The WHO Regional Committee for Europe appointed a Regional Search Group (RSG) for candidates for the post of WHO Regional Director for Europe in 1989, 1994, 1998, 2003 and 2008, and tasked it with applying criteria adopted in the Regional Committee decisions and resolutions EUR/RC38(3), EUR/RC40/R3, EUR/RC43/R5 and EUR/RC47/R5. The Rules of Procedure governing the membership and method of work of the RSG were further amended in 2001 (resolution EUR/RC51/R4) and in 2010 (resolution EUR/RC60/R3). Pursuant to these amendments, the RSG became the Regional Evaluation Group (REG) and was first appointed in 2014. The most recent time an REG was appointed was in 2018.

At its 73rd session, the Regional Committee should appoint an REG to evaluate and short-list candidates for the post of Regional Director. This document sets out the REG’s terms of reference, its membership and selection procedure, its method of work and timetable, and the criteria for candidates for the post of Regional Director.

The Regional Committee is invited to appoint the members of the REG after considering a list of names proposed by Member States in the WHO European Region, in accordance with Rule 14.2.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Europe.
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INTRODUCTION

1. Rule 47.1 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Europe stipulates that “At its session preceding the one at which a person is due to be nominated as Regional Director, the Regional Committee shall appoint a Regional Evaluation Group composed of six members chosen from delegations of the Members attending the Regional Committee, based on equitable geographical representation, to make a preliminary evaluation of candidates for nomination in the light of the criteria specified by the Regional Committee and to perform related functions as set out in this Rule”.

2. Therefore, under the terms of Rule 47.1, at its 73rd session the Regional Committee should appoint a Regional Evaluation Group (REG) to make a preliminary evaluation of candidates for nomination to the post of WHO Regional Director for Europe by the Regional Committee at its 74th session.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

3. The terms of reference of the REG, as set out in document EUR/RC40/4, approved in resolution EUR/RC40/R3 and amended by the Regional Committee in resolution EUR/RC60/R3, are:
   - “to enter into dialogue with Member States and encourage them to nominate suitable candidates;
   - to consult with and consider the views of the Director-General concerning the candidates;
   - to interview all candidates, consider their written statements and evaluate their views and intentions in relation to the requirements of the post;
   - to evaluate the candidates and report thereon to the Regional Committee”.

4. Additionally, at its 60th session the Regional Committee adopted the following amendment to Rule 47 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Europe:

   “47.10 [...] the Chairperson of the Regional Evaluation Group shall send, under confidential cover, the evaluation report of the Search Group on all candidates, and an unranked short-list of not more than five candidates who in its opinion most closely meet the criteria laid down, to the President, the Executive President and the Deputy Executive President of the Committee, to each Member State of the Region according to the Regional Office’s list of official contacts, and to the Director-General”.

MEMBERSHIP AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

5. In accordance with Rule 47.1, the REG shall be composed of six members chosen from delegations of the Members attending the Regional Committee, based on equitable geographical representation. Rule 47.2(a) provides that the selection of the members of the REG shall be carried out, mutatis mutandis, in accordance with the procedure set forth in Rule 14.2.2.

6. Accordingly, the Regional Director invited Member States in the WHO European Region to send nominations for membership of the REG. Document EUR/RC73/5 Rev.1 provides the list of nominations received from Member States by the deadline of 24 April 2023, which was extended to 26 May 2023.

7. Rule 47.2(a) describes the modalities for appointment of the members of the REG.

8. Pursuant to Rule 47.2(b), members shall cease to serve on the REG if a candidate is presented by the Member State on whose delegation they served at the Regional Committee when they were appointed.
WORK OF THE REG

9. Once appointed, the members of the REG will recall the criteria for candidates for the post of Regional Director as adopted by the Regional Committee at its 40th session (resolution EUR/RC40/R3), and affirmed and supplemented at its 47th session (resolution EUR/RC47/R5). These criteria are reproduced in Annex 1.

10. As noted in section 3 of document EUR/RC40/4, “it is suggested that, in future, candidates be invited to present to the REG a written statement outlining their views on the future strategy, policies and role of WHO in Europe”. Members of the REG would therefore be expected to use both written statements and interviews in evaluating individual candidates. Also, pursuant to Rule 47.8 of the Rules of Procedure of the Regional Committee for Europe, the REG may, unless it exceptionally decides otherwise, make arrangements for all candidates to give a time-limited oral presentation at a meeting to which all Member States in the Region are invited.

11. The REG may seek the opinion of outside public health experts and other bodies.

12. The attention of REG members will be drawn to the need for confidentiality on all discussions regarding the assessment of candidates.

CONCLUSION

13. The Regional Committee is invited to appoint members of the REG (the nominations received can be found in document EUR/RC73/5 Rev.1). The REG will then meet as soon as possible to decide on its programme and method of work. A provisional timetable of events is given in Annex 2.
Annex 1. Criteria for candidates for the post of WHO Regional Director for Europe

The following criteria were adopted by the Regional Committee at its 40th session (resolution EUR/RC40/R3), and affirmed and supplemented at its 47th session (resolution EUR/RC47/R5).

(a) The candidate must have a commitment to WHO’s mission;

The candidate should be committed to the values, role and policies of WHO and notably the goal of health for all. There should be clear evidence of his/her personal involvement in furthering that commitment.

(b) The candidate must have proven leadership qualities and integrity;

The candidate must be dynamic and must have demonstrated long-term and consistent leadership qualities. A commitment to outcomes and effective results – as opposed to merely a concern about processes – is essential. Ability to communicate in a clear and inspiring way is an important requirement. Such communication skills need to be effective with widely different target groups, including the mass media, and involve direct personal contact with political and other leaders in the public health field, health personnel, a wide range of academic and other professional groups outside the health sector, and WHO staff, etc. In view of the high goals of WHO and its impartial international character, the personal integrity of the candidate and the ability to withstand pressures from official or private sources contrary to the interests of the Organization are essential.

(c) The candidate must have proven managerial ability;

The person should have demonstrated clear ability to manage a complex organization in the health field. His/her performance in that role should have demonstrated a determination to make a thorough analysis of the problems and possibilities for solving them; the setting of clear goals and objectives; the design of appropriate programmes for optimal use of the total resources; the efficient use of those resources; and a careful process for monitoring and evaluation. Importance should be attached to the candidate’s skills in fostering teamwork – with appropriate delegation of responsibility – and in creating a harmonious working environment. In view of the need for the work of the Region to interact with and actively support the efforts of other regions and headquarters, the candidate’s ability to work effectively with leaders, at both national and international levels, in health and other sectors, is an important element.

(d) The candidate should be a person professionally qualified in the field of health and having a sound knowledge of public health and of its epidemiological basis;

This type of qualification and background would greatly assist the candidate in the performance of his/her duties, and in contacts with national health administrations.

(e) The candidate must have a broad understanding of the health problems and social, political, cultural, ethnic and other sensitive issues in the Region;

In view of the above, it follows that the candidate would normally be a national of one of the Member States of the Region. The candidate should be fluent in at least one of the working languages of the Regional Committee, and knowledge of others would be an asset.

(f) The candidate must be sufficiently healthy to carry out the duties of the post.

It is acknowledged that being sufficiently healthy to carry out the duties of the post would not preclude a physically handicapped person from being considered.
Annex 2. Provisional timetable for the work of the Regional Evaluation Group 2023–2024

October 2023  The Regional Committee appoints a Regional Evaluation Group (REG) to prepare for nomination of the Regional Director at the next session.

November 2023  The WHO Director-General informs Member States in the WHO European Region that candidatures for the post of Regional Director should be submitted before 29 March 2024.

March 2024  Candidatures for the post of Regional Director should be received before 29 March 2024.

April 2024  The Director-General sends the list of candidates and their particulars to Member States (i.e. to the WHO Regional Office for Europe’s list of official contacts) and to the Chairperson of the REG.

April–June 2024  The REG may make arrangements for all candidates to give a time-limited oral presentation at a meeting of all Member States in the Region (including via a web platform).

August 2024  Not less than 10 weeks before the opening of the 74th session of the Regional Committee, the Chairperson of the REG sends the evaluation report of the REG and an unranked short-list of not more than five candidates, under confidential cover, to the President, the Executive President and the Deputy Executive President of the Regional Committee; to each Member State in the Region according to the Regional Office’s list of official contacts; and to the Director-General.

October 2024  The Regional Committee nominates a candidate for the post of Regional Director and submits its nomination to the Director-General for forwarding to the Executive Board.

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