



EUROPE

Regional Committee for Europe Fifty-second session

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RESOLUTION

POVERTY AND HEALTH – EVIDENCE AND ACTION IN WHO'S EUROPEAN REGION

The Regional Committee,

Having considered the contents and recommendations of document EUR/RC52/8 (*Poverty and health – Evidence and action in WHO's European Region*);

Recognizing the overwhelming evidence of the close relations between poverty, both absolute and relative, and ill health;

Being aware of the responsibility of the health system to improve the health of the poor and to contribute to the reduction of poverty, as part of comprehensive multisectoral efforts;

Recognizing that health is an integral part of social development;

1. THANKS the Regional Director for the action taken to implement the provisions of its resolution EUR/RC51/R6 and for including the subject of poverty and health on the agenda of the present session;

2. EMPHASIZES that the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being;

3. ACKNOWLEDGES that the issue of poverty and health is a central concern both of WHO and of its Member States, which are all affected, although to different degrees;
4. URGES Member States:
 - (a) to accelerate the formulation and further development of actions to combat the harmful effects of poverty on health;
 - (b) to develop a minimum guaranteed package of free medical services for the poor, and to ask donor countries to consider supporting these efforts;
5. REQUESTS the Regional Director:
 - (a) to impress upon the international community the need for political commitment in order to place health at the centre of sustainable development, and consider the socioeconomic and political implications of failure to address poverty and ill health;
 - (b) to review the criteria used for defining absolute and relative poverty, considering the specificity of each country;
 - (c) to continue the process of developing, analysing and disseminating knowledge on the relationship between poverty and health, and in particular the systematic collection, validation and dissemination of case studies on the practical role of the health system in addressing issues of poverty and health;
 - (d) to establish a data bank at the WHO Regional Office for Europe on the effective actions taken by the health systems of Member States in the European Region to promote the health and wellbeing of the poor and the most vulnerable groups;
 - (e) to assist Member States by providing evidence-based information on best practices to improve policy-making in addressing issues of poverty and health;
 - (f) to utilize the resources available within the Regional Office, including the recently established European Office for Investment for Health and Development in Venice, to develop activities related to poverty and health and provide technical assistance to Member States;
 - (g) to work closely with other relevant agencies active in the field, with the aims of producing regular comprehensive reports on the poverty and health situation in the European Region and monitoring progress.