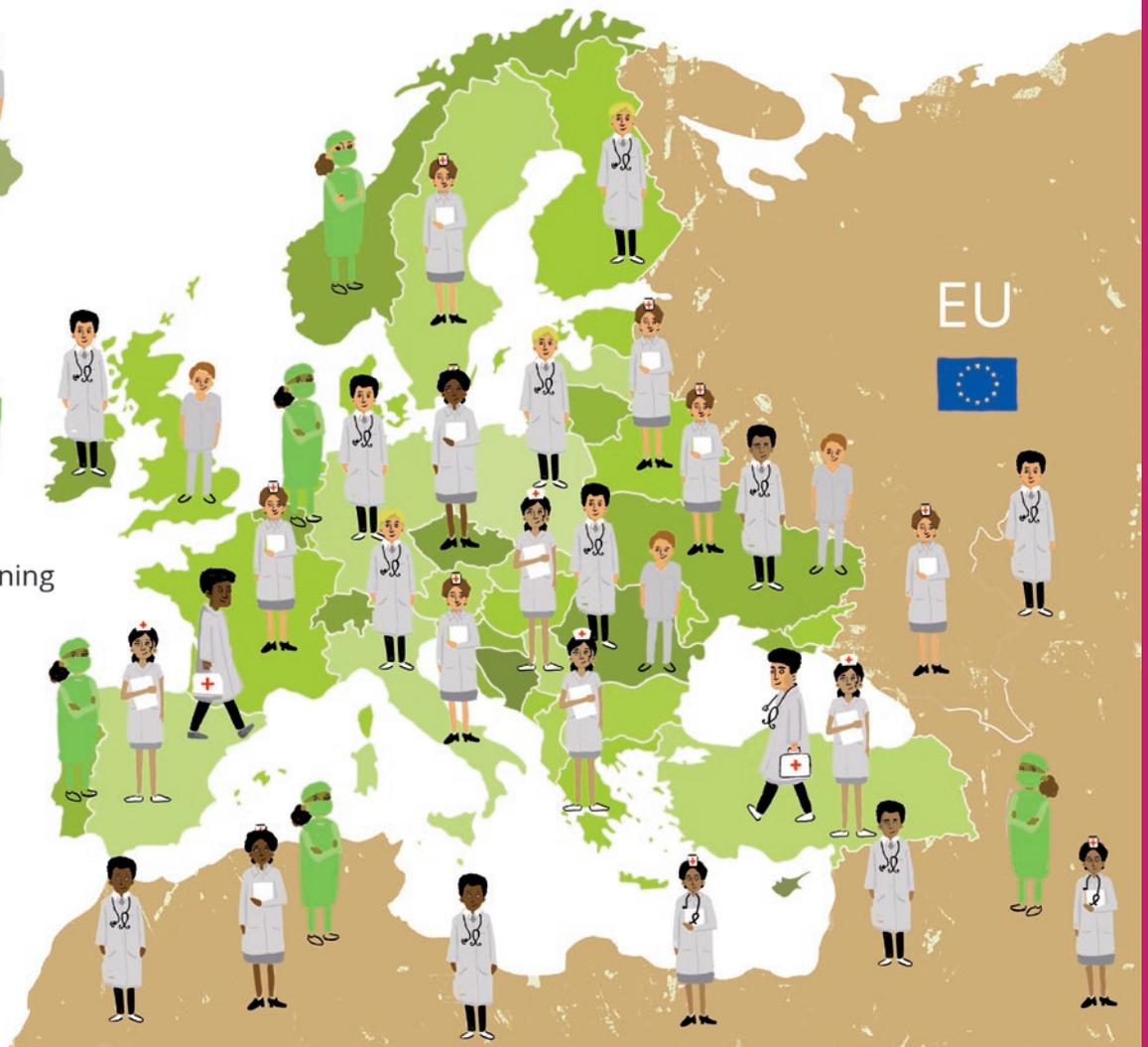


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Main achievements

- DG DEVCO's Programme for Action on Global Health includes a specific focus on health systems strengthening and health workforce. It has co-funded a project on the WHO Code implementation in 5 countries.
- As funder of the Joint Action on Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting DG SANTE has encouraged the Joint Action to increase the importance of the WHO Code applicability in the European Union and invited HW4All to provide information.
- Engagement of 5 Members of Parliament in policy dialogue on health workforce mobility and migration event on 5 May 2015 organised by HW4All/EPHA/EPSU in the European Parliament.
- Members of Parliament asked written questions about impact health workforce mobility within EU on access to health.
- WHO European Region report 'Making progress on health workforce sustainability in the WHO European Region' (2015) includes the efforts of HW4All about how the WHO Code can be the entry point to a broader focus on developing new national-level health workforce policy and planning mechanisms, or strengthening those that already exist, and for engaging with broader society.
- Second round of WHO Global Code reporting by the WHO Secretariat to Member States at World Health Assembly May 2016 includes outcomes that derive from HW4All, e.g.: Member States' efforts to make the Code available in their official languages (including Catalan, Dutch, Finnish, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Romanian and Thai); the incorporation of the Code's provisions into national legislation (for example, in Germany) and bilateral agreements (specifically in source countries such as the Republic of Moldova and Philippines).

Activities

European Press office

The European Press officer Thomas Schwarz led the development and implementation of HW4All communication instruments, including mainly a communication concept (2013), the HW4All website (2013-15) the HW4All online collaboration tool (2014-15) a HW4All email newsletter (2014-15) and the use of social media (Twitter and Facebook 2013-15) for the promotion and dissemination of the action and its major products such as events at European/global and national level and the publication of the European Call to Action and the national case studies. Focusing on the four coordination meetings (Amsterdam 2013, Rome 2014, Poznan and Madrid 2015) and their preparation and follow-up, the European Press provided input and guidance for the communication work of the HW4All project partners at a national level.

Side events at the World Health Assembly

The European Press officer prepared and organised, in cooperation with the HW4All overall and advocacy coordinators and a range of other interested actors, two successful and well attended side events on the implementation of the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel (WHO Code) at the World Health Assemblies in Geneva, in May 2013 and May 2015.

Website updating

After the development of the HW4All website (2014) and later on the online collaboration tool (2014), the European Press officer was responsible for their updating (directly and by instructing project partners and users of the tool, and editing their contributions) and promotion. At the end of the project, and while still continuing to use the online collaboration tool for the dissemination of the project results and coverage of activities in the no cost extension period January to February 2016, the European Press officer has been preparing and implementing the closure of the tool and the transfer of the main project documents back to the static HW4All website which will remain accessible for the next five years (transfer will be completed by the end of April 2016).

Panellist in the HW4All event in Brussels on the 9th of December 2015

Due to his strong involvement in HW4All promotion and the political dialogue on health workers migration and Code implementation at a global level, the European press officer was invited to join the panel at the final HW4All event in Brussels. He also used the occasion to confirm the continued engagement of the MMI Network and its HRH working group in the field of Code implementation at the European and global level, building on and continuing the efforts and achievements by the HW4All project.

Lessons learned

As indicated above, there have been considerable synergies with MMI advocacy at a global level, at the World Health Assembly, the Global Health Workforce Alliance and the Health Workforce Advocacy Initiative, in the analysis and assessment of the processes, in the development of inputs and advocacy statements and in the organisation of events, notably the side events at the World Health Assembly.

Being rooted in health cooperation and in advocacy at a global level, the MMI Network itself got valuable new insights into health workforce and health workforce migration realities and policies at European regional and national level. Linking between the national/regional and the global and between the regions will certainly help us to continue and enhance our advocacy at global level. We are therefore keen to keep links and contacts and continue cooperation with the project partners and some key actors via the MMI HRH working group coordinated by Wemos.

JOINT PROJECT ACTIVITIES AT EUROPEAN AND GLOBAL LEVEL

HW4All project representatives provided many contributions to meetings and consultations on health workforce migration and planning at global and European level. Some highlights:

Side-events to the 66th and 68th World Health Assemblies (WHA) 2013 and 2015

Geneva, 22th of May 2013: 'Stoking up the fire for Code implementation!'

The WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel (WHO Code) was adopted by the 63rd World Health Assembly on 21 May 2010. The side event was aimed at informing the WHA debate with a civil society perspective on successes and gaps of the implementation of the Code, three years on its adoption. It linked up to the official WHA debate, as the WHO Code implementation was itself a focus of the Assembly on May 24th (agenda item 17.4, The health workforce: advances in responding to shortages and migration, and in preparing for emerging needs).

During the side event initiatives focussed on the management of health workers were presented from different geographical areas and in particular from the European and the African continents. Starting with case stories of Code implementation, country leadership and civil society involvement from source and destination countries and regions, the discussion was broadened and conclusions were drawn on the state of Code implementation.

The meeting was conceived to involve the largest possible range of relevant actors: therefore, while the HW4All project solidly took the initiative and leadership (by submitting to the WHA Secretariat the official proposal through its partner MMI who is in official relations with WHO), co-promotion of the side event was opened, from the very beginning, to partners external to the HW4All initiative such as WHO itself, WHO Europe, Global Health Workforce Alliance, Member States Delegations from Malawi, Switzerland, United States of America, and the European Union. In the same spirit, a conscious effort was made to enlarge the partnership among civil society organisations and European and non-European relevant networks (the full list of partners is contained in the programme of the event, here attached), by mobilising existing relations of Medicus Mundi International, Amref Italy as well as Wemos.

About 80 WHO Member States delegates, WHO staff and civil society delegates attended the meeting. Member States delegations from Austria, Brazil, the European Union, Germany, Greece, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, Spain, South Africa, Sudan, Switzerland, Trinidad, United States of America and Zimbabwe actively participated. The Irish Delegation, holding the EU Presidency, also attended.

WHO representatives and some countries confirmed their commitment to implement the Code and plans to re-launch implementation at a higher level. These plans include:

- Improving statistical tools for national health workforce planning and forecasting based on the OECD observatory;
- Improving the 'National Reporting Instrument';
- Organising technical regional meetings.

Geneva, 20th of May 2015: 'WHO Global Code of Practice - initial achievements and future challenges'

The groundbreaking WHO Code marks the first time that WHO Member States have used the constitutional authority of the Organisation to develop a non-binding code in thirty years. The WHO Code, which is voluntary in nature, sets forth ten articles advising both source and destination countries on how to address present and expected shortages in the health workforce; approach the recruitment of health personnel; and strengthen health systems. The principles of the WHO Code encourage all Member States to mitigate the negative impact of health workforce migration on low-income countries struggling to meet the basic health needs of their populations in a setting of serious workforce deficits.

The 2010 WHA resolution requested the first review of the relevance and effectiveness of the WHO Code to be made during the World Health Assembly in May 2015. An expert advisory group (EAG) was convened to carry out the review and submitted its report to the 68th WHA for consideration. The side event provided a good an opportunity to get insights and assessments from members of the EAG before the formal WHA debate.

There were success stories to report: Stories of countries using the the WHO Code for promoting and achieving change in the fields of health workforce migration policies and sustainable health workforce policies; stories of the WHO Code having been used as reference for creating further instruments at a regional level; encouraging models of how the WHO Code implementation has been made more effective by systematically involving all actors at a national level.

For 'Friends of the WHO Global Code of Practice', the WHO Code itself and its implementation are also a matter of concern. At the side event, a civil society representative presented some 'hurrahs and headaches' with the the WHO Code, provoking a debate on what is needed to make/keep it relevant and effective.

With over 120 participants and some inspiring statements, the side event was a strong and encouraging call for making the WHO Code what we want it to be: a real instrument for change.

Both side-events were hosted by the MMI Network and co-organized by the HW4All project and a range of partners.

Workshop with Members of European Parliament (5 May 2015)

This workshop was jointly organised by the HW4All project, the European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) and the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA), and hosted by Nessa Childers MEP (S&D, Ireland) at the European Parliament. The event discussed the applicability of the WHO Code in the European context, marked by increased professional mobility.

80 participants attended the meeting and 5 Members of European Parliament provided their input. The latter has begun to have a significant adverse impact on health system sustainability due to increasing shortages and misdistribution of doctors, medical specialists and nurses.

A phenomenon that is hitting hard in some Southern European countries, but also in Poland, Bulgaria and in particular Romania, where since 2007 several thousand physicians and nurses have received certificates that allow them to work in another EU member state.

The following key points were highlighted by discussants during the debate:

- Cross-border co-operation between countries should be increased; the case study by the HW4All project about collaboration between Romania and Bulgaria on medical specialists provides a good example;
- EU Cohesion and Structural Funds should be available to all Member States for putting health workforce objectives into practice in line with the WHO Code;
- 'Source' countries of health workers migration require additional help from the EU for health workforce strengthening, creating partnerships, setting up professional registers, setting up continuous education programmes and improving education infrastructures, given that the repercussions for these countries are more serious;
- Better information systems are required to obtain accurate data on stocks and flows, and investigate reasons for leaving;
- Governments should take a long term view to planning, recruitment and retention and aim for (self-)sustainability;
- There is a need to maintaining or to launch a multi-stakeholder debate, including civil society organisations and the social partners, on policies, strategies and financial support.

European Conference 'Exploring the migration-development nexus - Global health aspects of the implementation of the WHO Code of Practice' (9 December 2015)

The HW4All project and EPHA organised an event on policy coherence for development in the context of the implementation of the WHO Code. The event focused on the impacts of brain drain on countries of origin and discussed solutions for sustainability. As a highlight of this final event of the HW4All project, the European Call to Action and a list of 175 signatures of European and national key actors were handed over to the representatives of the European Commission.

The event was opened by Dilyana Slavova, President of the Agriculture, Rural Development and the Environment Section in the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) who deplored the fact that too many health professionals are leaving their country of origin after

graduation to take up positions in other countries. She emphasised the urgent need to invest in human resources for health to forge sustainable health systems.

The first panel focused on the importance of the WHO Code implementation for public health. Dr Giorgio Cometto (Global Health Workforce Alliance, WHO) presented relevant facts and figures about health workforce mobility and explained their strategy to tackle the estimated shortage of 10 million health workers by 2030.

Sascha Marschang (EPHA) stressed that the loss of qualified health workers intensifies already existing health inequalities between richer and poorer countries, and between the global north and the global south. This has big consequences for quality of care, access to healthcare, and treatment and prevention options.

Linda Mans (Wemos) provided an overview of the work undertaken by the HW4All project and handed over the European Call to Action and a list of signatures to the representatives of the European Commission, explaining that a coherent EU policy response would require commitment at the highest level, crucially also from the Council.

Caroline Hager (DG SANTE) congratulated the HW4All project on their efforts to raise awareness about the WHO Code at a time of fierce global competition for health workers. She confirmed that she would take the Call to Action forward and continues to work with the WHO and other stakeholders on the Code implementation and improved data exchange.

Matthias Reinicke (DG DEVCO) highlighted a number of Commission actions in support of HRH. This work includes DEVCO's 'From brain drain to brain gain' programme and provision of financial support to Ministries of Health.

After this initial round, Professor Alyson Pollock (Queen Mary University London) opened a second panel discussion by emphasising the importance of thinking in a public health paradigm when it comes to discussing health system sustainability. The panel participants were:

- Dr Titilola Banjoko (Foreign Policy Centre & Africa Recruit, UK);
- Dr Yoswa Dambisya (East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community-ECSA-HC);
- Koen Demaegd (International Federation of Medical Students' Associations);
- Ralph Genetzke (International Centre for Migration Policy Development);
- Thomas Schwarz (HW4All/Medicus Mundi International Network).

At the end of the event, the hosts and organisers thanked the audience for their active participation and interest in the HW4All project and explained that, although the project was coming to an end in early 2016, the work would be continued and built upon, inter alia, as part of a dedicated working group on HRH hosted by Medicus Mundi International.

Participation in Joint Action on Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting

Conference, 28-30 January 2014

Mobility and migration of health personnel both in Europe and at global level was a well addressed issue during the conference. Wemos, a member of the HW4All project, organized a break out session on 'Global mobility and triple win migration' on the second day and participated with an input in the Expert meeting on the applicability of the WHO Code on the third day.

Final conference, 18 and 19 February 2016 (Varna, Bulgaria)

The challenge of mobility of health professionals and data monitoring were the hot topics of the final conference that brought together knowledge of experts from all over Europe and provided the opportunity for further networking. Our Polish partner in the HW4All project, Redemptoris Mission, presented a Polish case study on obtaining reliable data on the scale of migration of Polish medical personnel. Such data is vital for the creation of a well-functioning health system, especially in the context of free mobility in the EU. The study recommends that professional associations should maintain systems for data collection, storage and dissemination, including migration statistics.

Other challenges tackled during the conference are health workforce education abroad with emphasis on conditions of healthcare students getting employed in their home country, as well as practical lessons learned from migration training.

Next to mobility, also other issues were discussed. Wemos moderated a panel on the ageing consequences on health workforce, while other sessions focused on topics such as the effects of demography changing on health workforce needs, and the impact of technology on health workers.

Preparatory work for the delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly Meeting: 'Brain drain in the health sector - an update on the implementation and impact of the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel in EU and ACP regions'

The meeting was originally planned for Thursday, 25 February 2016 at the European Parliament in Brussels, but was rescheduled to 18 March 2016 after the end date of the project (29 February 2016). Therefore, only the preparatory work is documented in the financial report. The programme of the event included:

- Welcome and introductory remarks by Cécile Kashetu Kyenge, Vice-Chair, Delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly;
- Brain drain in the health sector and the WHO Code implementation from the European side: the role of civil society. Input by Giulia De Ponte, European Advocacy Coordinator, 'Health Workers for All' civil society partnership;

- The impact of health workers brain drain on African health systems. Input by Patrick Kadama, Director Health Policy and Strategy, African Center for Global Health and Social Transformation;
- Findings on Code of Practice implementation emerging from the second round of reporting by WHO Member States. Input by Ibadat Dillon, Technical Officer, Health Workforce Department, World Health Organisation;
- Questions and answers, open discussion;
- Concluding remarks by Cécile Kashetu Kyenge, Vice-Chair of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.

Results

All European institutions with which the HW4All project was in dialogue did incorporate – fully or partly – references to our statements/positions (e.g. EU Commission report on PCD, Parliamentary Questions raised in European Parliament). In its 2015 report on ‘The applicability of the WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel within a European context’, the Joint Action on Health Workforce Planning and Forecasting accepted both directly to HW4All inputs to the report on policy coherence and ethical recruitment, and the results of previous dialogues carried out by HW4All at national level.

In September 2015 the WHO European Region launched the report ‘Making progress on health workforce sustainability in the WHO European Region’ at the 65th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe in Vilnius, Lithuania. It includes the efforts of HW4All about how the WHO Code can be the entry point to a broader focus on developing new national-level health workforce policy and planning mechanisms, or strengthening those that already exist, and for engaging with broader society.