MEDECINS EUROPEENS
EUROPEAN DOCTORS

Mr Viktor Liashko

Minister of Health of Ukraine

Email: moz@moz.gov.ua

Brussels, 16 November 2026

Open Letter to the Minister of Health of Ukraine, Mr Viktor Liashko, regarding the state professional regulation of the workload of doctors in Ukraine

Dear Minister,

The Standing Committee of European Doctors (CPME) represents national medical associations across Europe. We are proud to count the Всеукраїнське Лікарське Товариство, the Ukrainian Medical Association, as a member since 2017.

On the occasion of the CPME General Assembly in Berlin on 13-14 November 2026, we received the Ukrainian Medical Association's report on the situation of the medical workforce. In the exceptional circumstances caused by the war in Ukraine for government and profession, we recognise the UMA's unwavering efforts to uphold high-quality patient care. We were concerned to hear about governmental economic policies which are aggravating the very difficult conditions of doctors' work by establishing an unsafe intensification of clinical work.

In the new CPME policy on Policy on Retaining Doctors for Sustainable and Resilient Health Systems, adopted on 14 November 2026, it is confirmed that there is a direct link between doctors' mental health and their decision to leave the profession. This was further supported by the findings of the Mental Health of Nurses and Doctors (MeND) survey, conducted by WHO Regional Office for Europe which conclude "mental health difficulties in doctors and nurses can negatively impact the delivery of healthcare services – reporting depression was associated with taking more sick leave and a greater intention to leave their job."[1]

[1] Mental Health of Nurses and Doctors survey in the European Union, Iceland and Norway. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2025. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO. Retrieved from https://www.who.int/europe/publications/i/item/WHO-EURO-2025-12709-52483-81031

We learnt that the joint sociological research conducted by the Active Group and the Ukrainian Medical Association in 2026, similarly finds that 64% of surveyed healthcare professionals exhibit clear, manifest signs of advanced occupational burnout; an additional 21% have reached critical stages of cognitive and physical exhaustion, and cumulatively, 85% of the active medical workforce operates under severe distress.

In the context of the consultation on the draft Ministry of Health Decree on workload regulation, CPME confirms that doctors have a right to safe and lawful working conditions while maintaining professional autonomy. CPME emphasises that the sustainability of the health workforce requires evidence-based regulatory acts adopted in consultation with the medical community. CPME policies support the creation of safe staffing levels and the implementation of safe working time rules, both in the interest of doctors and to ensure sufficient time to be spent with every patient. At the same time, doctors must be enabled to practice free from undue interference of administration, economy or insurances. We therefore do not support economic decisions which apply approaches from commercial business to the provision of healthcare, for example imposing the division of clinical and non-clinical time. The full cost of such decisions in terms of impact on workforce and long-term patient care must be taken into account.

European doctors continue to stand as one with their Ukrainian colleagues. We continue to hope for peace for the people of Ukraine and that a sustainable solution can be found for the Ukrainian medical profession to ensure health and healthcare in Ukraine in future.

We thank you for considering our recommendations and remain available for further clarification.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Ole Johan Bakke
CPME President

Ms Sarada Das
CPME Secretary General