



**VENUE: ASTORIA GRAND HOTEL
SOFIA, REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA**

**SUMMARY NOTE ON
THE 48TH PLENARY MEETING OF THE SEE HEALTH NETWORK:
HEALTH PROMOTION AND DISEASE PREVENTION –
ACTING TOGETHER FOR BETTER HEALTH FOR ALL**

17-18 JUNE 2025

SEE HEALTH NETWORK MEMBER STATES





Republic of Bulgaria

The South-eastern Europe Health Network expresses its deep appreciations and gratitude to the Presidency of Republic of Bulgaria: Ministry of Health, for its continuous support and efforts during the SEEHN Presidency for the period (July 2024 – June 2025)



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48th Plenary Meeting of the SEE Health Network

Health Promotion and disease Prevention – Acting Together for Better Health for All

17-18 June 2025 - Sofia, Republic of Bulgaria

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ABBREVIATIONS

ALB	Albania
BIH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
BGR	Bulgaria
CEI	Central European Initiative
EU	European Union
Ex COM	Executive Committee
ISR	State of Israel
MDA	Republic of Moldova
MH	Mental Health
MKD	Republic of North Macedonia
MNE	Montenegro
MOH	Ministry of Health
MSs	Member States
NCD	Noncommunicable Disease
NHC	National Health Coordinator
RCC	Regional Coordination Council
RHDC	Regional Health Development Centre
ROU	Romania
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEE	South Eastern Europe
SEEHN	South Eastern Europe Health Network
SRB	Serbia
WB	Western Balkan
WHO	World Health Organization



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SUMMARY BACKGROUND

The **Republic of Bulgaria (BGR)** held the **Presidency** of the South-eastern Europe Health Network (SEEHN) for the period spanning **1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025**. The mandate culminated in the successful organization of the **48th SEEHN Plenary Meeting, titled “Health Promotion and Disease Prevention – Acting Together for Better Health for All”**, convened in a hybrid format on **17–18 June 2025 in Sofia, Bulgaria**. *The detailed programme of the event is provided in Annex 1.*

The 48th SEEHN Plenary Meeting brought together National Health Coordinators and/or their Alternates from SEEHN Member States, Directors of the SEEHN Regional Health Development Centers (RHDCs). In addition, the event was attended by delegates from international partner organizations, including the Central European Initiative (CEI), EuroHealthNet, the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), UNICEF, the WHO Regional Office for Europe and WHO Headquarters, as well as the WHO Country Office in BGR participating online. *The final list of participants is available in Annex 2 of this Summary Note.*

The primary objective of the meeting was to provide a strategic platform for in-depth dialogue, exchange of best practices, and the development of coordinated approaches to enhance health promotion and disease prevention across the SEEHN region.

Throughout the thematic sessions, Member State representatives presented national experiences and key achievements in health promotion and disease prevention through public health campaigns. The meeting covered various public health challenges including non-communicable diseases, vaccination programs, nutrition policies, and health communication campaigns, with participants sharing experiences and best practices from different countries. Key discussions centered around regional cooperation, digital health initiatives, and the importance of multi-sectoral approaches to improve health outcomes, with the incoming Israeli Presidency outlining their priorities for the upcoming term. Discussions also addressed public health policies and their impact, new avenues for partnerships and strengthening efforts for better healthcare.



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The meeting aimed to achieve the following:

- Take stock of the SEEHN action under BGR Presidency 2024-2025.
- Transfer the Presidency mandate to the State of Israel and establish the activity Roadmap for the period July 2025- June 2026.
- Improve and strengthen initiatives and public health campaigns toward effective and strong health promotion and diseases prevention.
- Share national experiences in vaccination, youth health, digital innovation, and healthy lifestyle promotion.
- Advance health system resilience through strategic planning, workforce mobility, and data-driven policy development.
- Elect the new Head of SEEHN Secretariat.
- Foster inclusive governance, including updates on SEEHN leadership, financials, RHDC collaboration, and regional pledges.
- Revisit and discuss the SEEHN RHDCs action and opportunities for further progress.
- Strengthen the on-going initiatives with partners and development new avenues for collaborations.

PLENARY MEETING OVERVIEW

The **48th Plenary Meeting** was structured around seven dedicated sessions, each contributing to the overarching objective of reinforcing SEEHN's institutional capacity. The meeting placed strategic emphasis on consolidating organizational structures and refining thematic priorities to sustain and advance regional collaboration, including partnerships with key international stakeholders.

The **opening session**, dedicated to welcoming remarks, served to establish the tone of the 48th Plenary Meeting and to articulate the anticipated outcomes. It provided a strategic framing for the discussions ahead, reinforcing the meeting's purpose and setting a collaborative atmosphere among participants. The session was formally opened by **Ms. Katya Ivkova**, Director of European Coordination and International Cooperation at the Bulgarian Ministry of Health. She welcomed the participants and expressed Bulgaria's honour in hosting the event.



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Ms. Ivkova then introduced the Minister of Health of Bulgaria, Associate Professor **Dr Silvi Kirilov** who emphasized the importance of regional cooperation in health, particularly in the context of global public health challenges. He highlighted the theme of the plenary—health promotion and disease prevention—as a strategic foundation for resilient health systems. The Minister acknowledged the need for cross-border collaboration and expressed hope that the meeting would serve as a platform for strengthening joint efforts among SEEHN Member States.

Dr Tatiana Paduraru, Acting Head of the SEEHN Secretariat, extended her gratitude to the Bulgarian Ministry of Health and the Bulgarian Presidency team for their leadership and hospitality. She underscored the significance of the plenary as a moment for reflection, collaboration, and forward planning. Dr Paduraru noted that the meeting would review progress made under the Bulgarian Presidency from July 2024 to June 2025 and set the roadmap for the upcoming Israeli Presidency. She highlighted that acting together is an imperative for the interconnected nature of public health challenges, including the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, the burden of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), demographic shifts, and workforce mobility. She extended gratitude to the SEEHN MS devotion and commitment as well as SEEHN’s strategic partners. Dr Paduraru presented the topics and fields that are foreseen to be addressed and discussed during the two days meeting among the participants. She reaffirmed the Secretariat’s commitment to inclusive leadership and regional solidarity, especially in light of the difficult circumstances facing Israel, which was unable to attend in person due to ongoing conflict. She praised Israel’s continued engagement and participation online.

Dr Svetlana Nicolaescu, Chair of the SEEHN Executive Committee, addressed the Plenary with a message of unity and gratitude. She thanked the Republic of Bulgaria for its exemplary leadership during its Presidency and acknowledged the contributions and championing made especially in the area of digital transformation, nursery and midwifery leadership and health diplomacy. She expressed gratitude to the outgoing Executive Committee members from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Israel, and Romania. Dr Nicolaescu acknowledged the complex geopolitical context in which the transition to the Israeli Presidency was taking place and reaffirmed that SEEHN remains a platform for cooperation, inclusiveness, and shared health goals and emphasized that the Presidency of SEEHN is a vehicle for regional solidarity, not a political endorsement. Dr Nicolaescu



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paid tribute to the late Dr Mira Dasic, former Director of the SEEHN Secretariat, whose passing was deeply felt across the network. She commended the Secretariat team for maintaining continuity and professionalism during a challenging period and praised them for their professionalism and resilience in continuing Dr Dasic's legacy. She concluded by reaffirming SEEHN's commitment to prevention as a long-term investment and called on Member States to act with foresight and unity. She emphasized the importance of investing in robust health systems, a motivated workforce, and inclusive digital innovation.

Her Excellency Ms. Christina de Bruyne, Head of the UNICEF Office in Bulgaria, delivered a keynote address on behalf of UNICEF. She congratulated the Bulgarian Ministry of Health for hosting the plenary and expressed UNICEF's strong support for the meeting's theme. Ms. de Bruyne emphasized that health promotion and disease prevention are critical components of public health systems and essential for protecting the well-being of children and adolescents. She highlighted UNICEF's work across the region in early childhood development, primary health care, and support for children with developmental delays. Ms. de Bruyne also discussed UNICEF's collaboration with the European Commission and WHO on the upcoming European Strategy for Child and Adolescent Health, which is expected to be endorsed by Member States in October 2025. Ms. de Bruyne praised Bulgaria's efforts in promoting child health, including immunization, nutrition, and mental health. She reaffirmed UNICEF's commitment to supporting SEEHN Member States in implementing evidence-based policies and strengthening health systems.

A pre-recorded video message was delivered by **Mr. Guillaume Simonian**, WHO Representative in Bulgaria. He praised SEEHN for its sustained regional partnership and commended Bulgaria for its leadership during its Presidency. Mr. Simonian emphasized that the theme of the plenary—health promotion and disease prevention—captures the essence of WHO's mission. He highlighted the recent adoption of the WHO Pandemic Agreement and the importance of multilateralism in global health. Mr. Simonian acknowledged the mounting public health challenges facing the region, including NCDs, misinformation, and climate-induced vulnerabilities. He praised SEEHN Member States for their resilience and commitment to health diplomacy, digital innovation, and risk factor reduction.



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Mr. Simonian concluded by reaffirming WHO's commitment to supporting SEEHN and encouraged Member States to invest in prevention and make health a pillar of regional stability and prosperity.

Dr Alexandre Berlin Prize Award Ceremony

The plenary included a special award ceremony honouring Dr Maria Ruseva of Bulgaria with the 2025 Dr Alexandre Berlin Prize.

The SEEHN Secretariat, in close consultation with the Executive Committee and Member States, had recently finalized a set of guidelines for the Dr Alexandre Berlin Prize. These guidelines ensure that the award reflects the founding principles of SEEHN—equity, solidarity, and professional excellence—and that it is awarded annually to an outstanding health professional from the country holding the SEEHN Presidency.

In 2025, the award was presented to Dr Maria Ruseva, a distinguished public health expert whose decades-long career has significantly advanced disease prevention and health promotion in Bulgaria and across the region.

The award recognized Dr Ruseva's outstanding contributions to public health and her pivotal role in the establishment and development of the SEEHN. The award was presented by Minister Kirilov and accepted on Dr Ruseva's behalf by Professor Plamen Dimitrov, who spoke warmly of her legacy and professionalism. Dr Alexander Leventhal, former Chair of the SEEHN Executive Committee and a close colleague, friend of Dr Ruseva, joined the ceremony online from Israel. He delivered a heartfelt tribute, recalling Dr Ruseva's visionary leadership and her instrumental role in launching the SEEHN as a platform for peace and cooperation in the post-conflict Balkan. Dr Paduraru also paid tribute to Dr Ruseva, describing her as a symbol of regional solidarity and health diplomacy. She noted that Dr Ruseva's legacy continues to inspire a new generation of public health professionals.

The ceremony concluded with a standing ovation and a final round of applause in honour of Dr Ruseva and in memory of Dr Alexandre Berlin, whose vision continues to guide the Network.



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Keynote Presentation by Dr Ivo Rakovac, WHO Regional Advisor on NCD Surveillance

Dr Ivo Rakovac delivered a comprehensive keynote presentation on the burden of noncommunicable diseases in the SEEHN region. The SEEHN region continues to face a disproportionately high burden of NCDs and their associated risk factors, surpassing the average levels observed across the wider region. Despite ongoing efforts, progress towards meeting established NCD-related targets remains notably slower. He presented data showing that NCDs account for approximately 95% of deaths and 90% of disability in SEEHN Member States. Dr Rakovac emphasized the urgency of implementing WHO's "Best Buys" and "Quick Buys" interventions to reduce premature mortality and improve health outcomes.

He highlighted the upcoming UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs in September 2025 as a critical opportunity for Member States to reaffirm their commitments. Dr Rakovac introduced WHO's new Division on Prevention and Health Promotion and encouraged SEEHN countries to adopt evidence-based policies, strengthen surveillance systems, and invest in prevention. He underscored the critical importance of implementing WHO's 'Best Buys' and 'Quick Buys' interventions as a means to reduce premature mortality and enhance population health outcomes. Additionally, he highlighted the growing relevance of commercial determinants in shaping the noncommunicable disease landscape, referencing key WHO/Europe publications: *Commercial Determinants of Noncommunicable Diseases in the WHO European Region* and *Quick Buys for Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases*. The presentation included detailed data on SEEHN MS progress with Global monitoring framework and health related SDGs, including premature mortality and risk factors such as tobacco use, alcohol consumption, obesity, and hypertension. Dr Rakovac praised Bulgaria for its recent efforts to expand access to antihypertensive medications and highlighted Israel as a model for reducing cardiovascular mortality.

Following the keynote, participants engaged in a brief discussion, raising the importance of translating WHO's Quick Buys into national policy changes, emphasizing the need for



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strategic prioritization, political timing, and comprehensive approaches that combine prevention and treatment.

Session 2 Summary: Public Health Policies and their impact on disease prevention *(facilitated by Katya Ivkova)*

The technical segment began with **Dr Kremena Parmakova**, Head of Surveillance and Infection Diseases Department, Bulgaria's Ministry of Health, who presented data on national immunization coverage and public trust in vaccines. She presented coverage trends for Bulgaria's immunization calendar and highlighted challenges in vaccine uptake post-COVID. She presented national programs on: improving seasonal flu vaccination, prevention of rotavirus gastroenteritis and cancer caused by HPV prevention deriving from the National Health Strategy 2030. She also shared findings from national surveys on parental attitudes, misinformation, and medical counselling. Dr Parmakova emphasized the impact of vaccines and importance of tailored communication strategies and community engagement to rebuild confidence, reduce dropout rates, and minimize regional disparities. The presentation acknowledged existing gaps in healthcare worker training, outreach among Roma communities, and digital access.

Session 3 Summary: Collaboration and new avenues for partnerships: risk factors, treatment, recovery and support to protect the health and wellbeing of young generations *(facilitated by Vesela Vuchkova)*

Professor Veselka Duleva from the National Centre of Public Health and Analysis delivered a comprehensive presentation on Bulgaria's national nutrition policy. She outlined the country's strategic documents, including the National Health Strategy and the National Program for the Prevention of Chronic Noncommunicable Diseases. The presentation highlighted the importance of reducing salt intake, promoting fruit and vegetable consumption, and reformulating foods to reduce sugar and saturated fats.



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Professor Duleva highlighted Bulgaria's legislative framework for healthy nutrition in schools, kindergartens, and nurseries. She showcased the development of food-based dietary guidelines for different age groups and the implementation of national reference values for nutrient intake. The presentation also covered Bulgaria's efforts in food marketing regulation, capacity building for health professionals (medical and non-medical), engagement of public structures, communities and industry in program activities, monitoring and evaluation, as well as maintaining effective international collaboration, e.g. participation in high-level EU/EC working groups on nutrition and related legislation, and international initiatives, such as the WHO European Childhood Obesity Surveillance Initiative (COSI).

Gabriella Sutton, Project Coordinator at EuroHealthNet, presented the organization's strategic efforts to embed health promotion in school environments across Europe. Highlighting the link between health and education, she introduced the EU-funded Schools for Health initiative, which supports schools in implementing best practices across mental health, physical activity, and nutrition. Sutton emphasized the systemic approach of the WHO-defined Health Promoting Schools framework and underscored the importance of policy alignment and stakeholder engagement. She shared lessons learned from the Romanian context, including material translation and capacity-building workshops involving local institutions and ministries. Looking ahead, EuroHealthNet has launched a dedicated thematic working group and announced a European Conference in December 2025 to explore sustainable avenues for revitalizing a pan-European network for health promoting schools, in close coordination with WHO and UNICEF. She invited SEEHN partners and experts to join the working group and collaborate on expanding the initiative in the region.

Session 4: Public health campaigns on healthy lifestyles and disease prevention *(roundtable facilitated by Tatiana Paduraru)*

This session featured national contributions from all SEEHN Member States, highlighting campaigns, innovations, and governance strategies. Introductory presentation from the



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host country was delivered by **Professor Plamen Dimitrov**, Director of the National Centre for Public Health and Analysis.

Professor Dimitrov highlighted decades of evidence showing that even modest investments in prevention and health promotion yield substantial population health gains, yet many SEEHN Member States continue to focus primarily on curative care. He underscored the pivotal role of well-designed health communication campaigns anchored in behavioural science and communication theories, emphasizing the importance of formative research, audience segmentation, emotionally resonant and culturally sensitive messaging, and the strategic deployment of mass-media, digital and community channels. He stressed that sustained funding, policy support and rigorous evaluation with continuous feedback loops are essential to drive and measure behaviour change.

To illustrate these principles, Professor Dimitrov presented Bulgaria's four-phase national HIV/AIDS campaigns, timed around World AIDS Day, Valentine's Day, Remembrance Day and summer vacation, and organized in partnership with the Ministry of Health and civil society. These campaigns have successfully increased awareness of HIV/STI prevention, normalized protective behaviours and engaged diverse demographic groups through targeted content. He concluded by calling for ongoing innovation, evidence-based adaptation and cross-sector collaboration to ensure that future communication initiatives remain effective in addressing evolving public health challenges.

Following the keynote, representatives from SEEHN Member States delivered brief national presentations on NCDs and premature mortality trends, highlighting their progress, challenges, gaps and priorities in health promotion and disease prevention and proposing regional priorities and areas of collaboration.

Albania

The Albanian delegation emphasized the importance of digitalization in health services and the integration of electronic vaccination records. They reported progress in immunization coverage and highlighted the need for increased public awareness and



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early screening programs. Albania proposed enhanced regional collaboration on digital tools and artificial intelligence in health.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Bosnia and Herzegovina presented data on the rising burden of cancer and cardiovascular diseases. They emphasized the need for a multi-sectoral approach to NCD prevention and called for greater use of EU funding instruments. The delegation proposed joint regional applications for EU health programs and highlighted successful campaigns on child nutrition.

Israel (Virtual)

Israel presented their approach to health promotion through social marketing. They showcased campaigns that leveraged social norms to promote healthy behaviours, such as serving water instead of sugary drinks and encouraging healthy school birthday parties. Israel's strategy emphasized emotional resonance, cultural relevance, and the use of digital platforms. The delegation also highlighted the importance of multilingual campaigns and targeted outreach to diverse population groups.

Republic of Moldova

Moldova presented their progress in tobacco control, digital health, and public health education and literacy. They emphasized the importance of community engagement and proposed the creation of a regional digital platform for sharing campaign materials. Moldova also suggested forming a regional working group on tobacco control policies.

Montenegro

Montenegro highlighted their efforts in organized cancer screening programs, HPV vaccination, and mental health promotion. They presented the Mental Health Festival as a successful example of community-based outreach. Montenegro emphasized the need for improved data collection and proposed regional alignment of legal frameworks for tobacco and nutrition policies.



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North Macedonia

North Macedonia's presented national action plan on NCDs as well as related strategic documents and initiatives affecting the reduction of NCDs, premature mortality and improving maternal and infant health. He emphasized the success in immunization coverage, effective tobacco control measures, strengthening digital health system and school-based health promotion. North Macedonia proposed joint training programs, collaborative campaigns, and a regional policy dialogue and coordinative platform, as well as data sharing.

Romania

Romania presented their national health programs with a focus on health promotion and NCD prevention and emphasized the importance of health literacy, early screening, and school-based health promotion. Romania highlighted importance of reversing the pyramid of health care with focus on prevention, and emphasized the need of PH capacity building, improving health information systems especially digital capacities and expressed interest in expanding regional cooperation on workforce development, developing guidelines and learn from each other.

Serbia

Serbia presented their national strategies for NCDs prevention and health promotion. They presented an example of diabetes care units' model for redesigning NCDs health delivery as a health care model in people with chronic multimorbidity. They emphasized the importance of legal frameworks, community engagement, communication skills for campaigns and digital health tools. Serbia proposed harmonized NCDs surveillance systems and joint regional campaigns on healthy lifestyles and healthy environments. Furthermore, they proposed to have joint activities and capacity building, knowledge exchange, address PH challenges and identified common priorities.

Session 5: SEEHN Presidency Report and SEEHN Road Map



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The final session of the day was dedicated to reviewing the achievements of the Bulgarian Presidency and outlining the roadmap for the incoming Israeli Presidency.

Report on the Bulgarian Presidency (July 2024 – June 2025)

Professor Plamen Dimitrov presented a summary of activities conducted under the Bulgarian Presidency (July 2024 – June 2025). Professor Dimitrov emphasized that the Bulgarian Presidency had focused on three strategic pillars: health diplomacy, digital transformation, and healthcare improvement. Key achievements included:

- Executive Training Course on Global Health Diplomacy in Times of Emergencies and Strengthening Preparedness, held on 25-27 November, in Sofia, Bulgaria with, unfortunately, Mira Jovanovski-Dasic (Former Head of SEEHN Secretariat) Commemoration Ceremony
- The inauguration of a new Regional Health Development Center for Nursing and Midwifery
- Organizing the High-Level Digital Health Expert Meeting in Sofia “TOWARDS UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE - GIVE HEALTH AN E-CHANCE!”
- Advancing regional dialogue on nursing leadership and health workforce mobility
- Strengthening partnerships with WHO, UNICEF, and the RCC (participation and representation of the SEEHN at high-level meetings: 74th WHO Regional Committee for Europe, held in Copenhagen, on 29 October 2024, with a statement; International Congress on Preventive Medicine and Public Health held in Struga, MKD and Joint Statement, on behalf of the South Eastern Europe Health Network At the 78TH Session of the World Health Assembly, held in the period 19.05.-24.05.2025). Within the framework of the 78TH World Health Assembly, SEEHN in collaboration with the RHDC on Nursing and Midwifery, hosted by Romania, has held a satellite session promoting and raising awareness on the importance of the Nursing leadership to be advanced in the SEE region.

He expressed gratitude to all Member States and partners for their collaboration and on behalf of the Bulgarian Presidency wished success to the upcoming Presidency of the State of Israel.



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Roadmap for the Israeli Presidency (July 2025 – June 2026)

Ms Revital Maimeran, Head of International Relations at the Israeli Ministry of Health, delivered a virtual address outlining Israel's priorities for its upcoming Presidency. She expressed regret that the Israeli delegation could not attend in person due to ongoing conflict and acknowledging the challenges posed by current geopolitical and security circumstances, Israel expressed deep appreciation to the SEEHN Secretariat and Member States for facilitating virtual participation and reaffirmed its commitment to collaborative action. Ms. Maimeran conveyed gratitude to the Republic of Bulgaria for its successful tenure, highlighting strengthened regional ties and improved health cooperation under its leadership. Looking ahead, Israel presented a strategic roadmap with four core priorities:

1. Emergency Preparedness and Response

Israel proposed initiatives aimed at enhancing Member States' capacity to respond to climate-induced crises such as wildfires and energy disruptions. This includes joint training, knowledge exchange, and identification of logistical focal points to develop shared emergency protocols.

2. Digital Health Cooperation

A regional seminar on digital health is planned, focusing on data infrastructure, system interoperability, secure data access, and AI policy. Israel aims to co-develop a digital health toolkit to guide Member States in advancing their digital health systems.

3. Public Health Innovation

A dedicated workshop will present Israel's newly launched National Digital Vaccination Registry (March 2025), a legislatively mandated system that centralizes vaccination records. The registry improves individual access to health data, supports clinical decision-making, and enables real-time outbreak response.

4. Nursing and Midwifery Leadership



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In partnership with RHDC Romania, Israel will host a regional workshop to foster nursing leadership. The initiative will culminate in a policy paper addressing workforce retention and governance in nursing, slated for presentation at the next SEEHN Plenary.

Further elaboration was provided by Ms. Ilana Gens, Chief Nurse of Public Health Services and Mr. Yoel Ben Or, Director of Digital Health Regulation. Ilana Gens outlined Israel's newly enacted, legally mandated National Digital Vaccination Registry, launched in March 2025. She highlighted three interconnected benefits: individual empowerment, enhanced clinical decision-making and strengthened public health response. She stressed that this registry places Israel among a handful of countries with a comprehensive, compulsory digital vaccine system, reinforcing preparedness for the “when—not if”—of the next pandemic. Yoel Ben Or spoke to the broader digital health and AI agenda Israel will champion under its Presidency. He framed the discussion around two core challenges: data Interoperability and AI Governance and Lifecycle Management. He closed by inviting Member States to propose additional topics—such as telehealth regulation, patient consent models, or workforce training needs—to ensure the agenda reflects regional priorities.

Closing Reflections

Ms. Katya Ivkova offered closing remarks, summarizing the day's discussions and emphasizing the importance of data quality, digital innovation, and school-based health promotion. She encouraged Member States to continue sharing best practices and to prepare for the upcoming UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs.

Dr Tatiana Paduraru thanked all participants for their engagement and reaffirmed the Secretariat's commitment to supporting Member States in implementing the Belgrade Pledge and advancing regional health cooperation.

SECOND DAY - Closed Session 6: SEEHN Governance (CLOSED session, report)

This session was attended only by SEEHN National Health Coordinators and/or Alternates as well as from country delegates who had submitted Mandate Letters by



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respective Minister of Health to attend the Session (Romanian and Serbian delegates). The session focused on key governance matters to strengthen SEEHN's operational framework and strategic direction. Facilitated by Dr. Svetlana Nicolaescu, Chair of SEEHN Executive Committee, the agenda covered a series of critical updates and decisions. Separate detailed report from this session is developed and available at Secretariat upon request.

Key items included:

1. Election of the Head of the SEEHN Secretariat

Dr Nicolaescu, briefed the meeting on the selection process who was launched following the sudden and deeply felt passing of former Head of Secretariat Dr Mira Jovanovski Dasic, in November 2024. In response, and in line with the SEEHN Memorandum of Understanding and Secretariat Statute, the Executive Committee convened an extraordinary session in November 2024 to initiate the formal selection process. To ensure continuity in Secretariat operations, Dr Tatiana Paduraru was appointed Acting Head. The recruitment procedure was prepared and conducted during end of 2024 and the first half of 2025. The vacancy announcement for the permanent position was officially launched on 20 December 2024, and remained open for 45 business days. All SEEHN Member States were invited to nominate candidates, and the process was carried out with full transparency and adherence to SEEHN governance rules.

By the deadline, two valid nominations were received:

- **Dr. Tatiana Paduraru**, nominated by the **Republic of Moldova**
- **Mr. Robert Velickovski**, nominated by the **Republic of North Macedonia**

Both candidates met the eligibility criteria outlined in the official post description. Following an initial administrative review, they were invited to participate in structured interviews in Skopje in May 2025, conducted by the Executive Committee, where their qualifications, professional experience, and vision for the Secretariat were carefully assessed.



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Following the discussions and reflections from the country delegates, the Closed session of the 48 SEEHN Plenary meeting **endorsed/approved the candidate proposed by the Minister of Health of the Republic of Moldova, Dr. Tatiana Paduraru, as new Head of SEEHN Secretariat** with mandate of 4 (four) years, starting as of 1 August 2025. Dr Tatiana Paduraru, with current position as a Technical Officer and acting as Head of SEEHN Secretariat, has an extensive educational and working background, strong technical capacity, with clear and forward-looking vision for the future of the SEEHN. With over eight years of experience serving as Technical Officer within SEEHN Secretariat, Dr Paduraru possesses deep knowledge of the priorities, activities and challenges of the Network, practicing result-oriented approach and well-nourished relations and communication with all SEEHN Member States, Regional Health Development Centers and partners.

2. Guidelines for the “Dr Alexandre Berlin” Prize (briefing)

Dr Nicolaescu informed the meeting on the developed Guidelines for the “**Dr Alexandre Berlin**” Prize.

Following the Decision of the 47 SEEHN plenary meeting held in June 2024 in Sarajevo for establishing the Dr Alexandre Berlin Prize in honor of Dr Alexandre Berlin and his more than 40 years of service, contribution and advocacy in the field of Health and Regional Cooperation, in the first half of 2025 Secretariat outsourced expert for developing Guidelines for presenting the Prize, including criteria and all forms. The Award will pay tribute to the continuous efforts of those promoting regional cooperation in the field of health in the SEE region, collaborators and supporters of the development and strengthening of the SEE Health Network

The Guidelines were adopted by SEEHN Executive Committee in May 2025 and are reflecting following main points (i) nominations for the Award Dr Alexandre Berlin to be linked to the current SEEHN Presidency to ensure a rotating principle, solidarity among MSs and avoid unnecessary competition; Secretariat will be responsible to extend Invitation to the SEEHN Presidency on this matter; (ii) the logic to be followed is one nominee and one awardee. In terms of eligibility, the person can be from public and/or non-governmental sector, yet the Ministry of Health (holding the SEEHN Presidency) is the final institution which submits the potential candidacy to the SEEHN Secretariat



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including simple dossier (Official Letter, Application Form and CV); (iii) The procedure to be conducted at national level prior nominating of the awardee is at a sole discretion of the respective Ministries of Health, yet in order to have proven track record of work and to ensure greater clarity, the Guidelines to include/elaborate minimal criteria for the awardee to be followed by respective Ministries of Health when proposing nominee towards SEEHN Secretariat. (iv) The Prize includes a monetary award of €2,000 along with a commemorative plaque from SEEHN. It will be formally presented yearly during a special ceremony at the SEEHN Plenary Meeting.

The Guidelines along with set of documents and information on the presented Awards in 2024 to Dr Goran Cerkez and 2025 to Dr Maria Ruseva will be placed at SEEHN web site and shared with SEEHN NHCs, Alternates and RHDCs.

3. **Secretariat Financial Report:** Ms Arsova briefed on a semi-annual financial report (January–June 2025), highlighting current expenditures and financial health.
4. **Pending Contributions:** Ms Arsova briefed and congratulated member states for the timely payments of annual contributions, ensuring operational continuity and functioning of the Secretariat.
5. **Cooperation with SEEHN RHDCs**

The RHDCs represent one of the Network's most distinctive and valuable assets and remain an important institutional pillar – each centre serving as a regional hub for technical excellence and collaboration, hosted by Member States and focused on critical public health priorities such as noncommunicable diseases, digital health, nursing and midwifery, workforce development, and reproductive health.

Dr Nicolaescu briefed on the efforts of Secretariat over the past year, for further strengthening the coordination and strategic alignment with the RHDCs. This has been especially visible in areas such as joint advocacy, knowledge exchange, and the organization of regionally coordinated activities. Several RHDCs have shown commendable leadership by initiating cross-border cooperation, hosting events, and contributing to the production of regional studies and technical guidance.



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Few examples were shared: (i) the RHDC on Nursing and Midwifery, hosted by Romania and officially inaugurated in 2023, has continued to play a leading role in advancing nursing leadership and workforce policy dialogue. (ii) The RHDC on Noncommunicable Diseases in Montenegro recently organized a successful regional consultation on NCD surveillance and data systems, yielding practical recommendations. (iii) Likewise, the RHDC on Sexual and Reproductive Health, also hosted by Romania, was a key partner in this year's regional consultation on maternal and newborn health held on the occasion of World Health Day. The Secretariat has supported these efforts through targeted grant mechanisms, technical alignment, and joint visibility efforts.

Looking ahead, Secretariat is working on a proposal to clarify the structure, governance, and sustainability of the RHDCs, to be presented at the next Plenary in 2026. All Member States were invited to continue engaging actively with their RHDCs – not only to boost national capacity but to ensure that SEEHN remains a forward-looking and technically robust platform for regional cooperation.

6. Briefing on the Belgrade Pledge and Strategic Planning (2025–2029)

Dr Nicolaescu offered a brief but important reflection on the Belgrade Pledge and the upcoming steps in SEEHN strategic planning for 2025–2027.

The Belgrade Pledge builds upon the legacy of the Chisinau Pledge, serving as a renewed political commitment to regional cooperation, equity, and sustainability in health. Originally envisioned as the cornerstone declaration of the Fifth Ministerial Forum, scheduled to take place in Belgrade in June 2022. However, in light of the pandemic-related restrictions, the event was held online, and Member States formalized their endorsement through official letters of commitment.

Most recently, Albania affirmed its support to the Belgrade Pledge following a visit by Dr. Paduraru in February 2025 and the efforts of Deputy Minister and SEEHN NHC, Dr Niko Hyka. This marks a significant milestone in consolidating regional unity and shared vision under the Pledge. At present, Bosnia and Herzegovina remains the only Member State pending formal endorsement. However, encouraged by the recent communication from Dr. Jurica Arapovic, National Focal Point from Ministry of Civil Affairs of BIH, who has proposed a pathway for advancing this process through the Cabinet of Ministers, it is



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anticipated that, following the 48th Plenary Meeting, the SEEHN Secretariat will follow up to ensure universal endorsement and the highest level of political commitment across all Member States. Drafting a mid-term Action Plan that will translate the vision of the Belgrade Pledge into measurable, results-oriented actions is next step. This framework will serve as a vehicle for accountability and impact, helping to align our national efforts with regional goals and fostering visible progress.

Dr Nicolaescu concluded the session by praising the active participation and thoughtful contributions of all SEEHN MSs representatives to this governance session, reaffirming collective commitment to SEEHN's core values and to its continued development as a strong, credible, and regionally owned platform for public health cooperation.

Session 7: SEEHN strengthening efforts for better healthcare *(facilitated by Dr Tatiana Paduraru)*

Session 7 of the 48th Plenary Meeting commenced with a formal announcement by Dr Svetlana Nicolaescu, Chair of the SEEHN Executive Committee, who shared the outcomes of the closed session. The key highlight was the endorsement of Dr Tatiana Paduraru as the new Head of the SEEHN Secretariat. Dr Nicolaescu emphasized that the selection process was conducted in accordance with the SEEHN Memorandum of Understanding and the Secretariat Statute, and that the decision reflected a commitment to professional leadership, institutional continuity, and geographical balance.

Dr Paduraru expressed her gratitude for the trust placed in her by the Member States. She pledged to serve with dedication, integrity, and respect for the region's diversity, emphasizing that her leadership would be collaborative and inclusive. She framed her appointment as a shared opportunity to advance SEEHN's mission and collective success.

The session forwarded with presentations and thematic discussions:

1. Regional Cooperation on Health Workforce Mobility *(delivered by Ms. Ulpiana Lama, Regional Cooperation Council)*



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Ms. Lama opened the technical segment of the session with a presentation on RCC's role in advancing health workforce mobility and rights portability in the Western Balkans. She emphasized RCC's human-centred development approach, which integrates health, education, and employment. RCC's current focus is on six Western Balkan economies, but its Southeast Europe 2030 Strategy encompasses all 13 members of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEEC). Key initiatives include two regional agreements on the recognition of professional qualifications: one for doctors, dentists, and architects, another for nurses, midwives, pharmacists, and veterinary surgeons. These agreements are based on EU Directive 2005/36/EC and aim to facilitate automatic recognition of qualifications to support workforce mobility. Ms. Lama acknowledged implementation challenges, particularly the lack of coordination among ministries of trade, education, and health. She urged SEEHN Member States to advocate for inter-ministerial alignment and to assess the impact of these agreements on national health systems. In following discussions several representatives of MSs expressed strong interest in joining RCC's initiatives, particularly in aligning with EU legislation and support EU harmonization efforts, particularly for countries preparing for EU accession.

2. WHO Initiative on Phasing Out Mercury in Medical Devices *(delivered by Dr Elena Jordan, WHO Headquarters)*

Dr Jordan presented WHO's global initiative to phase out mercury-containing medical devices in healthcare facilities. The project, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), spans five years (2023–2028) and includes five pilot countries: Albania, Montenegro, India, Uganda, and Burkina Faso. The initiative supports the implementation of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, a legally binding treaty aimed at protecting human health and the environment from mercury exposure. Dr Jordan explained the health risks associated with mercury, particularly its neurotoxic effects and its threat to foetal development. The project's three main components are: 1) development of national strategies for phasing out mercury thermometers and sphygmomanometers, 2) safe collection, storage, and disposal of mercury devices, including collaboration with manufacturers to transition to mercury-free alternatives and 3) capacity building through training modules and knowledge-sharing platforms. Montenegro and Albania are pilot



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countries for substitution demonstrations. WHO is working with national authorities to inventory mercury devices, conduct training, and procure mercury-free alternatives. Dr Jordan invited SEEHN Member States to collaborate on updating standard operating procedures and to participate in regional knowledge-sharing events.

3. Strengthening NCD Surveillance through population-based surveys (delivered by Dr Milica Stanisic, RHDC on NCDs Montenegro)

Dr Stanisic reported on the outcomes of a regional meeting held in March 2025 in Podgorica, focused on strengthening surveillance systems for noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). She emphasized the importance of high-quality, timely, and comprehensive data for shaping public health policies and interventions. Key recommendations from the meeting included:

- Standardizing methodologies and ensuring sustainability of population-based surveys (e.g. linking taxes on unhealthy products (e.g., tobacco, alcohol, sugary foods) to NCD surveillance funding);
- Enhancing digital infrastructure and data integration across fragmented health systems;
- Promoting regional collaboration and regional joint advocacy for putting the NCDs population-based surveys high on the public health priority list.

Dr Stanisic proposed further focus on proactive policy engagement for robust NCDs surveillance systems; preparing the comprehensive document/publication for the SEEHN Member States on the subject and establishing regional platform – roundtables and discussions on diverse areas of prevention, control and surveillance of NCDs in our Member States through activities of the RHDC NCDs.

4. Digital Health Transformation (delivered by Ms. Katya Ivkova, Ministry of Health, Bulgaria)



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Ms. Ivkova presented the outcomes of a digital health seminar held in Sofia in April 2025 for SEEHN MSs to share best practices and experience in digital solutions in healthcare. The seminar focused on national achievements, challenges and collaboration with WHO guidance to support digital governance, interoperability, and ethical data use. She emphasized that digital health is not an end in itself but a vehicle for achieving equitable, people-centred health systems.

Key takeaways included:

- The need for interoperable systems that enable secure, real-time data exchange;
- The importance of digital literacy among healthcare professionals and evidence-based decision making;
- The harmonization of the national legislation with European Health Data Space regulation;
- The proposal to develop regional guidelines on ethical data use and interoperability standards;
- To mobilize support for national capacity building (RHDCs or directly MSs).

Ms. Ivkova highlighted Bulgaria's engagement with WHO headquarters and the potential for joint fundraising to support digital health initiatives. She called for continued regional collaboration and emphasized the importance of representing SEEHN's digital health agenda at global forums.

5. Maternal and Newborn Health (delivered by Dr Mihail Horga, RHDC on Sexual and Reproductive Health, Romania)

Dr Horga summarized the findings of an online consultation held in May 2025 with WHO Europe, under the 2025 World Health Day theme: "Healthy Beginnings, Hopeful Futures". The consultation identified key regional priorities:

- Improving quality of care, more specifically reducing high rates of caesarean sections through quality improvement and midwifery support;



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- Promoting breastfeeding through joint awareness campaigns and digital tools for tracking;
- Reaching vulnerable populations via mobile health services and forming regional model for community integrated mobile services and use Roma health mediators to get closer to Roma communities;
- Enhancing data collection and sharing and transforming data into policy-relevant insights;
- Exchanging knowledge and experience of the workforce, using telehealth and digital innovation;
- Establishing obstetric surveillance systems and cross-border emergency protocols.

Dr Horga proposed facilitating regional initiatives and data-sharing, forming joint working groups to advance these priorities and committed to reporting progress at future SEEHN meetings.

6. Nursing and Midwifery Leadership *(delivered by Ms. Roxana Hainagiu, RHDC on Nursing and Midwifery, Romania)*

Ms. Hainagiu reported on a side event held during the 78th World Health Assembly in Geneva, co-hosted by SEEHN and several global partners. The event supported the extension of WHO's Global Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery to 2030.

She emphasized the critical role of nurses and midwives in transforming health systems and highlighted Romania's leadership in hosting the RHDC, which was part of the joint statement of the co-hosts delivered by ROU during the work of Committee B at WHA78. The event showcased global and regional best practices and called for continued investment in nursing education, leadership, and workforce planning. There were important global leadership contributions to the event, as well as SEEHN by Dr Paduraru in the segment dedicated to regional perspectives, emphasizing the importance of context-specific approaches to implement the strategic direction effectively. Ms. Hainagiu offered unwavering commitment to international collaboration and advancing policies positioning nurses and midwives at the core of health system transformation. She also announced Romania's upcoming presentation at the next meeting of the Chief Nursing Officers of the WHO European Region.



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7. Health Workforce Migration – Moldova Case Study (delivered by Dr Sergiu Otgon, RHDC on Health Workforce, Moldova)

Dr Otgon presented findings from a WHO/EC-funded study on health workforce migration in Eastern Partnership countries. Health resilience in Eastern partnership research project composed of 2 components: human resources in health and mental health and wellbeing of health personnel. The country-case study, is conducted between 2024 and 2027, focuses on workforce inflows, outflows, education, and the impact of migration on health systems.

Key insights from Moldova’s case study included:

- Significant outflow of healthcare professionals, particularly to EU countries, levels of salaries are lower compared to EU countries;
- Growing impact on Moldova’s health system (decrease in total number of physicians, aging workforce, positions remain unfilled etc.);
- Gaps in workforce distribution, age imbalances, and job vacancies;
- The need for updated data and policy responses to mitigate negative impacts.

Dr Otgon proposed to adapt the existing template to a regional level study among SEEHN MSs and proposed setting up coordination team and establishing a regional working group on health workforce migration. He invited SEEHN countries to attend the official launch of the study on 17 September 2025.

Closing Reflections and Next Steps



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Ms. Katya Ivkova delivered the closing remarks on behalf of the Bulgarian Presidency. She summarized the key conclusions of the plenary, emphasizing the importance of health promotion, disease prevention, and regional solidarity. She called for SEEHN's voice to be represented at the upcoming UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on NCDs and encouraged Member States to prepare a joint statement.

Dr Tatiana Paduraru echoed these sentiments and thanked all participants, partners, and the Bulgarian organizing team. She reaffirmed the Secretariat's commitment to inclusive leadership and regional progress.

The closing session marked a significant milestone in SEEHN's ongoing mission to promote health and prevent disease across its Member States.

2. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The 48th Plenary Meeting of the South Eastern Europe Health Network, held under the Bulgarian Presidency in Sofia on 17–18 June 2025, concluded with a strong reaffirmation of regional solidarity, shared responsibility, and the transformative power of cooperation in public health.

Participants were commended for their active engagement throughout the two-day event, and special recognition was extended to the SEEHN Secretariat for its exceptional collaboration and organizational support. The Bulgarian Presidency was praised for its leadership in steering the network through a year of strategic focus on health diplomacy, digital transformation, and healthcare improvement.

Key priority areas, identified during the meeting, to be translated into actions are:

1. Health promotion and disease prevention and control
2. Digital health and data systems



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3. Workforce development and mobility
4. Nutrition, school health, and community engagement
5. Environmental health and emergency preparedness.

Regional collaboration was recognized as indispensable. SEEHN continues to serve as a vital platform for the exchange of knowledge, mutual support, and coordinated initiatives. The COVID-19 pandemic experience further validated the importance of such cooperation in achieving improved health outcomes, enhanced health security, and long-term sustainability.

The insights and commitments generated during the plenary are expected to be translated into actionable policies, programs, and partnerships. **Foreseen next steps** are:

SEEHN Member States:

- Roll out WHO “Quick Buys” interventions and enhance intersectoral collaboration for comprehensive prevention;
- Strengthen data collection, surveillance systems, and digital interoperability standards;
- Establish a regional tobacco control alliance and hypertension/CVD coordination mechanism;
- Join EuroHealthNet’s working group on health-promoting schools (Sept/Oct 2025);
- Participate in the UN high-level meeting on NCDs;
- Ministries of Health to coordinate with education and trade ministries to advance mutual recognition agreements for health professionals;
- Host workshops on emergency preparedness (climate change) and digital health infrastructure.

SEEHN Secretariat:

- Launch a digital sharing platform for communication campaigns and best practices;



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- Draft a people-centred, data-driven regional strategy.

Israeli Presidency:

- Follow the Roadmap of proposed activities - organize seminars on AI policy, digital health toolkits, and nursing/midwifery leadership in collaboration with Romanian RHDC;
- Prepare and circulate a joint statement for the UN high-level meeting on NCDs and convene the next SEEHN Plenary meeting.

Regional Health Development Centres:

- Form working groups on healthcare workforce migration and maternal/neonatal health;
- Develop interoperability and ethical data-use guidelines; potentially (and if applicable) launch mercury-free device substitution already piloted in Albania and Montenegro.

Main Conclusions and Decisions

1. Prevention as a pillar of health systems

Prevention measures—vaccination, screenings, lifestyle promotion—are essential for sustainable, equitable health outcomes and protecting populations against chronic and emerging threats.

2. Solidarity and shared action

SEEHN's regional cooperation model, proven during the COVID-19 pandemic, was reaffirmed as indispensable for pooling expertise, resources, and political will.

3. Digital and diplomatic momentum



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The Bulgarian Presidency’s focus on digital transformation, health diplomacy, and service quality laid strong groundwork. The incoming Israeli Presidency’s priorities received full endorsement.

4. Leadership and governance

Dr Tatiana Paduraru’s election as Head of the Secretariat ensures balanced, professional leadership. Commitments were made to translate meeting insights into concrete policies, programs, and partnerships.

5. Continued collective commitment

The meeting concluded with a collective call to sustain momentum and deepen cooperation, guided by the shared objective of “Acting Together for Better Health for All”—not only within the region but as part of a global commitment to health equity and resilience.

Meeting rapporteurs:

Ms. Vesna Arsova Financial Officer of the SEEHN Secretariat

Dr Milica Stanisic Head of the RHDC NCDs Montenegro



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Annex No 1: Programme

17-18 JUNE 2025

DATE: 3 JUNE 2025

ASTORIA GRAND HOTEL

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SOFIA, REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

PROGRAMME

ALL HOURS IN THE PROGRAMME ARE IN LOCAL TIME (EET)

Monday, 16 June 2024		GUIDANCE FOR CHAIRS AND FACILITATORS
Arrival of participants	Pick-up of all participants to be organized by the Bulgarian Presidency	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Bulgaria is organizing airport transfers for all participants
19:30-21:30	Welcome Dinner (Restaurant of Astoria Grand Hotel Sofia)	Dinner is hosted by SEEHN Secretariat
Tuesday, 17 June 2024		
VENUE: ASTORIA GRAND HOTEL <i>Moderator Day 1:</i>		



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9:00 – 9:30	Registration of participants	Conference room:
9:30-10:00	<p>Session 1: Welcome remarks</p> <p><u>Opening addresses by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assoc. Prof. Silvi Kirilov, MD, Minister, Ministry of Health of the Republic of Bulgaria • Tatiana Paduraru, MD, Acting Head, SEEHN Secretariat • Svetlana Nicolaescu, MD, Chair of SEEHN Ex Com, Deputy Secretary General, Ministry of Health, Republic of Moldova • H.E. Christina De Bruin – UNICEF Representative in Bulgaria • WHO CO Bulgaria – Mr. Guillaume Simonian, a.i. WHO CO Bulgaria - online • Award Ceremony Dr Alexandre Berlin Prize 	<p>Facilitator introduces the topic and a brief description relevant to the topic</p> <p>Katya Ivkova</p> <p>Director “European Coordination and International Cooperation” Directorate</p> <p>MoH, Bulgaria</p>
10:00-10:45	<p>Keynote presentation WHO Regional Office for Europe: “Health Promotion and Disease Prevention – Acting Together for Better Health for All”</p> <p><i>Presenter: Dr Ivo Rakovac</i>, Regional Adviser on NCDs Surveillance, WHO RO Europe</p>	WHO Regional Office for Europe
10:45-11:00	<p>Coffee break</p> <p>Family Photo</p>	MoH can provide photographer for Session 1
11:00-12:00	<p>Session 2: Public Health Policies and their impact on disease prevention</p> <p><i>Presentation: Vaccination Programs</i></p>	<p>Facilitator</p> <p>Katya Ivkova</p>

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	<p><i>Presenter: Mr. Ilija Tasev</i>, Director, „Public Health“, Directorate, MoH, Bulgaria;</p> <p>Dr Kremena Parmakova, Head of the Department "Surveillance of Infectious Diseases", „Public Health“, Directorate, MoH, Bulgaria</p> <p><i>Presentation: Public Health Policies and their impact on disease prevention – the Bulgarian experience</i></p> <p><i>Presenter Dr Kremena Parmakova</i>, Head of the Department "Surveillance of Infectious Diseases", „Public Health“, Directorate, MoH, Bulgaria, Dr Radosveta Filipova, State expert „Public Health“, Directorate, MoH, Bulgaria</p> <p>Q&A and Discussion</p>	<p>Director “European Coordination and International Cooperation” Directorate</p> <p>MoH, Bulgaria</p>
<p>12:00-13:00</p>	<p>Session 3: Collaboration and new avenues for partnerships: risk factors, treatment, recovery and support to protect the health and wellbeing of young generations</p> <p><i>Introductory presentation by the Presidency: Nutrition policy in Bulgaria for the promotion of health and well-being of the young generation</i></p> <p><i>Presenter: Prof. Veselka Duleva</i>, Director of „Public Health and Health Risk“, Directorate, National Center of Public Health and Analyses (tbc)</p> <p><i>Presentation: “WHO-associated European Network of Health Promoting Schools – School for Health”</i></p> <p><i>Presenter: Ms. Gabriella Sutton</i>, Coordinator Policy and Projects at EuroHealthNet</p> <p>Q&A and Discussion</p>	<p>Facilitator</p> <p>Vesela Vuchkova</p> <p>Directorate “European Coordination and International Cooperation” Directorate</p> <p>MoH, Bulgaria</p>



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13:00-14:00	Lunch break	
14:00-15:00	<p>Session 4: Public health campaigns on healthy lifestyles and disease prevention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying Key Strategies for Improvement <p>Introductory presentation by the Presidency: "The Role of Health Communication Campaigns in Health Promotion"</p> <p>Presenter: Prof. Plamen Dimitrov, MD Director of the National Center of Public Health and Analyses</p>	<p>Facilitator</p> <p>Dr Tatiana Paduraru, MD Acting Head, SEEHN Secretariat</p> <p>Each SEEHN MSs in alphabetical order to be ready to share information on the Country current status related to the topic (3-5 minutes each)</p>
15:00 – 15:30	<p>Session 5: SEEHN Presidency Report and SEEHN Road Map</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Facilitator: Tatiana Paduraru, MD,</i> Acting Head, SEEHN Secretariat <p>Presentation: Bulgarian Presidency Report (July 2024- June 2025)</p> <p>Presenter: Prof. Plamen Dimitrov, MD Director of the National Center of Public Health and Analyses <i>Presentation:</i></p> <p>SEEHN Road Map under the Presidency of State of Israel (July 2025- June 2026)</p> <p>Presenter: ISR</p>	
15:30-16:00	<p>Debrief of the DAY 1</p> <p>Ms Katya Ivkova, Director “European Coordination and International Cooperation” Directorate, MoH, Bulgaria/Dr Tatiana Paduraru, MD, Acting Head, SEEHN Secretariat</p>	



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19:30	Official dinner offered by the Bulgarian Presidency	Venue: details will be announced during the meeting; Astoria Grand Hotel Sofia
Wednesday, 18 June 2025		
VENUE: ASTORIA GRAND HOTEL SOFIA		
9:30-11:30	<p>Closed Session 6: SEEHN Governance</p> <p><i>Facilitator: Svetlana Nicolaescu, MD, Chair of SEEHN Ex Com</i></p> <p><u>SEEHN Secretariat</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Secretariat (elections) • Guidelines for Dr Alexandre Berlin Prize • Secretariat Semi Annual Financial Report (January-June 2025) • Pending contributions for 2023– 2025 • Cooperation with SEEHN RHDCs Briefing on the Belgrade Pledge signing and strategic planning for the next four years 	ONLY for National Health Coordinators and/or Alternates (in person and/or online)
11:30-12:00	Coffee break	
12:00 – 13:30	<p>Session 7: SEEHN strengthening efforts for better healthcare</p> <p><i>Facilitator: Tatiana Paduraru, MD, Acting Head, SEEHN Secretariat</i></p> <p><i>Presentation: Recommendations and follow-up actions on NCDs population-based registries meeting.</i></p>	Facilitator introduces the topic and a brief description relevant to the topic



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	<p><i>Presenter: Ms Milica Stanisic</i>, Director South-eastern Europe Health Network Regional Health Development Center on NCDs, MNE</p> <p><i>Presentation: Recommendations and follow-up actions on digital health meeting.</i></p> <p><i>Presenter: Ms Katya Ivkova</i>, Director “European Coordination and International Cooperation” Directorate, MoH, Bulgaria</p> <p><i>Presentation: Conclusions from the online Consultation on Maternal and New-born Health Challenges in South East Europe</i></p> <p><i>Presenter: Dr Mihai Horga</i>, Director, South-eastern Europe Health Network Regional Health Development Center on SRH, ROU</p> <p><i>Presentation: Conclusions from the WHA78 side event "Nursing and Midwifery Leadership: Driving Global Health Goals"</i></p> <p><i>Presenter: Ms Roxana Hainagiu</i>, South-eastern Europe Health Network Regional Health Development Center on Nursing and Midwifery, ROU</p> <p><i>Presentation: WHO initiative on phasing out mercury containing medical devices in healthcare facilities in pilot countries, including Albania and Montenegro</i></p> <p><i>Presenter: Dr Elena Jordan</i>, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Health, WHO HQ (online)</p> <p><i>Presentation: Moldova Healthcare workforce migration case study</i></p>	
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	<p><i>Presenter: Mr Sergiu Otgon, South-eastern Europe Health Network Regional Health Development Center on Health Workforce, National Public Health Agency, MDA</i></p> <p>Q&A</p>	
13:30-14:00	Conclusions and recommendations	
14:00-15:00	Lunch break	
15:30	Cultural tour	Offered by Bulgarian Presidency
	Departure of participants in the afternoon and next day (19 June 2025) Transfers to airport are arranged by MoH (check-it 1 day prior departure)	Bulgarian Presidency



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Annex No 2: List of Participants

17-18 JUNE 2025

DATE: 3 JUNE 2025

ASTORIA GRAND HOTEL

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SOFIA, REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

Country	Name/Surname	E-mail	Affiliation
Albania	1. Sonila Turshilla	sonila.turshilla@mfa.gov.al	Embassy of the Republic of Albania to the Republic of Bulgaria Counsellor
	2. Niko Hyka	niko.hyka@shendetesia.gov.al	Ministry of Health Deputy Minister
	3. Juljana Nanaj	jnanaj@secid.org	SEEHN RHDC on CDC
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4. Aleksandra Micic	embhbg@gmail.com	Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Republic of Bulgaria Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
	5. Snjezana Brckalo	Snjezana.Brckalo@mcp.gov.ba	Ministry of Civil Affairs Alternate Focal point to SEEHN and representative of RHDC on MH
	6. Ada Hasecic	Ada.hasecic@mcp.gov.ba	
	7. Dzenita Hukic	Dzenita.Hukic@fmz.gov.ba	Federal Ministry of Health Alternate SEEHN NHC

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