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ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF WHO FROM COUNTERMEASURES AGAINST COVID-19

Abstract. The article analyses specific features of economic activity of the World Health Organization. It is established that the WHO performs a directive and coordination function, which allows to ensure the operation of the world health system as a whole. It is determined that the main functions of WHO are: directive and coordination, law-making, research, humanitarian, medical and other assistance, and information. The main constituent acts of the WHO are the Statute (Constitution), which defines in detail the competence and powers of the organisation's structural bodies, as well as the Agreement with the United Nations, which recognises the WHO as a specialised UN agency in the field of health. In March 2020, WHO officially declared the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus a pandemic. During this period, the pandemic has significantly affected the trends and processes of global economic development, affecting every country in the world without exception. This is primarily due to the introduction of strict quarantine actions and measures taken by the governments of almost all countries in the world in the field of healthcare, strict restrictions in all sectors of social communication and all areas of economic activity, and the introduction of a population isolation regime to effectively counter the spread of COVID-19. The implementation of these measures has had a negative impact on the welfare of the population in almost all countries of the world, and has led to a reduction in demand for many goods and services. It is established that the main areas of application of WHO funds include: acceleration of innovative research in the field of containing the spread of the virus and providing clinical care, use of global networks to adapt and update technical guidelines for Member States, training of medical personnel, invention of new tools and technologies, operational support to countries in the midst of new waves of the virus spread, and assistance in the event of new waves of the virus spread. The main
areas of WHO's economic activity in the context of countering COVID-19 are identified: monitoring and assessment of the epidemiological situation, coordination and cooperation between countries, technical support, research and innovation, ensuring global access to vaccines, financial support, advice and guidance, support for underdeveloped and developing countries.

**Keywords:** coronavirus, pandemic, WHO, UN, COVID-19, vaccination, monitoring.
прискорення інноваційних досліджень у сфері стимулювання поширення вірусу та надання клінічної допомоги, використання глобальних мереж для адаптації й оновлення технічних настанов для держав-членів, підготовка медичного персоналу, винахід нових інструментів і технологій, оперативна підтримка країн у розпал нових хвиль поширення вірусу, надання допомоги у разі виникнення нових хвиль поширення вірусу. Визначено основні напрями економічної діяльності ВООЗ в контексті протидії COVID-19: моніторинг і оцінка епідеміологічної ситуації, координація дій і співпраця між країнами, технічна підтримка, дослідження й інновації, забезпечення глобального доступу до вакцин, фінансова підтримка, консультації і рекомендації, підтримка слаборозвинених країн та країн, що розвиваються.

Ключові слова: короновірус, пандемія, ВВОЗ, ООН, COVID-19, вакцинація, моніторинг.

Introduction. The second half of the 20th century. - the beginning of the XXI century. were characterized by significant socio-demographic changes that created new threats and challenges to public health, which include the growth of the global population and its concentration in developing countries, the spread of population migration from disadvantaged areas according to epidemiological indicators, the decrease in the effectiveness of sanitary and epidemiological bars primarily due to the globalization of aviation. The burden of overcoming the causes and consequences of these threats mostly falls on specific countries that are unable to solve these problems on their own. Such a situation creates the need for a new look at the role of international institutions for the coordination of cooperation between countries in the field of health care. In modern conditions, the role and importance of international cooperation in the field of health care is changing. The central place in the field of health care at the international level belongs to the World Health Organization, which acts as the main coordinating body in the field of health care at the international level.

Without exaggeration, we can say that the challenge for humanity was the COVID-19 pandemic, the result of which was unprecedented for the 21st century. the scale of the crisis, the consequences of which spread their influence beyond the sphere of health care, affecting world politics and the economy. The global response to the spread of COVID-19 included measures of quarantine and general vaccination and the development of collective immunity. An important place in this process was assigned to the World Health Organization, as it coordinated this process and provided assistance and recommendations to the most affected countries. However, the slowness of the WHO in responding to the pandemic at the initial stage negatively affected its image. Many experts criticized it, noting that the WHO is deprived of effective decision-making tools, as a result of which it performs only a
coordinating and analytical role in the fight against COVID-19. In fact, WHO's work is important in shaping the global agenda, ensuring equal access to vaccines and providing assistance to countries most in need.

**The purpose of the article** is to study the economic activity of WHO in connection with measures to combat COVID-19.

The tasks of the research are:
- give a description of WHO and its legal status;
- consider the peculiarities of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- to analyze the economic activities of WHO in the fight against COVID-19.

Hypothesis: WHO's activities in the fight against COVID-19 helped contain the pandemic.

**Research methods.** During the writing of the article, the following methods were used: the historical method, the legal method, the method of generalization were used in the study of the general characteristics and legal status of WHO; methods of analysis and synthesis, deduction and induction, were used in the study of the features of the COVID-19 pandemic; the system method, the logical method, the structural-functional method were used in the study of WHO's economic activity in the fight against COVID-19.

The information base of the research was the works of domestic and foreign scientists, data of international organizations, periodical articles, analytical reports of the World Health Organization, Internet resources.

According to the tasks, the article is divided into three sections.

1. **Characteristics and legal status of WHO**

The World Health Organization was created after the Second World War on the basis of several international institutions existing at the time, which dealt with health issues in certain regions of the world. WHO performs a directive and coordinating function, which makes it possible to ensure the work of the global health care system as a whole. For more than seventy years, the WHO has accumulated significant practical experience, new international bodies and institutions have emerged, the nature of specific tasks and challenges has changed, which affect the organizational and legal mechanism of international and legal cooperation of countries in the field of health care.

The main purpose of WHO's activities is to solve health care problems arising at the national and international levels, establish norms and standards, introduce appropriate forms of cooperation, provide technical support to states, monitor and evaluate trends in this area (WHO website). Accordingly, the legal status of the WHO testifies to its significant influence on states on the issue of compliance with uniform standards in the global health care system, which emphasizes the essential place of the WHO in the system of modern international organizations.

The activities of the WHO are an illustration of the interdependence of two
seemingly unrelated spheres - medicine and politics. WHO's achievements in the field of health care would not be effective and comprehensive if they did not have political tools behind them. In the medical dimension, WHO experts are investigating the impact of the infection caused by the SARS-CoV-2 (2019-nCoV) coronavirus on the human body, and based on the results of the research, they are developing medical recommendations for immunization. WHO also constantly monitors the epidemiological situation in the world, namely: new clinical data on the effectiveness of various vaccines and dose boosters, as well as the specificity of the immune response to various types of vaccination (WHO consultation on COVID-19 vaccines research. 2021).

The institutional structure of the modern global health care system includes numerous international organizations and bodies whose goal is to ensure the highest possible level of health for all people. Such institutions function both at the universal and regional levels. An integral element of the institutional mechanism of cooperation in this area is WHO cooperation at the regional level with the Council of Europe, the EU, the Pan American Health Organization and the African Union.

The main functions of the WHO are: management and coordination, law-making, scientific and research, the function of providing humanitarian, medical and other aid, informational. An important component of the information function of WHO is the educational element. Informing member states and relevant organizations in the field of health care about modern sanitary-epidemiological problems, new developments in the medical and pharmaceutical field with the aim of their better awareness, large-scale promotion of a healthy lifestyle and prevention, for example, in the case of combating tobacco, alcohol, drug addiction, with the spread of HIV-AIDS, is an important area of activity of the WHO (T. V. Goldenberg. 2018. p. 170).

The main founding acts of the WHO are the Statute (Constitution), which defines in sufficient detail the competence and powers of the structural bodies of the organization, as well as the Agreement with the United Nations, in which the WHO is recognized as a specialized agency of the United Nations in the field of health care. The WHO Charter (Constitution) is a multilateral international treaty of a special kind that combines two groups of norms. The first defines the rights and obligations of countries, the second - provides for the creation of a new entity - WHO and outlines the scope of its activities, competence, intra-organizational mechanism of relations with members and place in the system of international relations (WHO website).

The second group of legal documents that make up the legal basis of WHO's activities and are derived from the founding treaties are acts of WHO's internal law: decisions related to the implementation of WHO's tasks and functions, international treaties concluded by WHO. The third group of documents that regulate the activities
of the WHO includes acts and norms that contain references to the UN Charter and provisions on the Pan American Health Organization (T. V. Goldenberg. 2018, p. 172).

Membership in WHO is one of the most orderly forms of state participation in the process of international cooperation in the field of health care. By its legal nature, the WHO is a relatively open organization that is interested in increasing the number of member states, provided that they are widely represented geographically. According to the WHO Charter, two types of membership are distinguished in the work:

- full – applies to both primary and secondary member countries, depending on when they acceded to the WHO Charter. Moreover, the scope of their rights and obligations is the same. The main difference between them is only the order in which they acquired membership: the original members did not go through the special admission procedure established for other members joining WHO;

- associated – only non-self-governing territories that have an official representative in the organization can be associated members of the WHO. Today there are only two associated members of the WHO - Puerto Rico and Tokelau (T.V. Goldenberg. 2018. p. 171).

Membership of countries in the WHO gives rise to corresponding rights and obligations for them. There are several main groups of rights and obligations arising from membership in the WHO, in particular, the rights and obligations of states arising from the obligation to inform each other about diseases, their causes and consequences; related to the fight against infectious diseases; relating to the adoption and implementation of acts of internal law of the organization.

The WHO statute does not provide for the possibility of termination of membership. Moreover, this possibility is denied by the practice of the organization itself. At the same time, there is no possibility of voluntary termination of membership, or termination of membership as a sanction. As an alternative to the latter, there is the institution of suspension of rights and services, as a sanction that can be applied by the highest body of the organization in case of failure of a WHO member to fulfill its financial obligations or in other exceptional circumstances.

2. Features of the COVID-19 pandemic

In March 2020, the WHO officially declared the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus a pandemic. During this period, the pandemic had a significant impact on the trends and processes of the development of the world economy, this applied to every country in the world without exception. First of all, this is connected with the implementation of strict quarantine actions and measures applied by the governments of almost all countries of the world in the field of health care, strict restrictions in all sectors of social communication and in all sectors of economic activity, the implementation of the population isolation regime in order to effectively combat the spread disease of COVID-19. The implementation of these measures
negatively affected the state of well-being of the population in almost all countries of the world, led to a reduction in demand for many goods and services (WHO website).

Since the emergence of COVID-19, WHO has been making significant efforts to combat this disease. The COVID-19 pandemic has become a crisis situation not only in the field of health care, but also in the field of economy, humanitarian aid, security and protection of human rights. The crisis has marked the shortcomings and inequalities within and among the countries of the world.

From the beginning of the pandemic, WHO implemented a three-pronged response strategy. The first component involved the implementation of a large-scale, coordinated and integrated health response, under the leadership of WHO and in accordance with the Strategic Plan for Preparedness and Response. As part of these activities, WHO supported efforts to accelerate the development and production of universally accessible COVID-19 vaccines and coronavirus diagnostics and treatments. In addition, WHO provided international coordination and operational support at the global, regional and country levels, and supported the scaling-up of national preparedness and response operations.

The second component is a large-scale effort aimed at saving people, ensuring access to medical services. As part of this effort, operational humanitarian responses are undertaken to support the most vulnerable people in the most vulnerable countries through the delivery of aid. In addition, a number of initiatives aimed at improving the situation of children in the justice system during the pandemic were introduced under the auspices of the WHO, among which it is worth mentioning the Recommendations on the use of deprivation of liberty and emergency measures during the outbreak of COVID-19, based on the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and Recommendations for the provision of early release, alternative measures and the prohibition of deprivation of liberty of children during the COVID-19 pandemic, based on a number of special acts, such as the WHO Interim Guidelines for the prevention and control of COVID-19 in prisons and institutions deprivation of liberty, Temporary recommendations for COVID-19, Minimum standards for the protection of children in humanitarian activities.

In accordance with the prescriptions of the above-mentioned acts, state response measures aimed at combating the COVID-19 pandemic with respect to children deprived of liberty, as well as emergency measures aimed at health protection, must strictly comply with international human rights norms and standards. Any response measures must be proportionate, necessary, time-limited, modifiable, non-discriminatory in relation to the assessed risk and based on the best interests of children.

WHO is investigating the current epidemiological situation and, at meetings of special committees, is developing a global response strategy to the spread of the
new virus, paying special attention to the population of developing countries. For example, the strategy to achieve global vaccination by mid-2022 aimed to vaccinate 70% of the population of all countries (Strategy to Achieve Global Covid-19 Vaccination by mid-2022). Within this strategy, WHO experts formulated recommendations for states, vaccine manufacturers, civil society, development institutes and international organizations. The strategy also emphasizes the need to enforce contracts and maintain drug supplies within the COVAX initiative, which aims to ensure equal access to vaccines against the novel coronavirus for the most vulnerable countries.

COVAX is an important initiative, because the uneven distribution of vaccines among countries contributes to the deepening of the epidemiological situation, reduces the pace and effectiveness of the global community's fight against the pandemic. The Director-General of the WHO, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said that this is due to the fact that in countries with low rates of vaccination, the virus is prone to mutations, as a result of which new strains appear, against which existing drugs are less effective (WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the media briefing on COVID-19 - 14 September 2021). At the US-chaired Global Summit on COVID-19, WHO managed to secure new commitments from world leaders to fund and donate doses to low- and middle-income countries, thereby ensuring access to vaccines for COVAX participants in 2021 2022

3. Economic activities of the WHO in the fight against COVID-19

The WHO is facing an acute problem of financing activities related to the prevention of the coronavirus pandemic. Since the beginning of the pandemic, WHO has created a number of specialized committees and initiatives, the main one of which is COVAX (Global leaders commit further support for global equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines and COVAX. 2021). On the other hand, WHO really does not have the necessary tools to issue binding directives and guidelines. This is due to the unwillingness of the national states, which, as before, remain the central actors of world politics in the globalized world, to delegate part of their sovereignty and transfer decision-making mechanisms to the hands of an intergovernmental organization. In addition, the WHO has a rather limited budget, which does not allow it to fully realize its potential and act more transparently than within the framework of the global plan. The additions to the WHO Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan emphasize that almost half of the funds needed to fight the pandemic have been collected ($1.06 billion from $1.96 billion) and call on member states and other donors to continue funding WHO's activities (WHO SPRP September update: an urgent call to fund the emergency response. 2021). The document provides a report on the use of funding in the work performed over the past 20 months. Among the main areas of use of funds, the following can be listed:
acceleration of innovative research in the field of containment of the spread of the virus and provision of clinical care,

use of global networks for adaptation and updating of technical instructions for member states,

training of medical personnel,

invention of new tools and technologies,

operational support for countries in the midst of new waves of the spread of the virus,

assistance in the event of new waves of virus spread.

In the 2021 annual report, WHO noted specific achievements in the field of health care and scientific research (7. Mid-year Report. WHO Strategic Action Against COVID-19. 2021). WHO deployed regional technical support missions in 106 countries around the world, sent 108 emergency teams to countries that requested assistance, distributed more than 232 million doses of vaccines within the framework of the COVAX initiative, purchased more than 1.3 billion dollars worth of essential goods to support activities in response to COVID-19 in 191 countries. WHO has brought together more than 3,000 researchers, 40% of whom are from low- and middle-income countries, with more than 1,000 global organizations to coordinate research. Among the achievements, we can also mention the launch of the online educational platform OpenWHO, which provides courses and trainings to improve the response to challenges in the field of health care.

The innovation was the development of "infodemiology" as a new science and research program in the field of public health care to combat the "infodemic" - an excess of information, in particular false, related to diseases. As part of the development of this scientific direction, WHO provides recommendations on managing the "infodemic" and informing about the risks for health professionals, religious leaders, authority figures and the public.

WHO's efforts are extremely important for the global community, because while developed countries and vaccine-producing countries direct efforts to protect their own populations, developing countries remain the most vulnerable to its manifestations. Access to vaccines against COVID-19 is highly uneven, with high-income countries using 35 times more vaccine doses than low-income countries and countries in the African region. Although the use of COVID-19 vaccines has begun in all regions, vaccination rates vary greatly, and 56 countries, located mainly in the African and Eastern Mediterranean regions, have failed to meet the WHO goal of vaccinating their entire population by early 2022 due to lack of necessary drugs (Highlights from the Meeting of the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on Immunization. 2021).

Let's consider in more detail the main areas of economic activity of the WHO in the context of combating COVID-19.
Monitoring and assessment of the epidemiological situation. WHO conducts systematic monitoring of the epidemiological situation regarding COVID-19 worldwide, collecting data and information from member countries. It assesses the economic consequences of the pandemic, taking into account the impact on industries, employment and international trade. In addition, WHO monitors the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economies of countries, analyzing data and trends related to changes in the economy, employment, trade and other economic indicators. This helps in understanding the scale of the economic crisis and determining the necessary measures to restore the national economy.

Coordination of actions and cooperation between countries. WHO coordinates international cooperation to fight the pandemic, in particular, it promotes the exchange of information, the transfer of technologies and best treatment practices between countries, and promotes the implementation of strategies to combat COVID-19 in different countries.

Support. WHO provides technical support to all member countries in the planning and implementation of effective measures to combat the pandemic, which includes the development of national plans, the training of the necessary specialists in the field of health care and medical personnel, and the maintenance of vaccination and testing programs.

Research and innovation. Scientific research and innovation aimed at developing new methods of diagnosing COVID-19, its treatment and new vaccines against COVID-19 occupy an important place in WHO's activities.

Ensuring global access to vaccines has become a major focus of WHO's work, which involves providing access to safe and effective vaccines against COVID-19 to developing countries. Within this direction, WHO not only participates in the development and production of vaccines, but also concludes agreements with manufacturers and countries to ensure the supply of vaccines to countries with the greatest need for them.

Financial support. WHO mobilizes financial resources to support the poorest countries in the fight against COVID-19. Such WHO financial support may include financial assistance, grants, loans and other financing mechanisms to support the health care systems and economies of developing countries.

Consultations and recommendations. WHO advises and provides recommendations to member countries on effective strategies to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the medical side, WHO, together with other UN organizations, helps countries in developing policies and programs aimed at saving jobs and reducing the negative impact of the pandemic on the national economy. WHO actively cooperates with other international organizations, national governments, scientific institutions in the field of combating COVID-19 and minimizing its economic consequences. At the same time, WHO's economic
activities are aimed at supporting countries in implementing strategies to combat the pandemic, preserve public health, and promote sustainable economic recovery after the pandemic (WHO website).

To overcome the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, WHO is helping developing countries develop economic strategies to counter the COVID-19 pandemic. It provides recommendations to countries on effective use of resources, stimulation of economic growth and support of the most vulnerable population groups.

Support for underdeveloped and developing countries. One of the main areas of activity of the WHO is the support of underdeveloped and developing countries in the fight against COVID-19 and its economic consequences. WHO facilitates access to funding, medical equipment, vaccines and other essential equipment. In addition, WHO is working on raising the awareness and skills of the local population on issues of health and hygiene.

Therefore, WHO plays an important role in coordinating global efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. It focuses on providing science-based advice and recommendations to member countries, facilitating interaction and exchange of information between countries, providing technical support and medical assistance, and distributing vaccines between underdeveloped and developing countries.

Conclusions.
The World Health Organization is a specialized agency of the United Nations that deals with public health, disease control and promotion of health on a global scale. The main purpose of WHO's activities is to solve health care problems arising at the national and international levels, establish norms and standards, introduce appropriate forms of cooperation, provide technical support to states, monitor and evaluate trends in this area.

The main founding acts of the WHO are the Statute (Constitution), which defines in sufficient detail the competence and powers of the structural bodies of the organization, as well as the Agreement with the United Nations, in which the WHO is recognized as a specialized agency of the United Nations in the field of health care.

WHO's efforts are fighting the spread of the COVID-19 virus through research, shaping the global agenda, coordinating the efforts of developed countries and providing assistance to the most vulnerable countries to ensure equity in the global vaccination and response to COVID-19. WHO It focuses on providing science-based advice and recommendations to member countries, facilitating interaction and exchange of information between countries, providing technical support and medical assistance, and distributing vaccines between underdeveloped and developing countries.

As a result of the study, the hypothesis was confirmed that the activities of the
WHO contributed to the elimination of the negative consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the fact that in the spring of 2023 WHO announced the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, and taking into account the scale of the pandemic's impact on the life of society globally and the preservation of risks of similar phenomena in the future, the issue of international cooperation in the field of health care within the framework of WHO needs further research.

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