Workshop on unlocking the power of data and human resources for health information systems to support health and care workforce development in the WHO European Region

Summary report
25 March 2025

World Health Organization
European Region

Background

The 53 Member States of the WHO European Region have endorsed the EUR/RC73/8 framework for action on the health and care workforce in the WHO European Region 2023–2030. This framework recognizes the data challenges and aims to enhance human resources for health information systems (HRHIS) for supporting policy decision-making. WHO is assisting countries in evaluating their HRHIS and strengthening data collection, reporting and utilization.

HRH directors, GCNMOs and data focal points from 36 countries participated in this workshop to discuss improving the generation and use of HRH data as well as HRH information systems. The role of NHWA in improving HRH data and indicators to monitor the progress was part of this discussion.

Workshop objectives

1. Improve the quality and use of health workforce data through the National Health Workforce Accounts (NHWA) and WHO/Europe, OECD, and Eurostat joint questionnaire (JQ) non-monetary healthcare statistics

2. Share best practices and develop actionable improvement plans to strengthen HRHIS across the WHO European Region.

3. Foster dialogue and collaboration among health workforce focal points to support the implementation of the framework and enhance regional health workforce development.
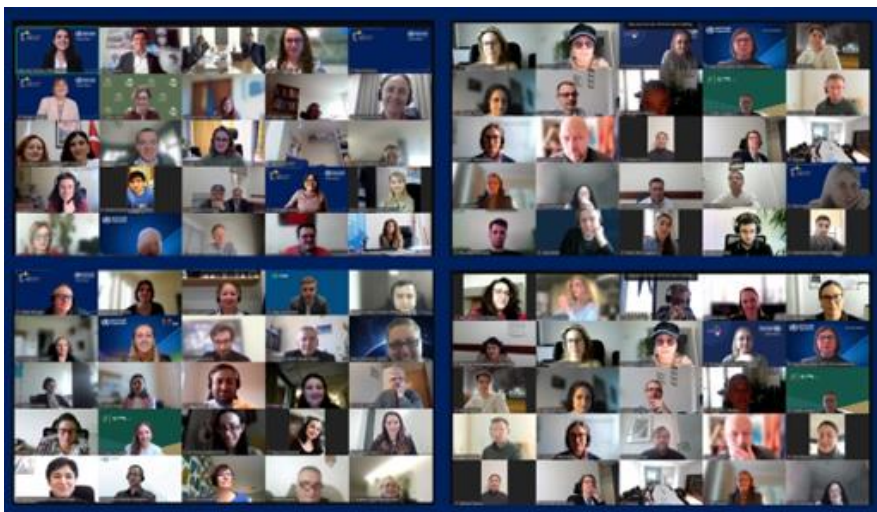
Overview of Programme

Panel Discussion:
- Discussed the future of data and human resources for health information systems with experts from Eurostat, OECD, and WHO.

Presentations and Country Spotlights:
- Explored the use of data for health workforce policy decision-making with presentations from WHO technical officers and country representatives from Kyrgyzstan and Türkiye.
- Discussed WHO national health workforce accounts, data collection, and reporting with insights from Belgium, the United Kingdom, and the South Eastern Europe Health Network.

Policy Lab:
- Focused on developing effective HRH information systems with breakout sessions on data standardization, compliance, data protection, and system design.

Best Practices:
- Shared best practices in strengthening HRH information systems with country spotlights rom Kazakhstan, Spain, and Estonia.

Challenges in the generation and use of HRH data and information system

- *Fragmented systems*: Partial involvement of key stakeholders like the private sector and ministries, leading to lack of coordination and unclear roles.
- *Lack of standardization*: Inconsistent concepts, indicators, and tools, with the private sector using different mechanisms, causing potential double counting.
- *Unclear data flows*: Vertical flows from local to national levels and horizontal flows between national stakeholders are not well-defined.
- *Multiplicity of data sources*: Without proper triangulation, leading to inconsistencies. Routine sources focus on stock data, while labor force surveys provide better insights into labor market dynamics.
- *Mismatches*: Between information produced and needed.

Approaches in addressing challenges in HRH data and information system

- *Improved national HRH governance and coordination mechanisms*: Dedicated HRH units or institutional coordination mechanisms.
- *HRH standardized indicators and data solutions*: NHWA indicators, mapping national health-related occupations to ISCO-08, unique IDs for HRH workers and health facilities, diversification of HRH data.
- *Capacity building and training*: WHO support in countries, regional training
- *Enabling environment for digital transformation*: Artificial intelligence, networked computing, high-bandwidth internet connectivity, open-source software.
- *Increased data use, analytics, and resource allocation*: At national, regional, and global levels ensuring adequate resources for HRH initiatives.

Annual timeline and key moments of coordination between JQ and NHWA

Current availability of data to WHO (December, 2024)

Country	ISO3	Rank	OVERALL average score on data availability	Stock data score	Distribution data score	Education data score
Albania	ALB	29	41%	52%	26%	45%
Andorra	AND	40	32%	64%	21%	28%
Armenia	ARM	44	29%	58%	5%	45%
Austria	AUT	26	46%	64%	34%	55%
Azerbaijan	AZE	47	28%	56%	7%	43%
Belarus	BLR	41	32%	62%	11%	48%
Belgium	BEL	12	60%	62%	44%	50%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	BIH	48	25%	46%	15%	38%
Bulgaria	BGR	32	40%	64%	25%	60%
Croatia	HRV	30	41%	62%	21%	50%
Cyprus	CYP	15	53%	72%	28%	50%
Czechia	CZE	5	73%	62%	86%	58%
Denmark	DNK	45	29%	56%	20%	48%
Estonia	EST	9	67%	88%	41%	63%
Finland	FIN	21	48%	56%	33%	58%
France	FRA	14	59%	62%	35%	55%
Georgia	GEO	35	36%	82%	27%	20%
Germany	DEU	10	61%	82%	31%	50%
Greece	GRC	37	33%	72%	26%	40%
Hungary	HUN	27	45%	76%	43%	56%
Iceland	ISL	8	68%	88%	35%	45%
Ireland	IRL	6	71%	64%	33%	100%
Israel	ISR	3	82%	100%	61%	100%
Italy	ITA	28	42%	62%	24%	50%
Kazakhstan	KAZ	17	51%	62%	7%	50%
Kyrgyzstan	KGZ	38	33%	62%	4%	38%
Latvia	LVA	23	46%	76%	35%	50%
Lithuania	LTU	24	46%	68%	36%	50%
Luxembourg	LUX	50	25%	46%	17%	13%
Malta	MLT	22	47%	62%	46%	50%
Monaco	MCO	53	14%	42%	4%	5%
Montenegro	MNE	2	82%	76%	54%	100%
Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	NLD	31	40%	62%	17%	50%
North Macedonia	MKD	42	31%	76%	23%	20%
Norway	NOR	1	91%	78%	86%	100%
Poland	POL	33	39%	64%	32%	50%
Portugal	PRT	16	53%	68%	18%	50%
Republic of Moldova	MDA	4	78%	64%	46%	100%
Romania	ROU	11	61%	88%	35%	50%
Russian Federation	RUS	43	31%	72%	6%	15%
San Marino	SMR	49	25%	52%	43%	0%
Serbia	SRB	36	34%	64%	28%	50%
Slovakia	SVK	19	49%	58%	33%	63%
Slovenia	SVN	34	39%	62%	30%	50%
Spain	ESP	20	49%	68%	43%	63%
Sweden	SWE	25	46%	56%	41%	63%
Switzerland	CHE	18	50%	74%	47%	50%
Tajikistan	TJK	46	29%	56%	7%	23%
Türkiye	TUR	7	69%	82%	34%	88%
Turkmenistan	TKM	39	32%	66%	7%	56%
Ukraine	UKR	51	22%	38%	1%	20%
United Kingdom	GBR	13	59%	72%	21%	45%
Uzbekistan	UZB	52	18%	46%	3%	18%

Key conclusions

- The need for maintaining momentum behind strengthening HRH data and information was emphasized. WHO tools and guidelines are available.
- A key driver of better data is better understanding and use of data by decision makers. The key HRH policy questions should be used to guide data improvement.
- Each country should build on their existing HRH Information Systems. NHWA can be used to provide a set of principles, guidelines, indicators and tools to support countries for improving HRH data.
- The importance of investing in capacity building and training is highlighted for data collection, reporting and utilization.
- The purpose and need for HRH units was recognized.

Next steps

- Member States to continue improving data collection for national use and reporting to WHO collection.
- Member States to strengthen HRH units, along with coordination with GCNMOs and other stakeholders.
- WHO to provide technical assistance in developing and implementing health workforce registries, standardizing health worker definitions, and improving data flow between different levels.
- WHO to facilitate training and workshops to build capacity in data availability, quality, and utilization.
- WHO to establish regular and shorter stakeholders' meetings for collaboration to promote HRHIS capacity based on thematic preferences.

Feedback received on the workshop

91%	**92%**	**100%**
scored 5	scored 5	said yes
On a scale 1 (worst) to 5 (best), how do you rate this workshop overall?	*Were the topics discussed relevant for the country you represent?*	*Do you feel you had an opportunity to contribute your thoughts?*

Summary of suggestions:

Shorter, frequent workshops (every 3-4 months) preferred due to work commitments. These should focus on specific topics. Key topics include data harmonization, countries best practices, new roles, and digital transformation.