

## Progress made since 2010 Joint Declaration

### Priority Area 5a: Health Inequalities

#### RATIONALE FOR PARTNERSHIP

Health inequalities across Europe and concerns about their negative consequences for social cohesion and economic development are real and serious. Particular worrying trends are large differences in health between socioeconomic and ethnic groups within Member States.

The EC and WHO/Europe agreed to:

- *Better monitor inequalities in health, including through more disaggregated data*
- *Raise awareness of health inequalities*
- *Promote information and knowledge exchange between European countries*
- *Help create tailored policies for specific issues*
- *Monitor and evaluate progress of such policies at the request of Member States*

#### 1. KEY PROGRESS MADE SINCE 2010

**1.1 Better monitor inequalities in health:** updating and expanding the health inequalities atlas tool, which uses publicly available socioeconomic and health-related indicators from EUROSTAT databases. The atlases aim to provide more visibility of health and their determinants and analyse how such an integrated information system and its underlying data can inform policy.

**1.2 Raise awareness of health inequalities:** In 2011, the EC and WHO/Europe closely collaborated on preparations for the Global Conference on Social Determinants of Health.

In 2014, WHO/Europe published the *Review of Social Determinants and the Health Divide in the WHO European Region*, with cooperation and comments from the EC.

WHO also discussed health inequities at the final conference of the EU Joint Action on health inequalities (Equity Action) in January 2014.

**1.3 Promote information and knowledge exchange between European countries:**

WHO/Europe and the EC have jointly funded activities to develop policy guidance and tools for reducing health inequalities. A set of 5 policy briefs have been published, and two high-level policy dialogue events have been organized around this policy guidance.

WHO/Europe, DG SANTE, and the University of Alicante jointly publish an e-newsletter on Roma health to share information and resources relevant to improving Roma health.

WHO/Europe and the European Commission, through the joint project on Equity in Health, published a study "How health systems can address health inequities linked to migration and ethnicity (2010)".

WHO/Europe contributed to EU funded initiatives and projects such as COST-Action (ADAPT) project on Migration and Roma health, is member of the EU funded RESTORE Advisory Board WP7 on migration and health and has contributed to panel discussion of the final conference of "Equity Action"

WHO/Europe and the EC have developed and expanded the WHO Portal on Health and Migration.

**1.4 Help create tailored policies for specific issues and monitor and evaluate progress of such policies:**

WHO has provided support to Member States, Regions and other stakeholders to develop policies and activities to develop an equity focus in specific policies which contribute to reducing health inequalities.

In 2013 and 2014 WHO conducted field assessments in three EU Countries in order to produce values- and evidence-based policy options for addressing migrants' health contributing to address health inequalities and enhancing people-centred health systems.

**2. KEY CHALLENGES**

- 2.1** Only a minority of EU or WHO/Europe Member States have developed comprehensive plans to address health inequalities.
- 2.2** Negative health impact of the financial crises, particularly on the disadvantaged and migrants: The economic crisis in the region and political turmoil in the neighbouring countries has led to policies on migration that have worsened the health divide between locals and migrants.
- 2.3** Low level of investment in preventive measures, in strengthening public health capacity and in advancing social protection policies.