Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge

Global Health Leader



Personal Information

Date of birth:	29/11/1968
Place of birth:	Roeselare, Belgium
Citizenship:	Belgium
Civil status:	Married
Children:	Two daughters

International Professional Experience

World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Director for Europe

WHO Regional Office for Europe | Copenhagen | 2020 – Present

- **Elected by Member States, and unanimously re-elected in 2025**, reflecting strong and sustained trust across all 53 countries in the diverse WHO European Region.
- **Secured unanimous adoption of the Second European Programme of Work (2026–2030),** developed through WHO's largest-ever co-creation process, enabled by large-scale use of artificial intelligence to capture the voices of over 5,000 contributors representing 10 million health leaders, with Member States leading both prioritization and the first explicit de-prioritization of work in WHO, and structured around five megatrends shaping health and society.
- **Mobilized USD 1,5 billion** in thematic and voluntary contributions over 3 biennia across the different segments of the WHO programme budget (base, emergencies, polio and special programmes).
- **Advised heads of state and ministers during the COVID-19 pandemic,** shaping national policy decisions under conditions of uncertainty, while coordinating a regional response that enabled equitable rollout of over 1.7 billion vaccine doses contributing to an estimated 2.1 million lives saved and maintained essential health services.

- **Elevated health on the political agenda through two Pan-European Commissions**—on **Health and Sustainable Development** and on **Climate and Health**—chaired by former heads of government and driving policy action within and beyond the health sector.
- **Strengthened health security and pandemic preparedness through establishment of the WHO Pan-European Network for Disease Control,** reinforcing cross-country and cross-United Nations (Quadripartite) cooperation under a One Health approach.
- **Built a regional movement on primary health care**, establishing a community of practice of over 10,000 stakeholders, generating best-in-class evidence, and convening high-level platforms to drive country-led reform.
- **Prioritized the health workforce crisis as a central policy issue,** supporting Member States to close critical gaps through large-scale health labour market analyses in over 15 countries, advancing primary health care workforce models, and driving reforms in nursing education and regulation—including in EU accession countries—through strategic partnerships with the European Commission.
- **Advanced equitable access to medicines through establishment of a Novel Medicines Platform**, bringing together governments, patients, industry and payers in a public–private partnership to address affordability and access to high-cost treatments.
- **Advanced digital health and artificial intelligence as strategic priorities,** supporting Member States to integrate digital solutions into health systems, while strengthening WHO's normative role, promoting accountability mechanisms, and ensuring that care remains human-centred.
- **Led the WHO European Small Countries Initiative** with 12 countries under 2 million population to address pertinent health system issues (health workforce, access to medicines, quality of care and financing of health care).
- **Accelerated action on noncommunicable diseases (NCDs)** through launching **politically actionable "quick buys",** while elevating mental health to the highest political level through the **Pan-European Mental Health Coalition**, launched with Queen Mathilde of Belgium, a region-wide co-creation platform engaging governments, partners, civil society and people with lived experience.
- **Drove sustained progress against major communicable disease threats,** accelerating **the decline in tuberculosis**—including drug-resistant TB—while **maintaining the Region's polio-free status**, including in fragile and conflict-affected settings.
- **Launched Regional Director's Special Initiative on Violence against Women and Girls,** elevating the issue as a regional priority and mobilizing action across Member States and partners.
- **Established the Pan-European Leadership Academy,** strengthening leadership capacity and addressing underrepresentation of Member States in global health leadership.

- **Strengthened strategic partnerships** across governments, EU institutions, international organizations, civil society and the private sector, while promoting inclusive engagement through platforms such as the Youth for Health Forum, ensuring broader participation in shaping health policy.
- **Strengthened inter-regional cooperation across WHO**, positioning the European Region as a platform for joint action and knowledge exchange, including on climate and health for Small Countries and traditional medicine (WPRO), access to innovative medicines, innovation and AI (AFRO), MDR-TB and traditional medicine (SEARO), medical evacuations in conflict settings (EMRO), and primary health care and Indigenous health (PAHO).
- **Led a comprehensive organizational realignment of WHO/Europe** to the European Programme of Work, shifting resources closer to countries (country office budgets from 33% to 48%; staff from 39% to 50%) and strengthening delivery where impact is greatest.
- **Expanded WHO/Europe's strategic footprint and financial sustainability** through establishment of new centres of excellence with long-term host government support, including the European Centre for Preparedness for Humanitarian and Health Emergencies (**Türkiye**), the Office on Quality of Care and Patient Safety (**Greece**), and a new WHO Country Office (**Cyprus)**, while securing Regional Committee approval for two additional Centres of Excellence on artificial intelligence and the wellbeing economy.
- **Drove financial sustainability and institutional resilience**, anticipating major funding shocks, leading rapid reprioritization and restructuring, reducing overheads, and safeguarding core delivery to Member States.
- **Elevated primary health care as a cross-cutting institutional priority**, breaking down programme silos, introducing pooled cross-programmatic funding, and making PHC a shared responsibility across the Regional Office.
- **Modernized WHO/Europe's governance architecture,** transforming the Regional Committee into a more strategic, political and decision-oriented body, including introduction of a streamlined 3-day model and strengthened alignment with global governance processes.
- **Institutionalized accountability and transparency**, introducing annual accountability reports, governance KPIs, and strengthened rules of procedure, making performance, decision-tracking, and Secretariat responsiveness measurable and visible.
- **Strengthened intersessional governance and Member State engagement**, reinforcing the role of the Standing Committee (SCRC), introducing more transparent nomination processes, and embedding continuous dialogue and oversight throughout the year.
- **Transformed operational delivery and efficiency**, including establishment of the Istanbul Enabling Hub, introduction of digital and AI-enabled systems to improve productivity, and maintaining strong assurance with consistent low-risk audit outcomes during major transformation.

Director, Division of Health Systems and Public Health & Special Representative on MDR-TB

WHO Regional Office for Europe | Copenhagen | 2009–2020 (initially on acting basis)

- **Shaped a regional vision for health systems** through the Tallinn 2018 agenda, enabling country-led reforms balancing equity, innovation, and fiscal sustainability.
- **Positioned Universal Health Coverage** as a core priority across diverse settings, delivering the flagship study *"Can people afford to pay for healthcare?"* and supporting countries to reduce out-of-pocket payments, strengthen financial protection, and track UHC and SDG progress.
- **Advanced primary health care** through the Astana 2018 agenda and establishment of the WHO Centre of Excellence in Almaty, supporting countries to design and implement PHC reforms tailored to their context and capacity.
- **Championed a cross-divisional programme** on health systems response to NCDs, helping countries move from vertical programmes to integrated, system-based responses grounded in national priorities.
- **Served as Special Representative on MDR-TB**, supporting countries to embed TB care within broader health system reforms and implement more equitable, cost-effective models of care.
- **Strengthened health system performance and accountability** through rollout of Health System Performance Assessment, enabling over 20 countries to measure results and drive reforms using their own data.
- **Shaped the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies** to deliver practical, policy-relevant options for country-led reform across diverse and resource-constrained settings.
- **Supported governments during the post-2008 financial crisis,** establishing rapid advisory support and helping protect health spending and maintain access to essential services under fiscal pressure.
- **Built long-term system capacity through the Barcelona Training Programme,** reaching 1,500+ policymakers across all 53 Member States and strengthening country ownership of reform implementation.
- **Launched a bottom-up Coalition of Partners for Public Health,** aligning actors around country-defined priorities through co-created approaches.
- **Advanced access to medicines**, supporting countries to improve affordability and manage high-cost treatments within sustainable financing frameworks.
- **Delivered reforms across EU and non-EU countries,** demonstrating approaches applicable to small states and resource-constrained settings.

Medical Officer (Tuberculosis) & Team Leader, 3 Diseases Unit (HIV/AIDS, TB, Malaria)

WHO Country Office for Myanmar | Yangon | 2004 – 2009

- Co-created the **Three Diseases Fund (3DF)**, a US$100 million multi-donor financing mechanism ensuring continuity of essential health services for vulnerable populations during a period of political isolation.
- Supported the development and implementation of national strategies and operational plans for TB, TB-HIV, HIV/AIDS and malaria, with a focus on high-risk and underserved populations.
- Co-strengthened health system capacity through large-scale human resource development to deliver complex patient care across all levels of the system.
- Co-designed the plan to introduce the first child-friendly TB drug formulations and national guidelines, improving access and quality of care for children.
- Main technical lead to the first MDR-TB DOTS+ programme in collaboration with partners, expanding access to treatment for drug-resistant TB.
- Co-led the first nationwide TB prevalence survey, strengthening the evidence base for national policy and planning.
- Provided regional technical support, including national TB programme review in Thailand and TB monitoring missions in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

TB and TB-HIV Project Manager

WHO Country Office for the Russian Federation | Moscow | 1999 – 2004

- Supported the Government in developing and adopting national policies on TB, TB-HIV and MDR-TB, aligning with global strategies and strengthening system coherence.
- Led implementation of TB and MDR-TB programmes across 26 regions, generating operational evidence and enabling national scale-up.
- Mobilized major international financing, including World Bank and Global Fund resources, to expand TB services and strengthen health system capacity.
- Expanded access to integrated TB and HIV care through primary health care approaches.
- Strengthened financial sustainability and system performance through capacity building, cost-effectiveness analysis, and workforce development.
- Developed comprehensive TB and MDR-TB care models for prison populations, including post-release support mechanisms.
- Established interagency coordination mechanisms to align international partner support with national priorities.

Regional TB Advisor for Former Soviet Union Countries

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF International) | Moscow Russian Federation | 1998 – 1999

- Led TB, MDR-TB and TB-HIV programmes across multiple countries in the former Soviet Union, including civilian and prison settings.
- Contributed to development of MSF international policy on TB, MDR-TB and TB-HIV control in complex and resource-constrained environments.
- Built and trained multidisciplinary teams of national and international staff, strengthening programme delivery and sustainability.

Prison TB and MDR-TB Coordinator

Médecins Sans Frontières Belgium | Kemerovo, Siberia, Russian Federation | 1996 – 1998

- Led one of the first large-scale MDR-TB interventions in prison settings, contributing to global evidence and informing WHO policy and guidelines.
- Mobilized resources and partnerships to expand TB and MDR-TB control in high-risk, underserved populations.
- Strengthened capacity of prison health systems through training and operational support.
- Raised international awareness of TB in prisons as a major public health issue.

Medical Coordinator

Médecins Sans Frontières Belgium | Nimba, Liberia | 1996

- Re-established essential medical and public health services at district level in a post-conflict setting.
- Led vaccination and nutrition campaigns targeting vulnerable populations.
- Delivered clinical care across multiple disciplines, including internal medicine and obstetrics, under emergency conditions.

TB Coordinator

Médecins Sans Frontières Belgium | Kismayo, Somalia | 1995 – 1996

- Implemented TB control programmes (DOTS) in a conflict setting, ensuring continuity of care in highly unstable conditions which contributed to MSF global policy and guidelines in war settings.
- Developed clinical guidelines in paediatrics and infectious disease management.
- Trained national staff at district level, strengthening local capacity for service delivery.

- Promoted community-based approaches to care and culturally appropriate health education.

Education

Institution	Degree Obtained	Date
Institute of Tropical Medicine Prince Leopold, Antwerp. Belgium	Postgraduate Diploma in Tropical Medicine (with distinction)	31 March 1995
Katholieke Universiteit (Catholic University), Leuven, Belgium	Diploma in Medicine, surgery and Obstetrics (with distinction)	29 June 1994

Knowledge of Languages

Fluent in English, French, Russian and Dutch (mother tongue). Working language German.

National Professional Experience

Family doctor in Belgium in the cities of Lombardsijde, Nieuwpoort and Hasselt, Belgium, 1994-1996

Clinical practice, paediatrics, emergency medicine, community medicine, nursing and midwifery.

Achievements and Awards

- Affiliate Professor of Global Health, Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences, University of Copenhagen — 2026
- Doctor Honoris Causa at Uppsala University, Sweden. — 2026
- Honorary professorship, Shanghai Medical College of Fudan University. — 2025
- Grand Cross of the Equestrian Order of Saint Agatha, San Marino.
- Ereteken van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap. — 2024
- Honorary Fellowship Award of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery at the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland. — 2024
- Kazakh Award “Altyn Shipager” (“Golden Healer”) — 2023
- Policy Influencer Changemaker Award, Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society — 2023

- Certificate of appreciation from SEE Health Network: For substantial contribution and dedication to the development of the SEE Heath Network and for boosting the regional cooperation in health. 2023
- Letter of appreciation from Minister of Health of Greenland, Mimi Karlsen, thanking RD for support. 2023
- Doctor Honoris Causa, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Medicine, Greece 2023
- Erepenning (Honorary Medal), Fakulteit Geneeskunde, KU Leuven (Catholic University of Leuven), Belgium 2022
- Honorary Professor by the National Scientific Center of Phthisiopulmonology of the Republic of Kazakhstan (in recognition of outstanding contribution in the field of medicine and health policy). 2022
- Letter of appreciation from First Lady of Ukraine, Olena Zelenska, for the WHO and RD support to Ukraine, national mental health programme, incl. support towards Ukraine's collaboration with Queen of Belgium. 2022
- Honorary Fellowship of the Faculty of Public Health, UK. 2022
- National Order for Merit in the Rank of Commander, President of Romania, Romania 2021
- Plaque of Honour, Ministry of Health of the Hellenic Republic, Athens, Greece 2021
- Aristotle's Gold Medal for Life-Time Achievement in Mental Health, International Society of Neurobiology and Psychopharmacology, Thessaloniki, Greece 2021
- Doctor Honoris Causa, Semmelweis University, Medicine and Health Sciences Budapest, Hungary 2021
- Honorary Professor, Astana Medical University, Astana, Republic of Kazakhstan 2020
- Award of excellent worker of healthcare by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan. 2020
- Visiting Professor, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. 2020
- Visiting Professor, London School of Economics. 2020
- Oorkonde Fonds Christoffel Plantin, Certificate of the prestigious Antwerp (Belgium) based Plantin Foundation, in recognition of the many years of strong commitment to the cause of primary health care, especially for the most vulnerable communities, in many areas of the world. 2018

- Letter of appreciation from the Minister of Health of the Republic of Bulgaria for The "invaluable role and highly professional engagement" at the national roundtable discussion on the future of healthcare system in Bulgaria and the necessary changes in the health insurance model. 2018

- Letter of appreciation from the Minister of Health of the Republic of Slovenia, for "excellent collaboration and valuable support". 2018

- Letter of appreciation by the Minister of Health, Republic of Cyprus, for "skills and passion ", in the context of the collaboration between the Ministry of Health and WHO to accelerate the implementation of Cyprus's health sector reform programme. 2014

- Letter of appreciation by the Minister for Health of Ireland, for the "Report of Health system responses to financial pressures in Ireland: policy options in an international context". 2012

- "Honorary Award" as recognition for my work in the Russian prisons on TB and MDR-TB from the Russian Minister of Justice Y.J. Chaika. 2003

- "Outstanding young person of the year 2001" from the Junior Economic Chamber in Belgium. 2001

▼ Certificates Obtained

- BMS Training: BMS Basics 17 January 2026
- Cybersecurity Refresher, WHO 17 January 2026
- Cybersecurity Refresher, WHO 14 January 2024
- Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments (SSAFE), Gaziantep, Turkiye 7 November 2023
- Ethics Empowerment, WHO 02 August 2023
- United to Respect: Preventing sexual harassment and other prohibited conduct for managers 04 April 2022
- Risk Management – (General), WHO 05 March 2022
- Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), WHO 04 March 2022
- Cybersecurity Essentials and Preventing Phishing, WHO 06 March 2020

• UN BSAFE	28 January 2019
• Cybersecurity Essentials and Preventing Phishing	13 January 2019
• United Nations Multilingual Course on Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority	2 August 2018
• GB UN To Serve With Pride- Zero Tolerance	8 July 2018
• Emotional Intelligence 2.0 - Level 2 certification, Talent Smart	31 January 2018
• Emotional Intelligence 2.0- Level 1 certification, Talent Smart	1 February 2017
• 6th WHO Flagship Course on Health Systems Development for the Countries of Central Asia and the Caucuses. Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, WHO Regional Office for Europe	26 October - 6 November 2009
• 2dn Inter-country Training of Trainers on TB/HIV, Bangkok, Thailand	February, 2006
• Workshop on Resource Mobilization, Yangon, Myanmar, WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia. WHO Country Office Myanmar	August 2005
• UN Team Building and CCA/UNDAF Workshop, United Nations Development Programme, Moscow, Russia	September 2000
• "Populations in Emergency Situations" training course certificate, Médecins sans Frontières- Epicentre	14-28 January 1996
• Training course "Electrocardiography for General Practitioners", Katholieke Universiteit (Catholic University), Leuven, Belgium. Faculty of Medicine. Internal Medicine. Cardiology	2 January 1995
• Practical course: 6 months apprenticeship in approved hospitals and 6 months practical training in General Medicine, Katholieke Universiteit (Catholic University), Leuven, Belgium. Academic Centre for General Medicine	31 August 1994
• Training thesis: Microvascular angina, a practical approach in diagnosis of chest pain with unknown aetiology, Katholieke Universiteit (Catholic University). Leuven, Belgium. Faculty of Medicine. Training Secretarial Office. Complementary Regional Medical Centre	25 June 1993

- Certificate of Secondary Education, approved in name of His Majesty the King of Belgium, Institute "Klein Seminarie", Roeselare (West Flanders) — 4 September 1986

- Certificate of Proficiency for Higher Education, approved in name of His Majesty the King of Belgium, Institute “Klein Seminarie", Roeselare (West Flanders) — 4 September 1986