit may be extended by the President of the Regional Committee on the proposal of the Regional Evaluation Group. Any such extension shall be communicated by the Chairperson of the Regional Evaluation Group to the Director-General, who shall promptly inform the Member States of the Region.

47.5 A person holding office as Regional Director for the Region shall, if he or she is eligible and has so requested within the time limit referred to in Rule 47.3, be a candidate for nomination without being proposed under the preceding paragraph.

47.6 [Deleted]

47.7 Not later than two weeks after the expiration of the time limit referred to in Rule 47.4, the Director-General shall transmit a list of names and all particulars of candidates received to the Chairperson of the Regional Evaluation Group.

47.8 The Regional Evaluation Group ~~may, if it deems it desirable, shall, unless it exceptionally decides otherwise,~~ make arrangements for all candidates to give a time-limited oral presentation at a meeting to which all Member States of the Region are invited. ~~This arrangement shall, in the interest of due process and transparency, apply in all cases, even when there is only one candidate.~~ In order to give all Member States an equal opportunity to attend such a meeting, it would normally be convened jointly with the Standing Committee during the latter's session immediately prior to the opening of the World Health Assembly.

47.9 The Director-General shall, not less than six months before the date fixed for the opening of the session, cause copies of all proposals for nomination as Regional Director (with particulars of qualifications and experience) received by him or her within the period specified to be sent to each Member of the Region and shall indicate to each Member whether or not the person holding the office is a candidate for nomination. Copies shall be sent to the Regional Office's list of official contacts, as well as to the Chairperson of the Regional Evaluation Group.

47.9 bis Prior to the release of the evaluation report by the Regional Evaluation Group on all candidates provided in Rule 47.10 below, the person(s) who have been proposed for the post of Regional Director and/or the person holding office as Regional Director for the Region who has requested to be a candidate for nomination, as provided by Rule 47.5 above, shall be invited to undergo a medical examination, and to have a completed WHO medical examination form brought to the attention of the Director, Health and Medical Services, at WHO headquarters. The Director, Health and Medical Services, shall inform the Chairperson of the Regional Evaluation Group as to whether the person(s) who have been proposed for the post of Regional Director and/or the person holding office as Regional Director for the Region who has requested to be a candidate for nomination as provided by Rule 47.5 enjoy the good physical condition required of all staff members of the Organization and satisfy the criterion stipulated in paragraph 2(f) of resolution EUR/RC47/R5.

47.10 Not less than ten weeks before the date fixed for the opening of a session, the Chairperson of the Regional Evaluation Group shall send, under confidential cover, the evaluation report of the Evaluation Group on all candidates, and an unranked short-list of not more than five candidates who in its opinion most closely meet the criteria laid down, to the President, the Executive President and the Deputy Executive President of the Committee, to each Member State of the Region according to the Regional Office's list of official contacts, and to the Director-General.

47.11 In the event that the post of Regional Director unexpectedly falls vacant, the Director-General shall:

- (a) designate a person to act as Regional Director until the appointment of a new incumbent;
- (b) decide, in consultation with the President, whether a special session of the Regional Committee should be convened as set out in Rule 5.

47.12 The nomination of Regional Director shall take place at a private meeting of the Regional Committee, which will be attended only by representatives, alternates and advisers of Members of the Regional Committee and by essential members of the Secretariat as established by the Director-General. The Regional Committee shall make a selection by secret ballot from among the persons who are candidates under this Rule, in the following manner:

- (a) at each ballot, each representative entitled to vote shall write on his or her ballot paper the name of a single candidate chosen from those who are candidates under this Rule;
- (b) if a candidate obtains at any ballot the majority required under Rule 39, he or she shall be declared nominated;

- (c) if at a ballot no candidate obtains the required majority and one candidate obtains a lesser number of votes than any other candidate, he or she shall be eliminated and a further election ballot held;
- (d) if at any ballot no candidate obtains the required majority and two or more candidates obtain the same lesser number of votes than other candidates, the Regional Committee shall decide by ballot as to which of the candidates obtaining such lesser number of votes shall be eliminated and, such candidate having been eliminated, a further election ballot shall be held.

47.13 If the number of candidates is reduced to two, and if there is a tie between those two candidates after three further ballots, the names of both those candidates shall be forwarded for selection to the Executive Board.

47.14 The name of the person or persons so nominated shall be announced at a public meeting of the Regional Committee and submitted to the Executive Board.

47.15 ~~[Deleted]-The Regional Committee may also inform the Executive Board of the name of another candidate considered suitable for the case where the person first nominated is not available.~~

47.16 The appointment of the Regional Director shall be for five years and he or she shall be eligible for reappointment once only.

Appendix. Governance Reform in the WHO European Region Summary of initiatives undertaken 2010–2015 (March 2015)

The European Region has been proactive in governance reform, starting in February 2010 with the establishment of the Working Group on Governance of the Standing Committee of the Regional Committee (SCRC). This document collects the main initiatives and changes grouped under six categories:

- Procedures for nomination of the Regional Director;
- Strengthened governance oversight by Member States;
- Management of governing body agendas;
- Management of resolutions and amendments;
- Transparency and criteria for nomination of members of the Board and the SCRC;
- Miscellaneous

Introduction

The European Region has been proactive in governance reform, starting in February 2010 with the establishment of the Working Group on Governance of the Standing Committee of the Regional Committee (SCRC).

A summary of governance issues addressed by the SCRC and the RC over the last 5 years is provided in the following. Numerous issues have been studied by the SCRC and its successive working groups, but for ease of reference they have been grouped under the following 6 main topics:

- Procedures for nomination of the Regional Director;
- Strengthened governance oversight by Member States;
- Management of governing body agendas;
- Management of resolutions and amendments;
- Transparency and criteria for nomination of members of the Board and the SCRC;
- Miscellaneous.

Hyperlinks to the relevant Regional Committee and SCRC documents, and RC resolutions, have been provided in the Annex in order to provide full documentation in support of the present summary.

Procedures for nomination of the Regional Director

Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee describes in detail the provisions for the nomination of the Regional Director for the European Region. The basic provisions were introduced already in 1994, but extensive amendments have been introduced as a result of reviews undertaken by the SCRC and its sub-groups in 2010 and 2013, with further modifications being proposed by the present SCRC governance sub-group, to be presented to RC65 in September 2015.

Initially, Rule 47 prescribed the setting up a Search Group to identify potential candidates for Regional Director. However, the 2010 SCRC governance sub-group acknowledged the fact that, since Member States are free to both nominate and elect whomever they want as Regional Director, there was little added value in having a group appointed by the Regional Committee to actively search for candidates. A more useful function of this group would be to evaluate the merits or otherwise of the various candidatures based on clear criteria, with the purpose of coming up with a short-list of candidates for the Regional Committee's consideration.

Rule 47, in its present form (including amendments currently proposed by the SCRC sub-group to RC65), consequently includes the following provisions:

- Appointment by the RC of a Regional Evaluation Group, composed of 6 Member States and with a quorum of 4, based on equitable geographical representation;
- All Member States proposing a candidate for Regional Director are reminded of the Code of Conduct for nomination of RD, adopted by RC63 (and harmonized with the revised modus operandi for the process of electing the Director-General);

- The Regional Evaluation Group makes arrangements for all candidates to give a time-limited, oral presentation at a meeting to which all Member States of the Region are invited. In the interest of due process and transparency, this arrangement applies in all cases, even when there is only one candidate.¹
- All candidates are invited to undergo a medical examination, and to have a completed WHO medical examination form brought to the attention of the Director, Health and Medical Services at headquarters, in order to ensure that they enjoy the good physical condition required of all staff members of the Organization;
- Following analysis, reviews and discussions of the CVs and impressions from the oral presentations, the Regional Evaluation Group prepares individual evaluation reports of all candidates. It concludes its work by also preparing an un-ranked short-list of not more than 5 candidates, who in its opinion most closely meet the criteria laid down for the post of Regional Director. Individual evaluation reports and the short-list are sent under confidential cover to the officers of the RC, the Director-General, and to each Member State of the Region;
- The final step in the process is the actual nomination of the Regional Director, which takes place at a private meeting of the Regional Committee, through secret ballot.

Strengthened governance oversight by Member States

In accordance with Article 50 (b) of the WHO Constitution, a key governance function of the Regional Committee is *'to supervise the activities of the regional office'*. In view of this, the RC has over the last few years been refocused towards a more strategic involvement in regional and global policy debates. At the same time, the RC has also devolved some oversight functions to the SCRC.

As from 2010, the following measures have been introduced:

- A strengthened oversight function of the Standing Committee was put in place in 2010 through Resolution EUR/RC60/R3, in line with its basic function *'to act for and represent the Regional Committee and to ensure that effect is given to the decisions and policies of the Regional Committee'*.²
- In this regard, it is important to recall that the functions of the Standing Committee, as laid out in Rule 14.2.10, subsections (a) to (g), is closely modelled on Article 28 of the WHO Constitution, which sets out the functions of the Executive Board vis-à-vis the World Health Assembly. The European Region consequently has a formal two-tier governance structure of Member States, - a set-up which might be of interest also to other regions of the Organization;
- As part of strengthened oversight and accountability, the SCRC receives and discusses high-level management reports on key strategic issues, linked to the performance of the Regional Office (as from 2010);

¹ In order to give all Member States an equal opportunity to attend such a meeting, it will normally be convened jointly with the Standing Committee during the latter's session immediately prior to the opening of the World Health Assembly.

² Rule 14.2.10 (a) of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee

- In order to gradually involve all European Member States in the governance and oversight function of the Organization, while at the same time facilitating a better geographical balance, the membership of the SCRC was in 2010 increased from 9 to 12, with 4 outgoing and 4 new members selected each year for periods of 3 years.

Management of governing body agendas

The question of how to better manage the agendas of the global governing bodies, including the issue of how to limit the number of agenda items, has been a recurring theme at recent Executive Board sessions.

In the European Region, a different but related issue was identified by the 2010 SCRC sub-group on Governance, i.e. the fact that the combination of shortened Regional Committee sessions and the large number of agenda items predetermined by previous sessions of the Assembly and the Board, did not leave sufficient room for debate on important regional priorities.

In order to ensure a more strategic approach to the management of Regional Committee agendas, including the control of the number of items to be tabled, the following measures have therefore been introduced:

- Regional Committee agendas have been reoriented to focus more on high-level policy and strategy issues of direct relevance to ministers of health (2010);
- Inclusion in the RC agendas of ministerial panel discussions on key policy issues, in order to mobilize European support for global action, whenever called for by WHA/EB resolutions (2010);
- For the first two days of the RC session, ministerial lunches are also arranged. These typically include presentations and discussions of selected high-level issues not requiring resolutions, thus contributing to also easing the work pressure on the regular RC agenda;
- Introduction of a 'rolling agenda' for RC sessions with a multi-year focus, in order to give delegates a better strategic overview of when agenda items will be tabled (2011);
- Use of annotated agendas that provide information on the planned conduct of the discussions in the Regional Committee (2011).

Management of resolutions and amendments

Several initiatives have been taken in the European Region over the last 5 years to better manage the submission and amendments of RC resolutions. In this work the SCRC and its sub-groups have tried to balance, on the one hand the sovereign right of Member States to advance their priorities through draft resolutions with, on the other, the potential for overcrowding the RC's agenda and the disruption which late proposals may create.

As of 2015, the following ground-rules apply for the management of resolutions in the European Region:

- In order to support Member States, and in the interest of transparency, individual SCRC members are designated as focal points for specific technical RC agenda items and resolutions (Resolution EUR/RC63/R7);
- All draft resolutions for the Regional Committee should in principle be reviewed by the SCRC, and should be ready for the open meeting of the SCRC in May for consideration by all European Member States (2011);
- New rules were introduced in 2013 regarding minimum time limits for the tabling of draft resolutions and substantive amendments, as follows (with similar procedures later adopted globally by EB134 in January 2014) :
 - Draft resolutions and/or decisions by Member States must be introduced in writing at least 7 days prior to the opening of the RC session;
 - Substantive amendments to such proposals must normally be introduced in writing not later than the closure of the 1st day of the session;
 - Draft proposals by the Secretariat relating to items on the agenda must be sent to Member States at least 6 weeks prior to the opening of the session;
 - Substantive amendments to such Secretariat proposals should normally be introduced in writing 24 hours before the opening of the session.
 - Annual reviews have been instituted of past resolutions to identify their expected life span and their potential for being ‘sun-setted’. A table summarizing all existing and active resolutions is being updated annually after each RC, and made available through a web portal. As such, Member States contemplating the circulation of new resolutions, can take guidance on whether or not such new proposals would overlap or duplicate already existing work (2013);
 - In 2014, the SCRC sub-group on Governance also recommended new templates for future RC resolutions. While a template for the financial and administrative implications of resolutions was routinely used at sessions of the Board and the Assembly, and had also been used at sessions of the RC, the sub-group felt more clarity was required concerning how new resolutions linked up with the General Programme of Work, the Programme Budget, the Health 2020 strategy and previous resolutions of the EB, WHA and the RC
 - (Hyperlinks to the templates are provided in the Annex);

Transparency and criteria for nomination of members of the Board and the SCRC

A key element of governance reform in the European Region over the last 5 years has been how to devise a transparent and democratic system for nominating the 8 European Members to serve on the Executive Board and the 12 members of the SCRC from amongst the Region’s 53 Member States.

That thorny issue has been on the agenda of successive governance sub-groups of the SCRC from 2010 to the present, and has only recently been finally settled through a consensus decision of the SCRC.

The following elements make up the pillars in the new nomination process:

- Three sub-regional groupings of countries among the European Region's 53 Member States were adopted through Resolution EUR/RC60/R3 and reconfirmed through Resolution EUR/RC63/R7;
- The same resolutions also stipulated specific criteria for experience and areas of competence which all candidates to the EB and the SCRC should fulfill;
- The approved criteria have subsequently been broken down by the SCRC sub-group on Governance into a number of clearly identifiable sub-criteria, against which the CVs of potential candidates can be screened and weighted;
- Two additional criteria have been added, namely the number of years since the country was last represented on the Board or the SCRC, and a 'country statement of intent' through which candidates would outline the aspirations and objectives linked to a potential EB or SCRC membership;
- A ranking system with weights assigned to the various criteria and sub-criteria in order of importance has been agreed to, following which individual serving SCRC members will assign scores according to their own judgment of the candidates;
- The final results are compiled through a mathematical algorithm, taking all the above parameters into account. As such the nomination tool fully respects each SCRC member's individual assessment and prioritization. It is furthermore fair to all candidates, objective, transparent and explainable to unsuccessful candidates;
- While future nominations to the Board and the SCRC would not be based purely on mathematically calculated scores, the tool will be used as an active guide to the SCRC, in order to take objective, informed nomination decisions.

Miscellaneous

In addition to the above broad categories of governance reform, the European Region has also taken a number of initiatives in other areas, in order to ease the burden on Member States and facilitate their active participation in the work of the Organization, as follows:

For global governing bodies:

- Extensive, advance briefing documents prepared for European Member States covering all items listed on the agendas of the global governing bodies. as well as information meetings/briefings also organized prior to, as well as daily, during meetings of the Board and the Assembly to help with the global and regional interface;

For the Regional Committee:

- Live webcasting of the entire RC proceedings, since 2010, as a means of promoting transparency and understanding of the Organization's work;
- Webcasting also of pre-session briefings for RCs, with the option of sending advance, written questions to the Secretariat;

- English/Russian parallel projection of slides at RC sessions since 2012, whenever power point presentations are used;
- Also since 2012, posting of NGO statements and related video messages on EURO's website prior to the opening of the RC;
- Advance publication of working documents for RC sessions in English, one month prior to the official dispatch time, - since 2012. (With a disclaimer that further corrections and amendments may still occur, up until the official date of dispatch.)

For the SCRC

- Extensive use of teleconferences between sessions of the SCRC;
- Electronic clearance and adoption of SCRC reports shortly after the closure of meetings, thus ensuring early access to these reports also by non-SCRC Member States.

Annex

List of reference material available for more details on the above summary:

- EUR/RC60/11: ‘Governance of the WHO Regional Office for Europe’
A pdf [EUR/RC60/11 Governance of the WHO Regional Office for Europe](#)
[Link to all languages EUR/RC60/11 Governance of the WHO Regional Office for Europe](#)
- Resolution EUR/RC60/R3
A pdf [EUR/RC60/R3 Resolution Governance of the WHO Regional Office for Europe](#)
[Link to all languages EUR/RC60/R3 Resolution Governance of the WHO Regional Office for Europe](#)
- EUR/RC62/14: ‘WHO Reform’
A pdf [EUR/RC62/14 WHO Reform](#)
[Link to all languages EUR/RC62/14 WHO Reform](#)
- EUR/RC63/15: ‘WHO Reform: progress and implications for Europe’
A pdf [EUR/RC63/15 WHO Reform: progress and implications for Europe](#)
[Link to all languages EUR/RC63/15 WHO Reform: progress and implications for Europe](#)
- EUR/RC63/16 Rev.1: ‘Governance reform in the European Region’
A pdf [EUR/RC63/16 Rev.1 Governance reform in the WHO European Region](#)
[link to all languages EUR/RC63/16 Rev.1 Governance reform in the WHO European Region](#)
- Resolution EUR/RC63/R7
A pdf [EUR/RC63/R7 Resolution Governance of the WHO Regional Office for Europe](#)
[link to all languages EUR/RC63/R7 Resolution Governance of the WHO Regional Office for Europe](#)
- EUR/RC64/16: ‘WHO Reform: progress and implications for the European Region’
a pdf [EUR/RC64/16 WHO Reform: progress and implications for the European Region](#)
[link to all languages EUR/RC64/16 WHO Reform: progress and implications for the European Region](#)
- EUR/SC21/SG Governance Subgroup on governance of the 21st SCRC – final report
a pdf [EUR/SC21/SG Governance Subgroup on governance of the 21st SCRC – final report](#)

link to all languages [EUR/SC21/SG Governance Subgroup on governance of the 21st SCRC – final report](#)

- [Template for draft Regional Committee resolutions](#)
- [Template for financial and administrative implications for the Secretariat of draft RC resolutions](#)
- Rule 47 of the RoPs of the RC and the SCRC
[Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Europe and of the Standing Committee of the Regional Committee for Europe](#)
a pdf [Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Europe and of the Standing Committee of the Regional Committee for Europe](#)
link to all languages [Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Europe and of the Standing Committee of the Regional Committee for Europe](#)

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