

Curriculum Vitae

Zsuzsanna Jakab

Position sought: WHO Regional Director for Europe

Name: Zsuzsanna Jakab
Date of Birth: 17 May 1951, Budapest
Nationality: Hungarian
Civil status: married with three adult children
Current job: Director of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
Languages: Hungarian: native speaker
English: fluent, near native
German: good
Russian: good
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Achievements and Vision

Zsuzsanna Jakab has a track record of excellence as a leader and manager during more than three decades devoted to strengthening public health at both national and international levels. Her major achievements include:

- building from scratch the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) as its founding Director, and within three years developing it into an internationally respected centre of excellence (2005 – present)
- developing and implementing the Hungarian public health programme and overseeing health aspects of Hungary's accession to the EU as Secretary of State at the Ministry of Health (2002-2005)
- managing and strengthening WHO/Europe's governance, management and financial systems and staff welfare as Director of Administration and Management Support in WHO/Europe (2000-2002)
- developing the first intensified country cooperation programme and then, as the Director for Country Health Development in WHO/Europe, directing and implementing the programme (1991-2000)

Success in each of these endeavours has come from an ability to define a vision, set clear objectives, bring together policy makers, senior officials and staff and provide the managerial capacity and focus to ensure achievement.

This, combined with her career-long commitment to public health and its development, both in Europe and globally, makes Zsuzsanna Jakab the ideal candidate for the post of WHO's Regional Director for Europe. Her vision is to build a strong and effective Regional Office that supports all its Member States in protecting and improving the health of their people. To

this end she will leverage her national, EU and WHO experience to ensure that synergies are exploited, existing partnerships reinforced and new ones developed whilst also investing in motivating staff and managing the Office and its resources to their full potential.

Personal Skills, Qualities and Competences

Over the course of her career Zsuzsanna Jakab has consistently demonstrated a natural aptitude for leadership along with an ability to assimilate and apply best management practice. The key qualities she would bring to the position of Regional Director are:

- commitment to the goal of protecting and improving health
- the ability to manage complex organisations, with continuous adaptation to a changing world, combining delegation with accountability;
- the diplomatic skills needed to foster consensus and build coalitions and networks among Member States, international organisations and other key stakeholders including non governmental organisations.
- practical knowledge and experience of how public health systems operate at national and international level
- a solid network of contacts including policy makers, senior officials and leading experts
- knowledge and experience of the diversity of the countries throughout the WHO European Region
- in-depth and extensive knowledge and experience of WHO policies and procedures at both regional and global levels;
- in-depth knowledge of EU policies and procedures: extensive experience of participating in senior official level and ministerial meetings as well as of the European Parliament
- the ability to develop public health strategies based on evidence and then to lead and manage their implementation;
- the people skills needed to recruit outstanding staff and to motivate and manage them to achieve excellence;
- excellent communication skills, both to internal and external audiences;
- the ability to identify the key tasks for success and the will, drive, determination and stamina to ensure their successful delivery.

All this is underpinned by her unique career trajectory moving between national and international level administrations which has ensured that her ideas and practice remain firmly rooted in the day-to-day reality of Member State health systems and their needs.

Employment History

**March 2005 – present date: Director of the European Centre for Disease
Prevention and Control (ECDC), Stockholm, Sweden**

As its first Director, tasked with establishing the Centre; ensuring the smooth running of its operations; setting out its long-term vision for further development; achieving high budget execution; recruiting staff and building up the staff capacity from just herself in March 2005 to 250 at present; developing close working relations with the Member States, Presidencies, European Parliament, the European Commission and other partners such as WHO.

Following an open competition, Zsuzsanna Jakab was appointed as the first Director of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control in 2005. She built up this EU agency from scratch, including finding and adapting suitable premises and recruiting all the staff, and has overseen, guided and managed it to become a key useful and successful institution which is operational in every aspect of its work, and which produces output appreciated by all its stakeholders. It is a testament to her public health leadership, management and diplomatic skills that in spite of being a new agency, ECDC rapidly found its niche among the existing public health partners in Europe whilst simultaneously developing a vision, identity and long-term strategic work programme to meet the needs and expectations of its stakeholders (EU Member States, Presidencies, European Commission, European Parliament). It speaks volumes that ECDC successfully managed a number of threats and other urgent tasks during a period of rapid growth, in new premises (not quite ready) and with systems and procedures which were either still untested or being developed.

Four years on, ECDC's Management Board, the EU Commissioners and a recent independent, external evaluation have confirmed that the centre has achieved scientific credibility, independence and a presence on the international stage. It has also been shown to contribute significantly towards strengthening the European Union's defences against communicable diseases and other emerging and re-emerging health threats. As the Director, Zsuzsanna Jakab has been invited to contribute to discussions in the European Parliament and in Informal Health Councils. She has also worked closely with the European Commission to feed ECDC's work into the EU policy making process.

None of this would have been possible without a professional, committed and motivated workforce and Zsuzsanna Jakab has been personally involved in the final selection of the majority of ECDC's staff. Zsuzsanna Jakab has always been attentive to the welfare of staff, fostering a positive climate and working environment in the Centre, which is appreciated by all the staff. She constantly strives to empower and inspire staff and to maintain a spirit that is conducive to high-quality work.

September 2002 – March 2005: Secretary of State, Ministry of Health, Social and Family Affairs, Budapest, Hungary

As the senior civil servant, tasked with responsibility for the operations and management of the Hungarian Ministry of Health, Social and Family Affairs; with responsibility for EU integration in areas related to health; with the establishment of the first National Development Programme for the use of EU structural funds; and the development and implementation of Hungary's national public health program.

After 11 years in WHO, Zsuzsanna Jakab returned to Budapest in 2002 at the request of the Hungarian government as Secretary of State in the run-up to Hungary's accession to the European Union.

In this top civil service job, she led the work of the Ministry and its institutions: specifically, Hungary's integration into the EU in the field of health, the use of EU structural funds and cooperation with WHO. In this role, she was also responsible for the development of Hungary's National Public Health Programme, in line with WHO Health For All (HFA) policy and guidelines, its submission to the Government and Parliament and subsequently for its implementation.

The aim of the national public health programme as well as the national development programme for the structural funds was to improve the health status of Hungarian citizens and to reduce the health gap between the EU average and Hungary. The National Public Health Programme introduced a set of primary and secondary prevention programmes of which population-based breast and cervical cancer screening programmes and a pilot project for colorectal screening have been the most successful and beneficial to the population.

During this time Zsuzsanna Jakab was also Chair of the European Environment and Health Committee and organised the European Conference on Environment and Health in Budapest in 2003.

October 2000 – September 2002: Director of Administration and Management Support, WHO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen, Denmark

Responsible for the work of the governing bodies and overall strategic and operational planning, monitoring and evaluation. Also tasked with supervising the work of WHO Collaborating Centres in Europe, legal and financial matters and administration. In close cooperation with other Directors provided support to the Regional Director in all policy and public health developments of the Office.

As Director of Administration and Management Support Zsuzsanna Jakab guided the overall managerial process of WHO/Europe Region, contributing to the smooth running of operations, supporting the Regional Director and working closely with other Directors on financial and administrative matters. The welfare of staff was one of her main considerations during this time. She attended the Global Policy and Management Group of WHO, comprising all the Directors of Programme Management from other Regional Offices and colleagues from WHO Headquarters, which ensured the coordinated and integrated management of WHO. This also provided an opportunity to visit other WHO regions and learn from their experience and work. This post helped to consolidate her knowledge and exposure to WHO globally as well as to its Member States which she had gained earlier in her career working with governance issues.

Early 2000 – October 2000: Coordinator, Division of Information, Evidence and Communication, WHO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen, Denmark

Tasked with setting up a new division, developing its vision, mission, strategy, activities, structure, staffing and resource needs and running it until the appointment of the new director.

March 1997 – Early 2000: Acting Director, then Director for Country Health Development, WHO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen, Denmark

Responsible for coordinating WHO's cooperation with all the Member States of Europe as well as with international partners. The main tasks were to guide the work of the humanitarian assistance programme in countries with man-made or natural disasters; to guide the further development of the EUROHEALTH Programme for Intensified

Collaboration with the 25 Newly Independent States (NIS) and Countries of Central and Eastern Europe (CCEE); to guide the external relations and partnerships programme; to supervise the work of the Epidemiology, Statistics and Health Information Unit; to guide the work of the quality of care and pharmaceuticals programme as well as Urban Health Development.

Following her promotion to the post of Director of Country Health Development Zsuzsanna Jakab continued to support those countries most in need. During this time she supported the Regional Director in the proposals and drive to ensure a higher country allocation for those European countries most in need and was rewarded by their adoption by the World Health Assembly. In parallel she helped ensure that the Office remained relevant to all the diverse countries of Europe including the EU countries through WHO/Europe's regional HFA policy, inter country programmes and networks. She also directly supervised several other programmes, such as the complex humanitarian assistance programmes which supported several European countries through war, civil unrest and natural disasters; the Health Information Programme which included the European HFA database and public health reports as well as country based initiatives to strengthen use of health information for policy, decision and management; the Quality of Care Programme; Urban Health Development and Partnerships.

1991 – 1997: Co-ordinator, Policy and Country Programme, EUROHEALTH Programme for Intensified Collaboration with NIS and Central and Eastern Europe, WHO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen, Denmark

Tasked with developing close cooperation with 14 countries of CCEE and setting up, guiding and supervising a WHO country presence and Office in each of the 25 countries within the Eurohealth Programme. Responsible for ensuring integrated support from WHO in the health development of these countries in the 6 priority areas of the programme.

In addition, responsible for supporting the Regional Director in the preparation and running of the Governing Bodies, such as the Regional Committee for Europe and the Standing Committee of the Regional Committee as well as preparing the Regional Office for meetings of the global governing bodies, such as the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board.

Zsuzsanna Jakab joined WHO in 1991 just as the political landscape of Europe was changing. She was immediately assigned by the Regional Director to the EUROHEALTH Programme for Intensified Cooperation with Central and Eastern Europe as well as the Newly Independent States. She led this programme together with another colleague and their role was to strengthen the health development of the 25 CCEE/NIS countries by channelling support from WHO/EURO in the areas of health policy; health services; communicable and non-communicable diseases; lifestyles and health; mother and child health and environment and health. This required identifying the needs for each country by examining the epidemiological evidence to pinpoint the areas that required action for each country backed up by on the ground country visits. Carrying out this role afforded Zsuzsanna Jakab both fundamental insight and intimate knowledge of the diversity in Europe and of the countries of the Newly Independent States as well as Central and Eastern Europe. This programme was confirmed as a success by an external evaluation undertaken by the Regional Committee.

1975 – 1991: Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Budapest, Hungary

- Director General, Department for International Relations (1989-91)
- Deputy Director General, Department for International Relations (1988-89)
- Director, Division for International Organizations (1983-88)
- Deputy Director, Division for International Organizations (1982-83)
- Officer in charge of WHO collaboration (1975-82)

Responsible in the early years for building cooperation with WHO thereby opening a new world for Hungary's policymakers and public health leaders and experts. As Hungary developed, the role encompassed making links and building relationships with other partners, such as the Council of Europe and with funding institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Funds as well as facilitating integration into the PHARE Programme.

Between 1975-1991 Zsuzsanna Jakab held a variety of gradually more senior positions at the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in Hungary, leading up to the post of Director-General for International Relations. During this period Hungary gradually opened up to the world and established more and more international relations and partnerships. Zsuzsanna Jakab guided the work to develop cooperation with WHO, the Council of Europe, the World Bank, the IMF, and the Phare Programme amongst others. Each of these partnerships provided tremendous support and impetus to Hungary's health policy and public health development. Zsuzsanna Jakab found all of these jobs leading up to the most senior during the term of office of the reform Government, extremely important, and professionally challenging and satisfying.

Education

- 1969-1975 Degree in Political and Social Sciences with Humanities, Eotvos Lorand Tudományegyetem (Eotvos Lorand University of Sciences), Budapest, Hungary
- 1977-1979 Postgraduate studies in Macroeconomics, Political Sciences and History of Religion, University of Political Sciences, Budapest, Hungary
- 1998-1999 Courses on Public Health Sciences and Qualitative Methods and Public Health Science and Epidemiology, Nordic School of Public Health, Gothenburg, Sweden
- 2000 Successfully completed the UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representatives competency assessment, International Dimension, Pittsburgh
- 2002-2003 Specialist course on Government and EU legislation, National Institute of Public Administration and Management, Budapest, Hungary
- Completed many management training sessions over the course of the career including result-based management; human resource development; management of change and conflict management