

## CONCEPT NOTE

# Civil Society as a Driving Force in the Global AMR Response

A High-Level Event at the European Economic and Social Committee

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<b>Co-organizers</b>	WHO Civil Society Task Force on AMR and European Public Health Alliance (EPHA)
<b>Venue</b>	European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), Brussels
<b>Date &amp; Time</b>	31 March 2026, Afternoon Session (14:00–17:30)
<b>Duration</b>	2 hours + 90-minute networking coffee

## Background

[Antimicrobial resistance \(AMR\)](#) is one of the most pressing global public health challenges of our time, threatening our ability to treat infections, increasing healthcare costs, and undermining the resilience of health systems worldwide. The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified AMR as a top global health priority, requiring coordinated, multi-sectoral action across all levels.

Civil society organizations play an indispensable role in advancing the AMR agenda by amplifying community voices, holding decision-makers accountable, driving awareness and behavior change, and translating global commitments into local action. The [WHO Civil Society Task Force on AMR](#), launched in 2025, brings together diverse civil society actors to strengthen engagement with WHO and support equitable, inclusive, and people-centered responses to AMR. It represents a unique and growing global movement that deserves dedicated visibility and political support.

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is the EU institution that gives organized civil society a formal voice in European policymaking. As the bridge between civil society and EU institutions, the EESC provides a uniquely fitting home for this event. It reflects the shared conviction that civil society is not merely a stakeholder in the AMR response, but a strategic driver of change.

This event is convened on the sidelines of the Steering Committee Meeting of the WHO Civil Society Task Force on AMR (Brussels, 30–31 March 2026). It offers a timely opportunity to connect global civil society leadership with European stakeholders, showcase civil society's value proposition in the global AMR response, and identify concrete pathways for collaboration.

## Objectives

- Showcase the unique value proposition of civil society in advancing the global AMR agenda—including antimicrobial stewardship, awareness-raising, community engagement, advocacy, accountability, and equitable access.
- Introduce the WHO Civil Society Task Force on AMR: its mandate, structure, membership, and strategic priorities to a Brussels-based audience.
- Foster dialogue between civil society leaders, EESC members, EU institutional representatives, and other stakeholders on strengthening the civil society contribution to AMR policy and action.
- Identify concrete collaboration opportunities and follow-up actions to sustain momentum.

## Proposed Agenda — 31 March 2026 (14:00–17:30)

Time	Session	Speaker(s)
14:00-14:30	<b>Arrival of participants and registration</b>	
14:30-14:40	<b>Welcome &amp; Setting the Scene</b> Overview of the AMR challenge, the role of civil society, and the purpose of the event.	<b>Milka Sokolovic</b> Director General, EPHA, and steering committee member, WHO Civil Society Task Force on AMR  <b>Stoyan Tchoukanov</b> President, EESC NAT Section
14:40-14:47	<b>WHO Civil Society Task Force on AMR</b> Mandate, membership, and strategic priorities	<b>Katherine Urbaez</b> Co-chair, WHO Civil Society Task Force on AMR
14:47-14:55	<b>A theory of change for civil society mobilization for AMR</b> Rationale, expectations and measuring impact	<b>Anthony So</b> Steering committee member, WHO Civil Society Task Force on AMR
14:55-15:20	<b>Panel Discussion: Civil Society’s Value Proposition in the Global AMR Response</b> Successes, challenges, and strategies for impact, including translating global commitments to local action.	Moderated by <b>Tracie Muraya</b> Co-chair, WHO Civil Society Task Force on AMR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Benedikt Huttner</b>, WHO</li> <li>• <b>Jaisalmer De Frutos Lucas</b>, AMR Stakeholder Network</li> <li>• <b>Andrea Caputo</b>, ReAct Europe</li> </ul>
15:20-15:45	<b>Response Panel- EU Stakeholder Representatives</b> Perspectives on EU policy, civil society engagement, and partnership opportunities (5 min each).	Moderated by <b>Milka Sokolovic</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Stoyan Tchoukanov</b>, EESC NAT Section</li> <li>• <b>Ariane Vander Stappen</b>, DG SANTE</li> <li>• <b>Dr Matteo Nocci</b>, DG-ECHO</li> </ul>
15:45-15:55	<b>Open Q&amp;A</b> Interactive exchange with the audience.	Moderated by <b>Milka Sokolovic</b>
15:55-16:00	<b>Conclusion &amp; Next Steps</b> Key takeaways and the way forward for civil society involvement in the global AMR response.	<b>Yvan Hutin</b> Director, Antimicrobial Resistance, WHO
16:00-17:30	<b>Networking Coffee</b> Open networking for speakers and participants.	All attendees

## **Expected Outcomes**

- Raised visibility of the WHO Civil Society Task Force on AMR and increased awareness of its work among EU institutional stakeholders.
- Stronger recognition at EU level of civil society's strategic role and distinct value proposition in the global AMR response.
- Shared understanding of gaps and opportunities for civil society contributions to AMR policy and action.
- Identification of concrete follow-up actions and bilateral engagement opportunities to sustain and deepen collaboration.

## **Bilateral Meetings**

Following the event, bilateral meetings between members of the WHO Civil Society Task Force on AMR and key Brussels-based stakeholders can be scheduled till 17:30. These meetings will provide space to deepen discussions, explore specific collaboration opportunities, and identify concrete follow-up actions.