

Date: 11 March 2026

Dr Karmen Joller
Minister of Social Affairs
Ministry of Social Affairs
Suur-Ameerika 1
10129 Tallinn
Estonia

Dear Madam,

**Twelfth High-level Meeting of the Small Countries Initiative: “From Scarcity to Sustainability: Can Small Nations Lead Workforce Innovation?”
Riga, Latvia, 4-5 June 2026**

We are pleased to inform you that the High-level Meeting of the Small Countries Initiative – “From Scarcity to Sustainability: Can Small Nations Lead Workforce Innovation?” – will be held in Riga, Latvia, on 4–5 June 2026. Jointly organized by the Ministry of Health of Latvia and the WHO Regional Office for Europe, the meeting will enable participating countries to reflect on shared challenges and identify collective and country-specific solutions relating to the health workforce. Despite the current financial situation that WHO and the global health community are facing, this meeting will continue to be held in person to provide an opportunity for high-level discussions.

The meeting aims to reflect on why strengthening health security remains a major priority for small countries, alongside the effects of demographic change, ageing and urban–rural disparities, and the impact of internal and international migration flows on workforce sustainability and equitable access to health care. The meeting will enable participants to explore shared solutions, focusing on how preparedness and resilience can be reinforced by optimizing the capabilities of the existing workforce through a better skills mix, leveraging the use of digital technologies and artificial intelligence, and more deeply integrating health and social care to meet long-term population needs.

The meeting will last for one and a half days. The working language will be English.

In view of logistic considerations, delegations are requested to comprise the **minister or head of delegation plus two additional delegates**. Accommodation for the minister or head of delegation of each Member State will be provided by the Ministry of Health of Latvia. Please refer to the attached information circular for further details.

Each participant should register by **15 April 2026** (the registration form can be accessed at the **registration** link and is also available in the attached information circular).

We look forward to continuing our collaboration through this unique initiative and to welcoming you to Latvia.

Yours very truly,



Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge
WHO Regional Director for Europe



Dr Hosams Abu Meri
Minister of Health, Latvia

Encls:

Scope and purpose
Draft preliminary programme
Information circular

Copy for information to:

Ms Helen Sõber, Adviser, European Union Affairs and International Co-operation Department, Ministry of Social Affairs, Suur-Ameerika 1, 10122 Tallinn, Estonia

Ms Agne Nettan-Sepp, Head, European Union Affairs and International Co-operation Department, Ministry of Social Affairs, Suur-Ameerika 1, 10129 Tallinn, Estonia

H.E. Ms Riia Salsa-Audiffren, Ambassador Representative of the Republic of Estonia, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Estonia to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva, Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28A, CH-1209 Genève, Switzerland

H.E. Mr Andre Pung, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Embassy of the Republic of Estonia, Frederiksgade 19, 4th floor, 1265 Copenhagen K, Denmark

Ms Kristina Köhler, Head of WHO Country Office, WHO Country Office, Estonia, Paldiski Road 81, 10617 Tallinn, Estonia