

# Roadmap to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem in the WHO European Region 2022–2030

## Draft resolution

The Regional Committee,

(PP1) Having considered the Roadmap to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem in the WHO European Region 2022–2030,<sup>1</sup> developed through consultation with Member States and non-State actors in the WHO European Region;

(PP2) Recognizing that cervical cancer is a serious public health problem in the Region, with major disparities in vaccination coverage, cervical cancer screening and treatment, and cancer survival outcomes both between and within countries;

(PP3) Recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected cancer care in the Region and resulted in a decline in human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine uptake as well as disruptions in screening programmes, follow-up, diagnosis, treatment and palliative care, that action is required to address backlogs in prevention, early diagnosis and screening, and that action is needed to ensure continuity of care during crisis situations and to increase preparedness and resilience to better counter the effects of the pandemic and other health emergencies;

(PP4) Acknowledging the need for enhanced political commitment, country ownership and regional support to provide universal and equitable access to quality cervical cancer prevention and care that includes the most socioeconomically vulnerable groups, and marginalized and underserved communities;

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<sup>1</sup> Document EUR/RC72/11.

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(PP5) Recognizing that specific efforts may be required to provide access to screening of women in all their diversity and especially vulnerable, marginalized and hard-to-reach communities;

(PP6) Recalling World Health Assembly resolutions WHA70.12, in 2017, on cancer prevention and control in the context of an integrated approach and WHA73.2, in 2020, adopting the Global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem, which requests Member States to prioritize vaccination of girls against HPV and implement and scale up cervical cancer screening and treatment programmes to reduce incidence and mortality;

(PP7) Recognizing the importance of providing equitable HPV vaccination to reduce disease burden from cervical cancer and other cancer forms, in line with nationally set priorities, and the importance of providing equitable access to high-quality organized cervical cancer screening and treatment of pre-cancerous lesions, as well as access to treatment for invasive cancer and palliative care, aligned to the principle of leaving no one behind of the European Programme of Work, 2020–2025 – “United Action for Better Health in Europe”<sup>2</sup> and its flagship initiatives relating to immunization, behavioural and cultural insights, and mental and digital health;

(PP8) Noting the pan-European United Action Against Cancer initiative, which calls to eliminate cervical cancer as a life-threatening disease by supporting cost-effective and evidence-based policies and measures, and Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan flagship initiative on preventing cancers caused by infections thereby reducing the overall burden of disease and increasing quality of life;

(PP9) Reaffirming resolution EUR/RC71/R4 adopting the European Immunization Agenda 2030, which envisions a world where everyone, everywhere, and at every age fully benefits from vaccines for good health and well-being, including HPV vaccination;

(PP10) Recalling the adoption of resolution EUR/RC71/R3, Realizing the potential of primary health care: lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and implications for future directions in the WHO European Region, which calls for a comprehensive and aligned health systems-based approach to strengthening primary health care;

(PP11) Recognizing the importance of commitment to sexual and reproductive health and rights, in accordance with the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, as well as the outcomes of their review conferences, and with

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<sup>2</sup> Document EUR/RC70/11 Rev.4.

the Regional action plans for ending AIDS and the epidemics of viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections 2022–2030,<sup>3</sup> which call for implementing screening, treatment and care for cervical cancer in a health system supportive of universal access and free of discrimination;

(OP1) ADOPTS the Roadmap to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem in the WHO European Region 2022–2030, together with its goals and 2030 targets;

(OP2) URGES Member States:<sup>4</sup>

- (a) to strengthen health systems governance with appropriate financial resources and coordination mechanisms and promote equitable access across the continuum of care to comprehensive, multidisciplinary and coordinated quality cancer services within integrated primary health care to achieve universal health coverage;
- (b) to develop or update, as appropriate, costed national cervical cancer elimination action plans, based on national cancer control plans and immunization priorities, with clear pragmatic strategies and mechanisms to achieve the targets and goals outlined in the regional roadmap, while taking into account the existing structures and performance of the national health systems;
- (c) to pursue a multisectoral and participatory approach in implementation of the roadmap through active engagement of sectors within the government and beyond, with specific focus on at-risk populations;
- (d) to achieve and sustain high levels of HPV vaccination coverage among adolescent girls (and boys, where feasible and appropriate) using effective delivery strategies and behavioural and implementation research towards equitable vaccination uptake;
- (e) to organize high-quality evidence- and population-based cervical cancer screening programmes, as part of a screening pathway, that reach all women in all their diversity, especially at-risk, marginalized, rural and socially disadvantaged populations in the target age group;
- (f) to implement (prior to implementation of organized population-based screening) appropriate and evidence-based quality diagnostic and treatment methods for cervical pre-cancerous lesions as well as the management and follow-up of screen-positive women;
- (g) to develop and implement cervical cancer management guidelines and care pathways, including multidisciplinary tumour boards to guide invasive cervical cancer treatment;

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<sup>3</sup> Document EUR/RC72/9.

<sup>4</sup> And, where applicable, regional economic integration organizations.

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- (h) to introduce and integrate palliative care and psychosocial support services into all services for cancer patients, including through access to pain medications, equipment and trained health professionals;
  - (i) to invest in evidence-based and behavioural and cultural insights-informed policy and communication strategies and improved health literacy to reduce disparities in HPV vaccine uptake, participation in screening programmes, and cancer outcomes;
  - (j) to establish quality national cancer registries and strengthen health information systems, including through enhanced interoperability, to generate high-quality data for informed health policies and decision-making, for enhanced surveillance, monitoring and evaluation of impact and for advanced research;

(OP3) REQUESTS the Regional Director:

- (a) to support the implementation of the Roadmap to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer as a public health problem in the WHO European Region 2022–2030 by providing leadership, strategic direction and technical guidance to Member States;
- (b) to facilitate collaboration of the Regional Multistakeholder Committee in supporting implementation of the regional roadmap through national action plans, where appropriate, and facilitate implementation with international partners, including the International Agency for Research on Cancer, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the European Commission, the Association of European Cancer Leagues, the European Society for Medical Oncology, the Union for International Cancer Control, and the United Nations Population Fund;
- (c) to promote regional information and knowledge exchange among national focal points for cervical cancer elimination;
- (d) to provide comprehensive technical support to Member States, upon request, including in increasing uptake of HPV vaccination with a focus on underserved and at-risk populations, developing organized population-based screening, strengthening clinical pathways, and improving access to high-quality diagnosis, treatment, and integrated palliative care and survivorship services;
- (e) to provide models for Member States in developing evidence-informed communication materials tailored to the needs of the target audience;

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- (f) to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework and to support Member States in documenting the impact of control programmes for cervical cancer;
  - (g) to report on the progress made in the implementation of the roadmap through a midterm progress report to the Regional Committee at its 76th session in 2026 and a final report at its 81st session in 2031.

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