



Phase VI (2014–2018) of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network Official call for expression of interest

This paper provides background information for cities interested in applying to become a member of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network.

Innovation, leadership and shared governance for health and well-being

Phase VI builds on 25 years of the WHO European Healthy Cities programme. The WHO European Healthy Cities Network is now positioned as a strategic vehicle at the local level for implementing Health 2020, the new European policy and strategy for health and well-being. Health 2020 recognizes the important leadership role of local governments in developing health, with a strong emphasis on whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches.

An adaptable and practical framework for delivering Health 2020 at the local level

Phase VI will support cities in strengthening their efforts to bring key stakeholders together to work for health and well-being, to harness leadership, innovation and change and to enhance the potential to resolve local public health challenges. The concepts of the city health profile and the (intersectoral) city health development plan remain valid and they will be adapted to reflect the wider scope of the WHO European Healthy Cities goals in Phase VI.

Health 2020 has been informed by several studies and brings together and interconnects new evidence and existing knowledge and evidence on health and its social determinants. In implementing Phase VI, cities will use this new evidence and knowledge, will build on the themes of Phase V and the Phase VI (2 + 4 goals and themes) framework and yield maximum health benefits for the population.

Phase VI will take account of the diversity, distinctiveness and circumstances of cities within the WHO European Healthy Cities Network, and cities will use different entry points and approaches but will remain united in achieving the overarching goals and core themes of Phase VI.

Goals and core themes

The two strategic goals of Health 2020 provide the overarching umbrella of Phase VI and will reinforce the strong-standing Healthy Cities commitment to addressing equity, the social determinants of health, improving governance and promoting health in all policies.

The two strategic goals of Health 2020 are:

- improving health for all and reducing health inequalities; and
- improving leadership and participatory governance for health.

City health diplomacy will be a new theme to explore in Phase VI, reflecting new opportunities for working across cities internationally but also linking with the national and global public health agendas. Phase VI core themes will be based on a local adaptation of the four priorities for policy action of Health 2020.

Cities will choose from several priority issues within the themes of Health 2020:

Theme 1: Investing in health through the life-course and empowering people

Early years
Older people
Vulnerability
Health literacy

Theme 2: Tackling the major health challenges of communicable and noncommunicable diseases

Physical activity
Nutrition and obesity
Alcohol
Tobacco
Mental well-being

Theme 3: Strengthening people-centred systems and public health capacity, emergency preparedness and surveillance

Transforming the delivery of city services
Revitalizing and strengthening public health capacity

Theme 4: Creating resilient communities and supportive environments

Community resilience
Healthy settings
Healthy urban planning and design
Healthy transport
Climate change
Housing and regeneration

Organizational structure of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network

In Phase VI, the WHO European Network will have three components.

- The WHO European Network will include cities in all WHO European Member States, and the maximum number of cities will be 100.
- National healthy cities networks will renew their accreditation to reflect Phase VI goals and core themes.
- A range of new partnerships and mechanisms for theme interest groups will be established or strengthened to support cities and national network cities, including subnetworks, task forces, working groups and partnerships.

Methods of working and capacity

WHO collaborating centres, thematic subnetworks, experts in various fields and WHO advisory committees will support WHO. Several WHO units and programmes will provide direct technical input to the WHO European Network during Phase VI. External institutions with appropriate experience and expertise will carry out the secretariat functions of the WHO European Network during Phase VI. Networking, training, tool development, monitoring, evaluation and knowledge and partnerships will build capacity and support delivery during Phase VI.

Process of designating cities in Phase VI

A unique link to the Phase VI electronic application form will be forwarded to you when your letter of expression of interest is received. The online application form will be available in English only.

Cities will be designated as members in Phase VI on an ongoing basis based on the applications received. All cities that have expressed interest in joining the WHO European Network that receive the green light to submit an application should do so immediately. WHO hopes to receive the majority of applications before the end of 2013. There will be a simplified application process for cities that were active members in Phase V. For other interested cities, there will be a full application process.

Country quotas

The cities designated to the WHO European Network will be geographically balanced from across countries in the WHO European Region. The maximum quota per country will be 12 cities. New cities from countries that reached their quota in Phase V are also encouraged to apply, and there will be a special effort to encourage greater participation from underrepresented countries and regions in Europe.

Letters of expression of interest

Any city that can meet the requirements for membership may apply to become a member of Phase VI. Cities should send a letter of expression of interest from the mayor of the city, indicating that:

- they wish to apply to become a member of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network in Phase VI;
- that the city will dedicate resources to meeting Phase VI goals and requirements; and
- that the city will make the annual financial commitment to WHO and participate actively in the WHO European Network and in subnetworks.

The letter should also identify the focal point in the city for the Phase VI application, including an e-mail address.

Financial commitment

All member cities will be required to make an annual financial contribution for each of the five years of Phase VI (2014–2018), paid directly to WHO. Member cities in Phase V applying for membership in Phase VI will be sent an invoice for payment when WHO receives the letter of expression of interest. Cities that were not members in Phase V will be sent an invoice when the application is approved. WHO will use the contributions for staffing, technical work and secretarial and managerial functions of Phase VI. In exceptional circumstances, a city that has difficulty in meeting this financial commitment can discuss alternative ways of making this contribution with WHO.

The letter of expression of interest should ideally be sent by 31 December 2013 (31 March 2014 latest) and addressed to:

1. Agis D. Tsouros, Director, Division of Policy and Governance for Health and Well-being, Head, Centre for Urban Health
WHO Regional Office for Europe
UN City, Marmorvej 51, DK-2100 Copenhagen, Denmark
cop@euro.who.int

A copy of the letter should be emailed to:

2. Joan Devlin
WHO Healthy Cities Belfast Secretariat
joan@belfasthealthycities.com

The email subject line should indicate Healthy Cities Phase VI.

Further information on the WHO European Healthy Cities Network is available at <http://www.euro.who.int/healthy-cities>. Cities not currently belonging to the WHO European Healthy Cities Network can contact the WHO Healthy Cities Belfast Secretariat or members of the WHO Phase V Cities Advisory Committee or National Network Advisory Committee. Details for the members of each Committee are available on the above website.