



# Newsletter

A periodical publication of the SEE Health Network  
Issue 2 - August 2011



SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE  
HEALTH NETWORK

The SEE Health Network was established in 2001 and consists of the Ministries of Health of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

## 10 Years of SEE Health Network: Alliance for Public Health Makes a Difference and Sets an Example



Dr Maria Ruseva  
SEEHN Secretariat  
WHO/Europe

It is our great pleasure to present the new edition of the SEE Health Network newsletter to share our achievements and vision of the future with our stakeholders and partners. The last 10 years of the Network can be marked by shared values and mutual efforts towards peace, health and wealth. The critical mass of local expertise and continued political support allowed the Network to reach sustainability and self-governance. Moreover, the partner organisations and countries have not been just usual donors, but also beneficiaries at the same time. The SEE Health Network experience has brought interagency cooperation and collaboration to new heights.

Health is increasingly seen as more than a determinant of well-being for individuals, but as a prerequisite for the sustainable economic growth of a country and its social cohesion. Stronger political leadership is essential to bring about sustained improvements in health systems and enable the latter to respond adequately to modern challenges. Effective partnerships empower leaders, encourage and support national decision-making processes underlining the ever more important role of the SEE Health Network.



Dr Piotr Mierzewski  
SEEHN Secretariat  
CoE

The SEE regional cooperation in the field of public health remains high on the agenda as a means of promoting political cooperation and economic growth in the SEE region, and it is an important tool for supporting European and Euro-Atlantic integration. It is symbolic that when we look at the acronym SEE Health Network, we see the Solidarity, Equity and Efficiency as our goals.

*"...SEE regional cooperation in public health.. promotes economic growth... and supports European integration..."*

With the continued support and commitment of the governments of its members and partner countries, as well as of its new and evolving partnerships, the SEE Health Network will play a central role in the evaluation of the SEE political process of cooperation in health since Skopje 2005 and tackling the health challenges facing the SEE region in the next decade during the "Third Health Ministers Forum: Health in All Policies in South-Eastern Europe: A Shared Goal and Responsibility", which will be held on 13-14 October, 2011 in Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Having achieved significant results in developing successful collaboration in a wide range of public health areas in the past 10 years, we are now ready to face the challenges of the coming decade. We are looking forward to further effective cooperation towards creating a safer and healthier Europe for future generations to come.

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## Upcoming Events

2011

Third SEE Ministers of Health Forum "Health In All Policies in the SEE: A Shared Goal and Responsibility", Banja Luka, 13-14 October 2011

## SEEHN Website

[seehnsec.blogspot.com](http://seehnsec.blogspot.com)

The blogspot page of SEEHN Secretariat has registered over 6,000 views since when first published in November 2010, with an average of 775 views per months or about 26 views per day.

Most viewed pages remain those on the Third Ministers of Health Forum "Health in All Policies in the SEE: A Shared Goal and Responsibility" and its preparatory process, reflecting the importance and the attention given to this mega event of SEEHN for 2011.

## Third SEE Health Ministers' Forum



**Ms Snezana Cicevalieva**  
Chair, Executive Committee  
SEE Health Network

*"...Regional cooperation in public health remains of the highest priority in underpinning political cooperation and economic development in the SEE region..."*

### **Health in All Policies in South-eastern Europe: A Shared Goal and Responsibility**

*With the special participation of SEE policy makers from other governmental sectors, SEE RCC Initiatives and partners, Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 13-14 October 2011*

SEE Health Network has been operational for the past ten years developing regional cooperation and technical activities in public health in SEE. This regional cooperation in public health was formalized with the agreement and the commitment of the ministers of health of the SEE member countries to the provisions of the Dubrovnik and Skopje pledges, endorsed at the First Health Ministers' Forum in 2001 and the Second Health Ministers' Forum in 2005, respectively.

Regional cooperation in public health remains of the highest priority in underpinning political cooperation and economic development in the SEE region, facilitating confidence-building, and as a supporting instrument for European and Euro-Atlantic integration. It has entered a very important phase, with changes in the political set-up and emerging new entities, in particular the Regional Co-operation Council, and with two of the SEE Health Network members (Bulgaria and Romania) having become members of the European Union, requiring the SEE Health Network to adapt to the new realities and develop a more regionally owned and led framework for cooperation. In response to such a developments and needs, the Memorandum of Understanding (2005) and the first legally binding agreement on the Seat of the Secretariat of the SEE HN arrangements (2010) were signed.

Recognizing the importance of this regional cooperation in SEE, European international community has been providing the political, technical and financial support and human resources to the SEE Health Network, especially the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, the Council of Europe, the Council of Europe Development Bank and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe and now the Regional Co-operation Council, as well as a number of European countries.

This Third Health Ministers' Forum comes after a decade of regional cooperation in SEE (2001-2011), streamlined towards European efforts on achieving equity and accountability in health, thus building on major European resolutions, charters and communications, treaties, frameworks and action plans as well as the new European Policy for Health (Health2020).

In relation to such contemporary developments and needs of the regional cooperation in public health in SEE, the main objective of the Forum is focussed on the Health in All Policies (HiAP) approach application by SEE countries, identifying challenges and opportunities in relation to HiAP and furthering work on HiAP in SEE on the basis of the **political commitment by all SEE governments to introduce/reinforce the values, priority areas, and actions for HiAP** in efforts towards achieving equity and accountability in health, thus building on major European resolutions, charters and communications, treaties, frameworks and action plan as well as the new European Policy for Health (Health2020) where HiAP is a major goal, and **signing the Banja Luka Pledge**.

In relation to the main objective, the Forum will review the NCD epidemic response in SEE countries and current Global and European policies and actions for strengthening public health capacities and services for control and prevention of NCD, and will decide on the future NCD policies, actions and synergies.

In addition, the Forum will provide for a decade of alliance for public health in SEE review of the process of regional cooperation in public health in SEE and decide on the future steps towards further developments.

Having regards the objectives of the Forum, country delegations will have specific composition, namely, will be lead by the Minister of Health, together with a minister or deputy minister from the sector that have most beneficial relationship with Ministry of Health regarding HiAP application in the respective country, a member of the Prime-minister cabinet, and country health coordinator that is invited to be part of the country delegation, since they will have a separate SEE HN Network meeting back to back to the Forum and will participate to the Forum, so as to be able to implement follow up activities from the Forum.

It is expected that mayor partners of the SEEHN will be represented at highest level at the Forum. Forum event happens immediately after RC61 of WHO in Baku, Azerbedzan, in September 2011 dedicated to Tallinn fallow up, so the Forum is an event that clearly shows follow up activities to the Tallinn charter, in the SEE.

Expected **outcome** from the Forum is Banja Luka Pledge and the commitment of the SEE Ministers of Health:

- to further collaborate in public health through the SEEHN in the coming years, both at political level and through the 10 Regional development centres in areas of mutual interest.
- to further and strengthen partnership in public health in the SEE, through cooperation with WHO, CoE, CEB and all the partner countries and agencies.
- to open the SEEHN for new member states beyond SEEHN historical and geographical boundaries. Namely, it is expected that amendments to the SEE MoU will be signed, and Israel that formally expressed interest for full membership in the SEEHN, will become the tenth member state of the SEEHN

Expected **outputs** from the Forum are:

- Progress report on a decade of SEEHN
- HiAP study and the
- Study on the NCDs.

## Regional Cooperation Council Coordination Conference

Following up on the priority actions from its Strategy and Work Programme, and within the mandate provided by the Southeast Europe Cooperation Process (SEEC), regarding coordination and streamlining of Regional initiatives in SEE, Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat (RCC) organized a regional coordination conference titled Western Balkans and Europe 2020 – Towards Convergence and Growth, in Brussels, on March 30 and 31, 2011. The meeting, organized to explore the possibilities of further alignment of the region to Europe 2020 policy objectives and principles in a better coordinated way, gathered over 100 representatives of regional organizations and structures, national authorities from Southeast Europe, representatives of international financial institutions, international donor agencies and the officials of the European Union institutions.



**Mr Nand Shani**  
Regional Cooperation  
Council

The participants have encouraged the RCC to assist in the process of associating the current regional activities with Europe 2020 priorities and structures, where such alignment is possible. RCC is expected to engage directly with regional initiatives by establishing a platform for action as well as providing support in better streamlining of regional activities and increased regional ownership. The existing platforms for regional exchange and cooperation have agreed on the importance of furthering Europe 2020 adoption in the region, wherever possible. Europe 2020 targets should be adapted to regional realities in cooperation with national administrations. A particular importance should be given to governance mechanisms employed by the regional groups, enabling peer reviews, benchmarking, establishment of indicators, exchange of best practice and monitoring and reporting on progress made.

The participants also stressed the significance of European Commission's role in helping deepen policy dialogue in specific areas, supporting participation of the enlargement countries in Europe-wide initiatives and providing for specific instruments that could facilitate the implementation of Europe 2020 in the region. That was also an opportunity for deepening communication with different donors according to their wish to improve access to numerous regional projects launched by multitude of regional initiatives and task forces.

A two-day conference to discuss possible development of regional social agenda for the Western Balkans was organized on 24-25 May 2011 in Sarajevo by the RCC with support from the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. It addressed issues of employment, poverty reduction and social inclusion. The conference aimed to initiate dialogue at the regional level on important social issues in the Western Balkans, compatible to EU accession process and discuss a long-term vision of social development that would align the countries closely to EU's social agenda and Europe 2020 strategy, ensure sustainability, comprehensiveness and efficiency of social policies, and mainstream such policies into economic reform processes.

*"...RCC is expected to engage directly with regional initiatives by establishing a platform for action as well as providing support in better streamlining of regional activities and increased regional ownership..."*



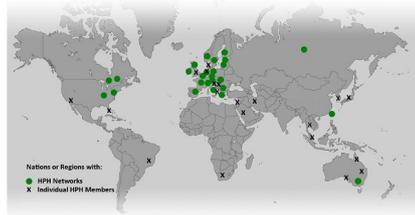
### *International Network of Health Promoting Hospitals: new website for better communication*

The International Network of Health Promoting Hospitals & Health Services is a "network of networks". It consists of 38 National and Regional HPH networks that collaborate to reorient health care towards active promotion of health. In total, the International HPH Network is made up of more than 800 hospital and health service members in over 40 countries. The Network is constantly growing and recently expanded to include members from Portugal for the first time.

The fundamental goal of the Network is to achieve better health gain by improving the quality of health care and strengthening the relationship between hospitals/health services, the community and the environment. The Network follows the WHO principles regarding health promotion, while continuously adapting to local needs and resources.

In late 2010, the long awaited WHO/HPH Memorandum of Understanding was signed by WHO Euro Regional Director, Zsuzsanna Jakab, CEO of the International Secretariat, Hanne Tønnesen, and Chairman of the HPH Governance Board, Louis Coté.

Since January 2011 the new website HPHNET.org has replaced the old one. It is built on the ideas, preferences and needs of users that were determined in the HPH Website Survey 2009 – 2010. The new webpage contains lots of new resources for users and will serve to further facilitate effective communication and ideas exchange between HPH members and partners.



### *19th International Conference on Health Promoting Hospitals & Health Services "Improving health gain orientation in all services: better cooperation for continuity in care"*

The 19th International Conference on Health Promoting Hospitals & Health Services with the focus on "health gain orientation in all services: better cooperation for continuity in care" took place in Turku (Finland) from 1st to 3rd June 2011.

Better health gain is one of the main goals of the Health Promoting Hospitals Network while at the same it is recognized that the reorientation of health services towards health promotion and health gain has yet to be brought about. The Conference provided a platform to discuss a number of important issues related to conceptual understanding of better health gain and its improvements, the role of strengthening continuity of care in health systems, and cooperation between health services and other settings in improving the health gain. WHO Regional Director for Europe Zsuzsanna Jakab has given a keynote speech where she emphasized the importance of the Network's contribution to the public health strengthening by putting health promotion into the daily practices of health care institutions.

Conference topics were developed and presented in keynote lectures, panel discussions, paper sessions, workshops and poster sessions. Additionally, a summer school and several thematic workshops were organized. The Conference was attended by hospital managers, public health specialists and health care professionals.

# WHO/Europe: Health 2020 and Public Health Strengthening



Dr Maria Ruseva  
SEEHN Secretariat  
WHO/Europe

At the 60th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe, Member States and partners gave WHO Regional Office for Europe a strong and clear mandate to develop the new European health policy in order to accelerate progress towards achieving the European Region's health potential by 2020. During the first meeting of the European Health Policy Forum in Andorra on 9th-11th of March, 2011 countries of the European Region launched the development of a new European health policy: Health 2020. Its purpose is to strengthen health systems through development of coherent and evidence-based policies, to tackle the complex determinants of health and ensure a sustained response to modern challenges.

As an umbrella policy, Health 2020 facilitates coordination and coherence across all work that WHO Regional Office for Europe, member states and partners carry out on behalf of and with the population. Further, it supports partnerships with the aim to reduce inequities and achieve better health. This document is designed to be clear, focused and appealing to the politicians, while also clarifying priorities and targets.

Actions to strengthen public health systems, functions, infrastructures and capacities to foster effective public health leadership are needed. The basis of these actions and reforms should be solid scientific evidence and experience. For that purpose WHO Regional Office for Europe launched the development of a policy document on strengthening of Public Health capacities and Services in Europe. This document, entitled Strengthening Public Health Capacities and Services in Europe: A Framework for Action, proposes the major avenues that the WHO Regional Office for

EPHO 1	Surveillance of diseases and assessment of the population's health
EPHO 2	Identification of priority health problems and health hazards in the community
EPHO 3	Preparedness and planning for public health emergencies
EPHO 4	Health protection operations (environmental, occupational, food safety and others)
EPHO 5	Disease prevention
EPHO 6	Health promotion
EPHO 7	Assuring a competent public health and personal health care workforce
EPHO 8	Core governance, financing and quality assurance for Public Health
EPHO 9	Core communication for Public Health
EPHO 10	Health related research

Box 1. Essential Public Health Operations (EPHO)

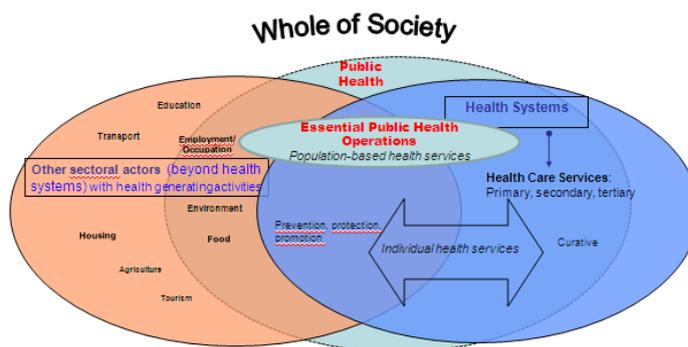


Figure 1. Whole of Society approach to public health governance

Europe intends to take in order to strengthen public health and secure the delivery of Essential Public Health Operations in an equitable way across the European Region.

In view of the differences in the way European health systems and public health services are organized, operated and governed, the Framework proposes a clear statement concerning public health and health systems, including definitions, boundaries and concepts. The Framework is an opportunity for all member states to review the existing capacities of health systems and undertake further actions. The purpose of the Framework is to put health firmly on the political agenda of ministries of health and other sectors, as well as foster effective public health leadership.

The Framework is built on 10 Essential Public Health Operations (EPHOs) (box 1) that emphasize current priorities and provide a detailed checklist of essential public health activities. It is intended to be a resource for evaluating public health services and capacities.

It is acknowledged in the document that the health of populations is generated by society as a whole and influenced by a broad range of policy areas as well as by the activities of the health system. Figure 2 illustrates how public health services straddle the health generating activities of both the health system and other sectors, playing an important role in each. The wide range of policies which influence health underlines the importance of committed intersectoral action as part of the stewardship role.

The European Health Policy 2020 and the Framework for Action are evolving out of a participatory process involving the Member States and other stakeholders. The drafts will be presented in Regional Committee in Baku in September, 2011, and the final Health2020 policy together with the Framework will be launched at RC62 in Valetta, Malta in September 2012.

# Our Regional Health Development Centers' Corner

## Public Health Services

Skopje, MKD

The Regional Health Development Center (RHDC) for Public Health Services was established in the Republic of Macedonia and is hosted by the National Institute of Public Health in Skopje; a Regional Center Manager (RCM) will be responsible for the management of overall activities in the Center.

One of the most important roles of the RHDC will be to lead, coordinate, manage and monitor the progress of implementing selected public health projects and/or activities in the region. The RCM is supported by selected staff of the Institute. Staff, office space and communication tools for the RHDC are already in place. Each Ministry of Health of the nine countries is in the process of nominating a National Coordinator for Public Health services. One of the most important roles of the national coordinator will be to monitor progress at country level.

The program of the Center for 2011 includes launching a Website and a Newsletter, the official inauguration of RHDCPH, mobilizing resources for the regional cooperation in public health; networking of the National Public Health Institutes within the SEE Health Network for which meetings have already been held and MoUs signed; holding meeting of the Directors of the National Public Health Institutes in SEE, and finally, conducting two two-days Policy Dialogues on Financing in Public Health and on Social Determinants of Health and Inequalities. Finalized list of public health indicators of relevance for the region and a Report with analysis of the status of public health in the countries in the region is in the process of completion.



Sarajevo, BiH

## Mental Health

The SEE Mental Health Project (Project) was a first activity of the South-eastern Europe Health Network and the Regional Office of the Project was located in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Taking into account that Project played an important role in the process of mental health reform in SEE countries in the period from 2002-2008, the Ministers of Health in the SEE countries have expressed their commitment to continue mental health reform through transforming the SEE Mental Health Project into a Regional Health Development Center on Mental Health in South-eastern Europe (RHDC on Mental Health in SEE).

By signing the Declaration on a Long-term Programme for Regional Collaboration and Development on Mental Health, the Ministers of Health in the SEE countries have been formally expressed their commitments. The RHDC on Mental Health in South-eastern Europe was established within the Ministry of Civil Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2010.

The goal of the RHDC on Mental Health in SEE is to continue strengthening cooperation among SEE countries in the field of mental health in order to improve mental health policy and practice through promotion, prevention, advocacy, publications, research, policy development, and collaboration and networking among SEE countries.



## Blood Safety

Mr. Attila Cseke, the Romanian Minister of Health, officially inaugurated on 7th of January 2011, in Oradea, the Regional Health Development Centre for Blood Safety (RHDC-BS) having the mission to act as strategic and methodological structure in blood transfusion safety. Oradea, ROM

“We opened today the Regional Health Development Centre for Blood Safety, an unique Centre in Romania, part of South-East European Network for Health. The existence of the RHDC-BS shows that the international prestige can be won due to committed medical professionals. The Centre will represent a reference point, being in permanent contact with The Macedonian Presidency and the Executive Committee of the SEEHN and other specialized centres both in the South-Eastern Europe and throughout the European Union” said Mr. Attila Cseke, Romanian Minister of Health.

The first international activity of the newly established center is scheduled to be held in May 2011 when representatives of countries members of the Health Network will participate to a specialized course in blood transfusion for emergencies and catastrophes, with financial and technical support of prestigious international bodies, in the field.



## SEEHN - Major political documents

### Host Country Agreement, 2010.

The first legally binding agreement on the Seat of the Secretariat of the SEE Health Network.

### Memorandum of Understanding, 2009.

Legally binding document signed by the governments of nine countries, establishing the institutional mechanisms for sustaining the regional cooperation on health development

### Skopje Pledge, 2005.

Cornerstone agreement on cross-border health development in south-eastern Europe

### Dubrovnik Pledge, 2001.

Agreement among countries on meeting the health needs of vulnerable populations in south-eastern Europe

### 25th meeting of SEE Health Network, Sofia, June 2011



## Meetings

SEEHN 21st meeting, Bucharest, June 2009

SEEHN 22nd meeting, Belgrade, November 2009

SEEHN 23rd meeting, Ohrid, June 2010

SEEHN 24th meeting, Tirana, November 2010

SEEHN 25th meeting, Sofia, June 2011

This issue was prepared by SEE Health Network Secretariat in cooperation with the Ministries of Health of Republic of Macedonia, the Regional Cooperation Council, WHO Regional Office for Europe, Council of Europe, and the SEEHN Executive Committee.

Please address your comments, suggestions and requests via email to [seehnsec@gmail.com](mailto:seehnsec@gmail.com). We would like to hear from you with comments or suggestions on this issue. We also welcome suggestions or contributions for the third issue.

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SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE  
HEALTH NETWORK

### Members:

Albania  
Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Bulgaria  
Croatia  
Republic of Moldova  
Montenegro  
Romania  
Serbia  
The Former Yugoslav  
Republic of Macedonia

### Partner Countries:

Belgium  
France  
Greece  
Hungary  
Israel  
Italy  
Norway  
Slovenia  
Sweden  
Switzerland  
United Kingdom

### Partner Organizations:

Council of Europe  
Council of Europe  
Development Bank  
WHO Regional Office  
for Europe

## SEEHN Representation

Presidency: BiH (Jul-Dec 2011)

### Executive Committee:

Ms Snezana Cicevalieva, Chair  
Dr Elizabet Paunovic, SRB  
Dr Goran Cerkez, BiH  
Dr Alexandre Berlin, Intl  
Dr Athanasios Constantopoulos, Intl

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Dr Piotr Mierzewski, CoE

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BiH - Dr Goran Cerkez  
Dr Milan Latinovic  
BUL - Ms Desislava Dimitrova  
CRO - Dr Vlasta Hrabak-Zerjavic  
MNE - Ms Mirjana Djuranovic  
MDA - Dr Viorel Soltan  
MKD - Ms Snezana Cicevalieva  
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SRB - Dr Elizabet Paunovic