

*World Leadership Dialogue*

# Combating the dual challenges of COVID-19 and health inequalities

*Friday 16 October from 11:00 – 12:00 Central European Time*

## Background

Achieving equity represents a major challenge for policy makers across the world, and **the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the unsustainable cost of health and social inequalities to our societies**. Inequalities have been both exacerbated and created by the pandemic and its health and socio-economic impact. These consequences will affect vast numbers of medically and socially vulnerable people for the years to come. They are very likely to have a devastating impact on health and well-being through a wide range of social determinants of health including unemployment, precarious working conditions and contracts, and in-work poverty, increase in poverty and social exclusion, deprivation of education, inadequate housing, mental health problems, and exposure to violence (especially against women and children). This health emergency demonstrates that health and social inequalities represent a serious weakness for countries and undermines their ability to face crises. However, **this challenge also offers the opportunity to take serious actions to put health equity at the core of the post-pandemic recovery process** in order to reform our national systems, making them more resilient to shocks and avoiding dramatic long-term consequences of the pandemic.

## Agenda

- 11:00 – 11:10 Introduction and opening remarks  
**Prof. Silvio Brusaferrò**, President Italian Public Health Institute (ISS) and coordinator of the Joint Action on Health Equity in Europe (JAHEE), Italy
- 11:10 – 11:45 Panel discussion moderated by Silvio Brusaferrò:  
Rapporteur: Raffaella Bucciardini, ISS  
**HE Dr Lia Tadesse**, Minister of Health, Ethiopia  
**Prof Sir Michael Marmot**, Director Institute of Health Equity and President of JAHEE policy advisory board  
**Dr Orielle Solar**, Regional coordinator on social determinants of health, Pan-American Health Organization
- 11:45 – 11:55 Q&A
- 11:55 – 12:00 Concluding remarks  
**Caroline Costongs**, Director, EuroHealthNet

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