

**PRESS-RELEASE**

Increasing access and affordability of health services: Tajikistan marks progress at high-level meetings in February supported by the European Union

**06 February 2024, Dushanbe** –

Tajikistan is making remarkable strides in transforming its health system to ensure essential healthcare services are accessible to all citizens without causing financial hardship. This strong commitment to achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC) was emphasized at two pivotal events held in February 2025: a High-level Roundtable organized by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Joint Annual Review hosted by the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population. Both events were made possible through the generous financial support of the European Union (EU).

**High-level Roundtable: Pioneering health financing reforms**

The High-level Roundtable focused on the progress of health financing reforms, specifically the launch of an innovative pilot programme in Sughd Oblast, which began on January 1, 2025. This pilot introduces new health financing mechanisms for primary healthcare institutions across five districts and cities: Devashtich, Asht, Shahriston, Kuhistoni Mastchoh, and Istiklol.

*“The adoption of Resolution 438, which formalizes the introduction of new health financing mechanisms in Sughd Oblast, represents a key milestone in Tajikistan’s journey toward a modern and sustainable health system,”* said Qurboniyon Sarvar Sobir, Deputy Minister of Finance of the Republic of Tajikistan

Central to the reform is the shift to performance-based payments, where healthcare providers are compensated based on the quality of services delivered. This model not only grants healthcare providers greater decision-making autonomy but also improves the management of public funds, ultimately benefiting the health of the population. During the roundtable, stakeholders discussed the potential for scaling these reforms nationwide and stressed the importance of strategic purchasing as a cornerstone for broader health system transformation.

WHO experts presented findings from a key study on primary health care financing during the Round Table event, providing invaluable insights to inform policy options and guide decision-making.

*“The strong collaboration between the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population and the Ministry of Finance has been essential in advancing these critical health financing reforms. Additionally, the technical expertise of WHO and the financial support from the European Union have* *been key enablers in making this progress possible,” said First Deputy Minister of Health and Social Protection of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dr. Gafur Mukhsinzoda.*

**Joint Annual Review: EU and WHO commend Tajikistan for progress in the health sector and call for accelerated action to improve access and affordability of health services**

Ahead of the Roundtable, EU and WHO supported the Ministry of Health and Social Protection in the organization of the Joint Annual Review of the Strategy for Healthcare of the Population up to 2030. The event, which took place on 5 February, brought together government representatives and development partners to review the year’s accomplishments and identify key priorities for 2025.

*“European Union’s actions are committed worldwide to achieve****universal health coverage and to assure the well-being and lives of citizens worldwide.*** *We are proud to be supporting the Tajik National Healthcare Strategy and its achievement through our Health Development Programme. Addressing health challenges, in a changing world, needs to remain a priority” – Mrs. Isabel Uriz Hernandez, Head of Cooperation at the European Union Delegation to the Republic of Tajikistan.*

WHO was represented by Dr. Igor Pokanevych, Senior Officer at the WHO in New York and former WHO Representative to Tajikistan. Dr. Pokanevych praised the country’s health system advancements.

*"I commend the Ministry of Health and Social Protection for its outstanding achievements over the past decade, particularly in advancing health system reforms. However, we must maintain this momentum. Given the global challenges and shifting geopolitical landscape, it is more important than ever that we work together to create lasting impact. WHO remains fully committed to supporting Tajikistan in building a resilient and equitable health system,"* Dr. Pokanevych stated.

**The European Union's contribution to Tajikistan’s health sector**

The year 2025 marks the final year of the EU-funded Health Development Programme (2021-2025). This programme focuses on strengthening primary healthcare governance, financing, and access to essential services, including outpatient medicines. With both financial and technical support, the EU helps Tajikistan build a more resilient and equitable health system, advancing the country’s goal of Universal Health Coverage. Over the past decade, the EU has invested over 60 million euros in supporting these efforts.

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| A project implemented | Y:\INFO-PRESS\EU symbols\EU logos - For projects\EU_normal-reproduction-low-resolution.jpgThis project is fundedby the European UnionDelegation of the European Union to the Republic of Tajikistan74 Adhamov Street734013 Dushanbe, Republic of TajikistanTel: (+992 37) 221 74 07, 227 10 24 Delegation-Tajikistan-Pic@eeas.europa.eu    Y:\INFO-PRESS\Website and Social Media\Delegation Social Media\Instagram\ig-logo-email.png | The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 60 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders. To this end the EU is active in Tajikistan since 1992 and provides approximately EUR 35 million annually in development assistance.  |