



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

IFMSA Statement on: Towards a sustainable health workforce in the WHO European Region: framework for action

67th WHO Regional Committee for Europe, Budapest, Hungary

At this point it is undeniable, we are facing a health workforce crisis in terms of geographical and skills distribution and increasing demand of health care professionals. Multiple efforts have been conducted to plan and promote future sustainability. We must not let these efforts fall through.

Having said that, the International Federation of Medical Students' Associations congratulates the WHO Regional Committee on the document presented, as we believe that it is through strategic planning with clear goals that we can achieve what our policies stand for and take steps to promote better health in our region, countries and communities.

We also agree that an essential component to achieve the 2020 health objectives is education. Nonetheless, we would like to emphasize the importance of focusing on the quality of our education and, by no means, let it be compromised by the increasing demand of health care professionals. Solutions we implement must consider the Medical Institutions capacity to train healthcare professionals and our Health Systems' need for them. The lack of such proper planning and forecasting may cause serious problems, as we are already experiencing in many European countries.

On this note, IFMSA suggests that the accreditation systems proposed in the framework meet international criteria set by the World Federation of Medical Education. Additionally, in regard to the monitoring and planning of Human Resources for Health, we underline the need for assessing the impact the current number of medical students and graduates will have on the health labour market. Furthermore, we call on Governments to promote equal access to medical education, independent of socio-economic background, and to create opportunities for graduates to specialize and continue their professional development with good working conditions.

It is with a feeling of great responsibility that we address these issues, as we are aware of the complexity of Health Systems. It is because of this complexity that IFMSA calls for alignment and a joint effort between sectors and stakeholders. And finally, as the future health workforce, we affirm the importance of including youth and the diversity of our communities in the debates and decision making processes that ultimately will shape our future.