



Member States consultation meeting on a new regional
strategy for child and adolescent health and well-being
Istanbul, Türkiye
18-19 February 2025

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SCOPE AND PURPOSE

A renewed commitment and focused efforts are essential for the health and well-being of children and adolescents in our Region. Mental health affects 1 in 4 children under 18 years. One in 3 primary school children live with overweight or obesity. In some parts of our Region, newborn mortality rates are 28 times higher than in countries with the lowest rates. These challenges have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, with reduced access to specialized health care, leaving many children and adolescents facing inadequate care.

Investments in children and adolescents today will not only enhance their development and future opportunities but also contribute to decrease health costs and burden of disease towards a healthier aging population and more prosperous societies.

In response to today's challenges, the new Child and Adolescent Health and Well-being Strategy, developed jointly with UNICEF, will set out a comprehensive vision with clear, deliverable objectives to improve health and well-being outcomes and reduce inequities.

Following initial discussions at the 74th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe in September 2024, the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia are engaging in further consultations with countries and technical experts. A first online Member States consultation, held on 26 November 2024, highlighted country priorities received through a Member States survey. An advisory group of Member States was created to shape the strategy for children and adolescents' health and well-being. The preliminary draft strategy document will be shared with all Member States for their review and input by end of January 2025.

This second consultation meeting scheduled for 18-19 February 2025, in Istanbul, Türkiye, aims to engage Member States in the finalisation of the strategy. Comments received from Member States to the preliminary draft strategy document will be compiled for discussion during the meeting, and it is hoped to reach consensus on the final wording of the strategy and an accompanying implementation and monitoring framework. The final strategy will be presented for endorsement at the 75th session of the Regional Committee in October 2025, providing a roadmap for action.

This strategy is part of the WHO European Programme of Work 2.0, which prioritizes child and adolescent health and well-being through a dual-track approach for healthier lives, addressing the immediate needs of older adults while renewing the focus on children and adolescents.

This is not just another strategy – it is our commitment to creating a Region where every child can reach their full potential for health and well-being.