

FEAM Statement on Recent U.S. Policy Decisions Affecting Global Health and Science

The Federation of European Academies of Medicine (FEAM) expresses its profound concern over recent Executive Orders from the President of the United States, including the withdrawing from the World Health Organization (WHO), significant funding cuts to WHO, revaluation and realignment of US foreign aid, and the reduction of financial support for scientific research, particularly affecting initiatives like Horizon Europe. These actions pose severe threats to the multilateral system established 80 years ago and undermine the foundational structures of international scientific collaboration and public health progress.

The decision to reduce funding for the WHO during a global health crisis presents significant challenges for international efforts aimed at managing pandemics that naturally cross borders. This reduction in support could weaken the global health architecture that underpins humanitarian aid and international health initiatives. It is crucial that Europe and other global leaders reassess their strategies to ensure that international health efforts remain robust and effective without disproportionate reliance on any single nation's leadership.

Similarly, the cuts to scientific funding are likely to impact collaborative efforts to advance understanding in critical areas such as infectious diseases, chronic conditions, and public health infrastructure. These policy changes could lead to a fragmentation of the global scientific community and isolate vital research initiatives. Such decisions threaten the continuity of cross-border health projects and research initiatives, potentially creating gaps in global health responses and reducing the capacity for emergency preparedness.

Our concerns also extend deeply to the pipeline of talent, which is indispensable for both societal well-being and the advancement of healthcare. The future of medical sciences and patient care hinges on our ability to attract and nurture bright, young individuals who see their careers within these fields. It is vital that these promising minds are supported and motivated to pursue medical, pharmaceutical, or veterinary studies. This commitment to fostering young talent is crucial for ensuring a resilient healthcare system capable of addressing both current and future challenges.

In response to these policy shifts, FEAM calls on European nations and the broader international community to reinforce their support for scientific endeavors and to seek alternative funding avenues to ensure the continuation of vital research. We must maintain strong, open, and collaborative research environments that are robust against political fluctuations.

FEAM remains steadfast in its commitment to advocating for solidarity and mutual support between countries, and science-based policies and decision-making. In an era increasingly affected by misinformation, it is imperative that public health policies and communications are grounded in rigorously vetted, evidence-based science to ensure the well-being of global communities. Decisions about public health measures, such as vaccinations and disease prevention strategies, must continue to be guided by the best available scientific evidence.

As we face these unprecedented challenges, FEAM reaffirms its dedication to its mission of promoting excellence in medical research, enhancing the quality of health care, and influencing health policy through science-based approaches. We will continue to support the scientific community in Europe and globally, advocating for the essential role of science in creating a healthier, more resilient society.