

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE MODELS IN THE WESTERN BALKANS AND EFFECTIVE HEALTH WORKFORCE STRATEGIES

SCOPE AND PROVISIONAL AGENDA

28-30 November 2023
Trieste, Italy

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

BACKGROUND

To realize the core priorities of the European Programme of Work, 2020–2025 – “United Action for Better Health” (EPW) – the urgency of which has been intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic – WHO Europe has developed the Roadmap for Health in the Western Balkans (2021–2025). The Roadmap scopes the following: Republic of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Republic of Serbia, and Kosovo^[1].

The Western Balkans (WBs) expressed their commitment to joint action to accelerate an equitable and sustainable recovery and development to close the health gap between the subregion and the EU. Hence, the Roadmap builds on WBs health goals and their efforts to support EPW implementation and to move the subregion ahead through strengthened partnership and solidarity and by forging important synergies within and across countries/area and partners.

The Roadmap focuses on nine High Impact Action Areas, including strengthening primary health care (PHC) and workforce that reflect the subregion’s commitment to the core priorities and flagship initiatives of the EPW and the SDG targets.

Strategic partnerships across the subregion and intercountry/area collaboration are essential for delivering on the Roadmap. In recent years, the WBs have accelerated collaboration for health together with the countries of central and eastern Europe through their joint Central European Initiative (CEI). Building on the strong cooperation between the WHO Europe and the CEI, including the joint Task force in response to Covid-19 emergency (2020), in 2021 and 2022 successful CEI-WHO collaboration focused on primary health care in Western Balkans, and the relations between CEI and Friuli-Venezia-Giulia Region of Italy, and two intercountry/area meeting were held in Trieste: ‘Realizing the potential of primary health care to deliver on the Roadmap for Health in the Western Balkans’ (2021) and Scaling-up Strategies for Primary Health Care in (2022).

WORKSHOP

In 2023, moving forward with the implementation of joint activities for the countries/areas of the Western Balkans in PHC under the Roadmap, the **3rd Western Balkans Inter-country/area meeting will be held on 28-30 November 2023 in Trieste, Italy**. The three-day meeting will be co-organized by WHO/Europe and CEI, and hosted at CEI Headquarters in Trieste, Italy. The WHO European Center for Primary health care and the Office for Health Workforce and Service Delivery will jointly moderate and facilitate the workshop.

The focus of the 2023 meeting will be on PHC models, family medicine and workforce, with an exchange of knowledge about the current state of PHC and health workforce in WBs countries/area and with a specific deep dive on workforce shortage, attrition and retention challenges.

^[1]All references to Kosovo in this document should be understood to be in the context of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)



OBJECTIVES

The meeting will aim at strengthening the intercountry/area collaboration on PHC and workforce with the following objectives:

1. to present PHC and family medicine models across the region and highlight regional experiences;
2. To discuss current challenges about PHC and workforce in the WBs countries/area
3. To identify relevant approaches and provide policy recommendations

Bringing together public health authorities and representatives from the WBs, the purpose of this technical meeting is to support WBs relevant stakeholders to prioritize and plan actions and next steps in the WBs around the above-mentioned focus areas.

The meeting will aim, to facilitate further cross-country/area learning, and to build synergies in the future. WHO and CEI will join forces by bringing together relevant technical expertise. Headquartered in Trieste, Italy, the CEI will host the event and bring in the Italian expertise from the selected healthcare institutions in the Friuli Venezia Giulia region. The participants will also be offered an opportunity to join on-site field visit to selected health facilities.

PARTICIPANTS

Key stakeholders and authorities responsible for PHC and health workforce planning– 3 from each WB country/area; WHO Representatives/Heads of Offices and/or country office staff working on PHC and workforce; WHO/Europe staff; CEI representatives, regional health authorities (Friuli-Venezia-Giulia, Italy), invited experts.

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Tuesday 28 November 2023

Technical Session Nr 1.

Realizing the potential of Primary Health Care (PHC) models of care in the Western Balkans through addressing the workforce challenges

09:30 – 10:00

Registration and welcome coffee

Venue: Trieste (TBC)

10:00 – 10:20

Official opening and Introductory statement

Roberto Antonione, CEI-ES Secretary General

Venue: Trieste (TBC)

Tomas Zapata, Head of Unit, Health Workforce and Service Delivery, WHO Regional Office for Europe

Format: plenary session

Gian Matteo Apuzzo, Technical Officer on Primary Health Care Models and Systems, WHO European Center for PHC

FVG Region

10:20 – 11:15

Introduction to the technical part of the program

Introduction of the program, WHO & CEI – 10 min

Moderator: Ana Sinkovic, CEI-ES

WHO and CEI team and countries/area delegation introduction

Gian Matteo Apuzzo, WHO Europe

Q&A/Expectations from countries/area

Format: plenary session

Setting the scene: Transforming PHC models of care presentation (20 min) + Q&A

Zulfiya Pirova and Liesbeth Borgermans, WHO Europe

11:15 – 12:45

Country experiences in advancing family medicine in primary health care

Moderator: Liesbeth

Borgermans, WHO Europe

Format: plenary session

- Family medicine presentation (HWD)
- Slovenia (15 min)
- Italy (15 min)

Presentations and Q&A

12:45 – 14:00 **Lunch**

Technical Session Nr 2.



Improving Family medicine approach in Primary Health Care in the Western Balkans

14:00 – 15:15

Venue: TBC

Moderator: *Gian Matteo Apuzzo – WHO Europe*

Format: *moderated discussion*

Moderated discussion: Multidisciplinary team in PHC service delivery

- Example 1 multidisciplinary team in NCDs – *Andrea Di Lenarda, Director Department for Outpatient (Territorial) Specialistic Care, ASUGI*
- Example 2 multidisciplinary team in mental health – **ASUGI, tbc**
- Example 3 multidisciplinary team in palliative care – *Raffaella Antonione, Director Palliative and Hospice Care, ASUGI*
- Example 4 Italy/FVG Community-oriented care - *Carlo Rotelli, Manager and Medical Doctor, Health District n.1, ASUGI*

Presentations and Q&A

15:15-15:30

Health break

15:30 – 17:00

Venue: TBC

Moderator: *Zulfiya Pirova, WHO Europe*

Format: *plenary session*

Presentations from delegations on changes on PHC models of care (10 min each).

Presentations to reflect on the *current model of PHC - success factors, results, challenges and lessons learned choosing one of examples such as NCDs, mental health, palliative care, community-oriented care.*

- Albania
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Montenegro
- North Macedonia
- Serbia
- Kosovo¹

Moderated discussion and Q&A (30 min)

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19:00 – 21:00 **Dinner (hosted by the CEI)**

Wednesday 29 November 2023

Technical Session Nr 3:

PHC Workforce Challenges in rural and remote areas

09:00-10:30

Venue: TBC

Moderator: Tomas
Zapata, WHO Europe

Format: plenary

Focus: What are the challenges of workforce in rural areas?
What are the PHC models in rural areas? What are the strategies to
strengthen PHC workforce in rural areas?

Presentations:

- **Recap on Day 1** and link to workforce challenges
- **Setting the scene:** the current state of health workforce with focus
on attrition and retention challenges (presentation by HWD team:
resolution, rural retention guidelines)
- **Country experiences**
 - *Region Vasterbotten (Sweden)*
 - *Province of Trento (Italy)*
 - *Region Friuli Venezia Giulia (Italy)*
- **Q&A session**

10:30-11:00

Coffee break

11:00-13:00

Venue: TBC

Moderator: Yana
Andersen, WHO Europe

Focus: Retention policy spotlights. What are the barriers and
facilitators to strengthen the PHC workforce in rural areas?

- **Education**
- **Incentives**
- **Regulation**



Format: group work/case study (TBC)

- Support

Moderate panel discussion with Country/area round table

13:00 - 14:00 Lunch

GROUPWORK

14:00-15:30

Venue: TBC

Moderator(s):

Format: group work

Introduction of group work

Session name

Focus: What inspired you from the presentations and discussion from all technical sessions that you would like take away to your country/area? What policy guidelines you would provide to your country/area? What concrete actions would you apply in your context?

Activity: countries/area group work

Output: presentations by country/area teams

15:30-16:00 Health Break

Country/area action plans discussion and conclusions

16:00 - 17:30

Venue: TBC

Co-moderators: WHO Europe

Countries/area team final presentations

Policy recommendations and key takeaways from the meeting and their application to countries/area context – each country/area discuss and choose three concrete actions



*Format: presentations and
panel discussion*

- Albania presentation
- Panel reflection 15 min

- Bosnia and Herzegovina presentation
- Panel reflection 15 min

- Montenegro presentation
- Panel reflection 15 min

- North Macedonia presentation
- Panel reflection 15 min

- Serbia presentation
- Panel reflection 15 min

- Kosovo presentation²
- Panel reflection 15 min

17:30 – 18:00

Conclusion and closing remarks:
WHO – CEI

Thursday 30 November 2023

FIELD VISIT

09:30 - 12:00

**Field visit visits to the community-hospital
experience in Trieste (TBC)**

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