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Dr Vesna-Kerstin Petric is currently Director-General of the Public Health Directorate at the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Slovenia. She graduated in Medicine at University of Ljubljana in Slovenia and earned a Master Degree in Public Health and Clinical Aspects of Addiction at University of London, King's College, Institute of Psychiatry. Dr Vesna-Kerstin Petri? has an extensive national and international experience in working on public health policies and a proven track record of leadership on politically demanding health issues. She has established a coalition of partners in support to tobacco control in Slovenia and since then successfully contributed as a civil servant to the adoption of restrictive tobacco control policies, including ban on smoking in all closed places (2007) and plain packaging (2017). She is also a holder of the WHO certificate of appreciation (2009) for contribution in tobacco control and is co-chairing the Global network of WHO national counterparts for implementing the Global strategy to reduce the harmful use of alcohol. From 2016 to 2019 she was elected a member of the Standing Committee of the Regional Committee for Europe (SCRC) and was a chair of Sub-group on WHO's country presence, member of the SCRC sub-group on Governance, its working group on leadership. She has also contributed to the organization of the WHO High Level Conference on Health Equity – Accelerating Progress towards Healthy and Prosperous Lives for all in the WHO European Region that took place in Ljubljana this June.