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OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY NETWORKS

SEENWH

**Profile of the South-East European Network
on Workers' Health**



Labour Administration, Labour Inspection and
Occupational Safety and Health Branch (LABADMIN/OSH)

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International Labour Organization, Geneva

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ARD	asbestos-related disease
BCA	Biennial Collaborative Agreement
BOHS	basic occupational health services
BSN	Baltic Sea Network on Occupational Health and Safety
CME	continuous medical education
CPD	continuous professional development
EU	European Union
EU-OSHA	EU Occupational Safety and Health Agency
FYROM, FYR Macedonia	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
GDP	gross domestic product
ICOH	International Commission on Occupational Health
ILO	International Labour Organization
ISGUM	Ministry of Health, and Occupational Health and Safety Institute (Turkey)
MOU	memorandum of understanding
NDPHS	Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-Being
NGO	non-governmental organization
OH	occupational health
OSH	occupational safety and health
PIACT	ILO Programme for the Improvement of Working Conditions and Environment
SEE	South-East Europe
SEEHN	South-Eastern Europe Health Network
SEENWH	South-East European Network on Workers' Health
SEEWA	South-East European Workplace Academy
SME	small to medium-sized enterprise
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WHO/Europe	WHO Regional Office for Europe

Foreword and acknowledgements

The profile of the South-East European Network on Workers' Health (SEENWH) is published as an appendix to the ILO Working Paper presenting the results of the multiple case-study analysis of six regional occupational safety and health (OSH) networks. The study was initiated in order to inform the modernization of the ILO portfolio of activities in OSH knowledge and information. It benefited from financial support provided under the Partnership Agreement between the Government of South Korea and the ILO 2015-2017 (GLO/15/50/ROK).

The study covers the statutes, roles, functions, governance modalities, financing and challenges of regional OSH networks from Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa. The results allow a better understanding of how and why OSH agencies, institutions, organizations and experts collaborate with one another. They provide invaluable descriptive information covering the diversity of existing collaborative arrangements and key characteristics of productive regional OSH networks. They highlight similarities and differences in ways of organizing collaboration in OSH and provide new knowledge to support international cooperation which has always been and remains a key role of the ILO. They can be useful to a vast diversity of stakeholders, including policy-makers, expert groups and, of course, active members of the network.

This profile was prepared by Professor Jorma Rantanen and Professor Jovanka Karadzinska Bislimovska who also coordinated exchanges with the SEENWH member organizations and compiled comments at various stages of development and revision. Acknowledgements extend to all of them, with expression of our gratitude for their interest and support.

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Summary

During its 11 years of activity the South-East European Network on Workers' Health (SEENWH) has demonstrated its viability and shown success in its key mission of strengthening national and subregional expertise and capabilities in OSH – an important asset for countries in social and economic transition to or towards EU membership.

The SEENWH has demonstrated continuity, visibility, and sustainability in its realized activities, and has demonstrated visible social capital as an expert community with high added value. It is now recognized among the experts and policy-makers in South-East Europe (SEE) as a key player in occupational health (OH) subregional collaboration, comparable to the Northern Dimension Partnership and the Baltic Sea Network on Occupational Health and Safety (BSN).

The SEENWH has contributed to cooperation with the WHO collaborating centres, national focal points, and international experts in the implementation of the WHO Global Plan of Action on Workers' Health in the WHO/Europe region. It has also been instrumental in the formulation and implementation of the Biennial Collaborative Agreement (BCA) activities of the WHO Regional Office for Europe, in the area of occupational health in Albania, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey.

With the support and participation of SEENWH members, an extensive survey of SEE occupational health systems was carried out in 2009 and 2010, covering the legislative structures, policy development, and strategies and capacity building in occupational health services in Albania, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and the UN Administered Province of Kosovo.

It was vital to formulate a network policy, strategy and action plan (Programme), but equally important was documentation and making it available for members and visitors. The SEENWH met this requirement by drawing up a document in the founding meeting in December 2006, and particularly in the Bucharest Statement in July 2012 (the Bucharest Statement on Occupational Health in the SEE Subregion, adopted by the IX Meeting of the SEE Network on Workers' Health, Bucharest, Romania on 13–14 July 2012).

The SEENWH has also been able to initiate and support the development of a regional centre for training and education – the South-East European Workplace Academy (SEEWA), a unique organization in the region.

The SEENWH has developed steps towards the next level of networking with the generation of networking of networks through collaborative memoranda of understanding (MOU) with the BSN, the South-East European Health Network, the WHO collaborating centres in occupational health network, and the respective Global Collaborating Centre Network.

1 Introduction

The SEENWH is a network of public health authorities and occupational health institutes from nine countries in the SEE subregion. It is supported by the WHO Regional Office for Europe. All members are recognized WHO collaborating centres for occupational health, WHO national focal points. It brings together experts from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and Turkey.

The total population of the SEENWH network member countries is around 120 million, the labour force 51.3 million, and the total geographical area 1.4 million square kilometres – corresponding to about a quarter of the population, a third of the geographical area, and a fifth of the labour force of the European Union (EU). The GDP per capita varies between USD 3,945 (Albania) and USD 11,593 (Croatia), i.e. between 12 per cent and 36 per cent of the EU average (European Commission, 2015, 2016; World Bank, 2015, 2017).

2 Formal status and constitution

The SEENWH is an inter-institutional and professional network of representatives from the WHO collaborating centres, occupational health institutes, and WHO national focal points from nine SEE countries.

It was established at the First International Workshop on “Strengthening the Health System to Address Occupational Health Risks in South-East Europe” on 18–19 December 2006, in Skopje, FYR Macedonia (WHO and IOH FYROM, 2006). The meeting was co-organized by the FYR Macedonian Institute of Occupational Health, the WHO Collaborating Centre in Skopje, the Occupational Health Programme of the WHO/Europe with the support of the WHO Country Office in FYR Macedonia, the South-East European Health Network (SEEHN), and the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH).

The participants were occupational health institutions and experts from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, and Turkey (the Institute of Occupational Health in Skopje, FYR Macedonia, and the Occupational Health Programme of the WHO/Europe, 2006). The minutes of the meeting are the key constitutional document for the SEENWH. (WHO, 2006; Bilimovska, 2014; Bilimovska, 2015).

3 Mission and policy

The SEENWH is a sustainable framework for strengthening occupational health systems in the SEE subregion. Its purpose as an expert information network is to provide peer-to-peer networking and collaboration of experts, institutions, and respective bodies in OH and OSH, between and within countries in the SEE subregion.

The goal of the SEENWH is to improve workers' health and well-being; to strengthen OH systems, policies, and services; and to build human and institutional capacities in the SEE region through international cooperation.

The policy aims at the implementation of relevant parts of WHO, ILO, and EU policies and programmes, particularly the WHO Global Plan of Action on Workers' Health, the new WHO European policy for health – Health 2020, and UN Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals 2030.

The key principles in the network's collaboration are:

- a) voluntary participation aiming at mutual benefits and the realization of the mission and strategic objectives of the network and of the participants, for the common good of workers' health in the subregion;
- b) peer-to-peer collaboration in continuous interaction in issues of inter-institutional and professional interest;
- c) collaboration on an equal footing;
- d) sharing of information through all channels available to the network members – mainly through the Internet, but also, if appropriate, print and other forms of documentation (e.g. videos);
- e) learning from others, learning together, and training together (SEEWA);
- f) long-term collaboration according to the guideline for the mission and the strategic objectives;
- g) partnership in the implementation of all network activities, and support of peers in their missions and activities when needed, requested, and appropriate; and
- h) trust and solidarity in the spirit of collegiality and friendship.

In July 2012, the SEENWH Network Meeting agreed upon a comprehensive policy document: the Bucharest Statement on Occupational Health in the SEE Subregion, adopted by the Ninth Meeting of the SEE Network on Workers' Health, Bucharest, Romania on 13–14 July 2012. This document defines the consensus among the whole network for the long-term implementation of policies and strategies. The statement includes the following main points:

- a) development and expansion of occupational health service structures, content, and orientation, to provide OSH to workers in the SEE subregion;
- b) development of institutional structures, facilities, financing, and staff, for occupational health services and other support services, and for research, training, information, and advisory services;
- c) development of human resources for occupational health services, and upgrading their competencies;
- d) development of occupational health interventions to underserved and vulnerable groups, for prevention of risks and promotion of health;
- e) development of national systems for occupational health information, and registration of occupational accidents and diseases;
- f) preparation of national asbestos profiles, and development of programmes for the elimination of asbestos-related disease;

- g) development of programmes for occupational health for health workers; and
- h) development of practical projects for research on emerging risks, including the impact of climate change and extreme weather events.

The statement calls for continuous support from the WHO Regional Office for Europe and the governments of SEE countries, and the participation of the health sector at large, as well as the labour sector, education, academia, social partners, and NGOs, for the achievement of these goals.

4 Strategy and programmes

The purpose of the SEENWH is to strengthen the workers' health system and to address occupational health risks. Originally, the basic orientation was to ensure the best possible access to occupational health research and expert information for occupational health experts and institutions in the SEE subregion. The scope has since been expanded, with the further development of the network, to cover research in occupational health; training and education of occupational health experts; networking with other professional and inter-institutional networks; and advising on policy-making and practical programmes for workers' health in the subregion.

The overarching strategic objective is to participate in and provide support for the implementation of the WHO Global Plan of Action on Workers' Health, in the SEE subregion.¹ The objectives of the SEENWH are:

- a) to build up a sustainable framework for strengthening occupational health systems in the SEE subregion;
- b) to provide a forum for the exchange of information and knowledge;
- c) to organize a platform for transmitting and developing good practices;
- d) to offer an institutional basis for developing programmes for training and education of OH and OSH professionals;
- e) to stimulate members to joint bilateral and multilateral research and development projects; and
- f) to enable opportunities for the best possible use of resources available for workers' health.

5 Structure, governance, and coordination

The organizational structure of the SEENWH is light and decentralized. The contacts between individual members depend on their project collaboration, and take place when needed. The network meetings are participated *in corpore*. The working groups (time limited) may be assigned by the network meeting to certain specific tasks, while the SEEWA is considered as a permanent activity.

¹ http://www.who.int/occupational_health/who_workers_health_web.pdf

The highest decision-making body in the SEENWH is the network member countries' representatives' meeting – of senior leaders or officers of the member institutions. The meetings, convening once or twice a year, decide on the main forms of collaboration and the joint projects, as well as on the hosting and timing of future meetings on the basis of rotation. The activities of the network are evaluated at the meetings.

The practical day-to-day management, coordination of activities, individual operations, and logistics are assigned by the coordinator, elected by the network members-countries' representatives. The projects and other practical operations are carried out by individual member institutions or groups of members on the basis of special assignments.

6 Members

The following 10 institutions participate in the SEENWH:

- Occupational Health Unit, Public Health Institute, Tirana, Albania.
- Department of Occupational Health, Medical Faculty, University of Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- The National Center of Public Health and Analyses, WHO Collaborating Centre for Occupational Health, Sofia, Bulgaria.
- Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, WHO Collaborating Centre for Occupational Health, School of Public Health, Andrija Stampar School of Medicine, University of Zagreb, Croatia.
- Institute of Occupational Health of the Republic of Macedonia, WHO Collaborating Centre, Skopje, FYR Macedonia.
- Department of Occupational Health, Medical Faculty of Podgorica, University of Montenegro, Podgorica, Montenegro.
- Occupational Health Office, Directorate of Public Health B., Ministry of Health, Bucharest, Romania.
- Serbian Institute of Occupational Health and Radiological Protection, Dr D. Karajović, Belgrade.
- University of Belgrade Faculty of Medicine, School of Public Health, Department of Occupational Health, Belgrade, Serbia.
- Institute of Research and Development of Occupational Health and Safety (ISGUM) Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Ankara, Turkey

Three network members are EU members, and the remaining six are in various stages in the application for EU membership, accession, or preparation and transposition of the EU *Aquis Communautaire* and its directives on OSH.² The member institutions' profiles are presented in Annex 1.

² European Commission, European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations. Current status of enlargement – https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/countries/check-current-status_en

7 Financing

No permanent special financing from national or external sources is available, although project- or event-specific support from the WHO/Europe Biennial Collaboration Agreements (BCA) funding has been available. The national institutions contribute in kind, and occasionally the organization of the network meetings is supported by national sources. It has been a strategy to locate the network meetings in connection with international or regional conferences, and thus economize the logistics and organization.

The lack of regular basic financing constitutes the most important obstacle for longer-term planning and implementation of SEENWH activities.

8 Functions and outcomes

SEENWH aims at providing a sustainable framework for strengthening occupational health systems in the SEE subregion. As a result of continuous joint work in the field, SEENWH has proposed recommendations for concrete actions including: prioritizing workers' health at the policy-making level; developing the legislative framework providing for sustainable financing; establishment or strengthening of national OH institutes; supporting capacity-building and human resources; promoting a public health approach to OH; implementing the basic occupational health services (BOHS) concept for vulnerable groups; improving relevant information systems; and stimulating both national and international partnerships in the field of occupational health.

The network supports the practical implementation of the WHO and ILO conventions and recommendations, as well as the implementation of the principles of the EU directives on OSH. The network offers a forum for regional collaboration for OH experts in the south-eastern part of a more integrated Europe.

Network meetings

Once or twice a year, these meetings discuss and agree on guidelines and directions for improving the structure and content of international and national information, also from the technical point of view.

Through organizing annual meetings, and supporting and participating in different projects, including the SEEWA programme for the training and education of OH professionals, the SEENWH is recognized as an essential body for enhancing partnerships and regional collaboration. The SEENWH most recent plenary meeting, the 10th Anniversary Meeting in 2016, was held in Belgrade, Serbia.

Newsletter

The SEENWH does not publish a newsletter but information about its activities are uploaded to the websites of the members' institutions.

9 Projects

SEENWH carries out several practical research, development, training, and education projects (see below). The projects are implemented as special assignments by the network meeting, as collaboration between the SEENWH members, and with other organizations such as the partner networks like the BSN, SEEHN; international organizations (WHO, ILO and EU); and NGOs such as ICOH.

Examples of SEENWH projects:

- New models for the organization and provision of occupational health services, focusing on BOHS and the WHO Collaborating Centres Work Plan 2009–2012. Leading institution: Institute of Occupational Health, WHO Collaborating Centre, Skopje, FYR Macedonia.
- Development of National Profiles and Strategies for Workers' Health in South-East European Countries (http://www.imt.mk/seen_en.htm). Situation analysis and recommendations for occupational health systems in South-East Europe (<http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-do/health-topics/environmental-health/occupational-health/activities>).
- Occupational health capacity building supported by an Internet-based platform. WHO Collaborating Centres Work Plan 2009–2012 and 2015–17. A part of the activities of the WHO global network of collaborating centres for occupational health. Leading institution: Coronel Institute, WHO Collaborating Centre, University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
- Towards the elimination of asbestos-related diseases in South-East Europe, 2012–17. Development of a National Profile and Programme for the Elimination of Asbestos-Related Diseases, WHO GPA, the WHO European Center for Environment and Health.
- The SEENWH has been instrumental in the formulation and implementation of the BCA and OH and OSH activities between the ministries of health and the WHO/Europe in Albania, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Turkey.
- The SEEWA programme for training and education of occupational health professionals (see below).

South-East European Workplace Academy of the SEENWH

A special joint activity within the framework of the SEENWH is SEEWA, a joint activity of the SEENWH members, started in July 2011, for training and education of occupational health experts for the SEE subregion and beyond. The academy is hosted by the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, WHO Collaborating Centre, School of Public Health, Andrija Stampar School of Medicine, of the Medical Faculty of the University of Zagreb, Croatia. SEEWA is a unique exercise for effecting the use of training resources, facilitating learning from peers, using international trainer resources as support to the regional and national ones, and for harmonizing the training content.

SEEWA educational events so far, are listed as the following:

- Healthy workplaces for health workers, Andrija Stampar School of Public Health, Medical Faculty, Zagreb, July 2011.
- Asbestos and asbestos-related diseases (ARDs), the Dragomir Karajovic Serbian Institute of Occupational Health, Belgrade, Serbia, June 2013.
- Meeting of the chairs for occupational medicine, medical faculties from the SEE countries, Institute of Occupational Health, Medical Faculty, Skopje, FYR Macedonia, November 2012.
- Participation in a PhD programme, postgraduate course for PhD students: “Aerosols, Fumes, and Dusts in the Aluminium Industry”, Medical Faculty, University of Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2014.

10 Outputs

Since its establishment, the SEENWH has conducted regular and continuous activities. The following are the most important events since December 2006:

- First SEENWH Meeting, Skopje, FYR Macedonia, December 2006. “Strengthening the Health System to Address Occupational Health Risks in South-East Europe” (http://www.imt.mk/seen_en.htm).
- Second SEENWH Meeting, Dubrovnik, Croatia, November 2007. Turkey joined, and FYR Macedonia, was elected as a coordinator country.
- SEE Symposium: “Global Plan of Action on Health Care Workers’ Health in South-East Europe”, Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina, May 2008
- Third SEENWH Meeting, Groznjan, Croatia, June 2008. “Workers’ Health Protection: Strengthening the Occupational Health System”.
- Fourth SEENWH Meeting, Skopje, FYR Macedonia, November 2008, “Vulnerable workers” (http://www.imt.mk/seen_en.htm).
- Fifth SEENWH Meeting, Podgorica, Montenegro, December 2009. “National Strategy on Occupational Health”. Fifth SEE Network Meeting on Workers’ Health on “National Profiles and Strategies for Workers’ Health in South-East European Countries” (http://www.imt.mk/seen_en.htm).
- Situation analysis and recommendations for occupational health systems in South-East Europe (<http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-do/health-topics/environmental-health/occupational-health/activities>).
- Sixth SEENWH Meeting, “Strengthening of the Occupational Health Information System Based on Evidence-Based Indicators”, Groznjan, Croatia, June 2010.
- Seventh SEENWH Meeting, Tirana, Albania, September 2010. A plenary session was dedicated to the network during the Third International Congress on Rural Health in the Mediterranean and Balkan Countries.

- Eighth SEENWH Meeting, “Basic occupational health services for vulnerable groups in SEE countries – SEE Network’s Endeavours for Workers’ Health”, within the XIX World Congress on Safety and Health at Work, Istanbul, Turkey, 11 September 2010.
- Ninth SEENWH Meeting, “Strategy for implementation of the Global Plan of Action on Workers’ Health 2008–2017 in SEE countries”. Bucharest, Romania, 13-14 July 2012.
- Second South-East Europe Workplace Academy – SEEWA 2013, “Towards the elimination of asbestos-related diseases in SEE”, Belgrade, Serbia, 19–20 June 2013.
- SEE Network Working Meeting within the SEEWA, “SEENWH Work Plan of Actions”, Belgrade, Serbia, 20 June 2013.
- SEENWH round table, “Universal health coverage of workers with OHS challenges and opportunities. Where is the SEE region in this process?” VII International Conference on Occupational Health and Safety, Istanbul, Turkey, 4 May 2014.
- 10th SEENWH Meeting, “Implementation of the Global Plan of Action on Workers’ Health 2008–2017, Achievements and Challenges”, Back to back to the joint meeting of WHO, Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC), and SEE Health Network, “Towards improved environments and health in South-East Europe. “Reviewing progress in the elimination of asbestos-related diseases”, Belgrade, Serbia, 9 April 2015.
- South-East European Network on Workers’ Health Meeting. Satellite meeting to the Sixth Croatian Congress on Occupational Health, “Essentials for workers’ health protection”, Sibenik, Croatia, 2 October 2015.
- 11th SEENWH Meeting and WHO National Workshop, “Occupational health and safety for vulnerable and ageing workers: challenges and actions”, with international participation, Sofia, Bulgaria, 26 April 2016.
- 12th SEENWH Meeting and WHO National Workshop: Promotion of the Draft of the National Programme for the Elimination of ARDs, and reviewing progress in the elimination of asbestos-related diseases in SEE, Skopje, FYR Macedonia, 12 October 2016 (http://zdravje2020.mk/index_en.php?page=vest16).
- Joint Meeting of the Association of General Practice and Family Medicine of South-East Europe (AGP/FM-SEE) and SEENWH, 13th SEENWH Meeting “Workers’ health and primary health care – links and common actions, country and SEE perspectives”, Budva, Montenegro, 26 May 2017.

International activities

The SEENWH has actively participated in, and contributed to, international collaboration, particularly conferences and meetings:

- Fifth European WHO Collaborating Centres’ Network Meeting, Buxton, United Kingdom, March 2007. The SEE network presented situational analysis of occupational health in SEE (www.euro.who.int/document/OCH/5th_mtg_buxton.pdf).
- Regional Meeting of the SEE Stability Pack (SP) Initiative for Social Cohesion (ISC): “Strengthening social dialogue for improving OSH in SEE” – (WHO/ILO project), SEE countries OSH profiles. Budapest, June 2007.

- NDPHS Conference. The SEE network presented WHO-ILO OSH profiles in SEE countries. Vilnius, November 2007.
- First European meeting of the WHO national focal points on workers' health, "Implementation of the WHO Global Plan of Action on Workers' Health in the European Region", Helsinki, Finland, September 2008 (<http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-do/health-topics/environmental-health/occupational-health/activities>).
- Second European meeting of the WHO national focal points on workers' health, "Policy instruments on workers' health", Struga, FYR Macedonia, September 2009. Special session on assessment and recommendations for occupational health systems in South-East Europe" (http://www.imt.mk/seen_en.htm; <http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-do/health-topics/environmental-health/occupational-health/activities>).
- Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, "Social inequalities in occupational health (side event)", Parma, Italy, March 2010.
- Launching the European Network for Workers' Health: Joint Meeting of WHO Collaborating Centres and National Focal Points, Bonn, SEE Network on Workers' Health, Germany, 6–8 December 2010.
- SEE Network on Workers' Health – opportunities and perspectives, OSH Forum 2011, Helsinki, Finland, 20–22 June 2011.
- Developments in the SEE Network on Workers' Health, Special Session 108 – Current Challenges in Occupational Health and Safety in Europe, 30th International Congress on Occupational Health, Cancun, Mexico, 18–23 March 2012.
- Meeting of WHO/Europe Collaborating Centres for Occupational Health, SEE Network on Workers' Health – Success, challenges, and gaps, Dortmund, Germany, 21–23 October 2013.
- The Sixth Croatian Congress on Occupational Health, "Essentials for workers' health protection", SEE Network on Workers' Health – one of the essentials in occupational health collaboration in the region, Plenary session, Sibenik, Croatia, 2 October 2015.

11 Collaborative partners

The WHO/Europe established the European Network of Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health at the end of the 1990s. The network attracts all the key occupational health institutions to collaborate in practice with the WHO and provide their outputs for others through the network, as well as supporting the national activities through the collaborating centres. The WHO collaborating centres are institutions such as research institutes, parts of universities, or academic bodies, which are designated by the WHO to carry out activities in support of the organization's programmes.

WHO European Centre for Environment and Health, Bonn, Germany

(<http://www.euro.who.int/en/about-us/organization/office-locations/who-european-centre-for-environment-and-health-eceh,-bonn,-germany>)

The SEENWH is recognized as a partner of the WHO Regional Office for Europe. The SEE Network is an international network of WHO collaborating centres for occupational health, and WHO

national focal points in South-East Europe that collaborate with the WHO/Europe on occupational health issues. The WHO European Centre for Environment and Health (ECEH) is the focal point for the WHO/Europe activities in occupational health. The Bonn centre was instrumental in the establishment of the SEENWH and has continuously supported the network activities in different ways, notably through technical and financial support.

South-Eastern Europe Health Network

(<http://seehn.org/>)

The South-Eastern Europe Health Network (SEEHN) is a political and institutional forum set up by the governments of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, and FYR Macedonia to promote peace, reconciliation, and health in the region. In 2011, Israel became the 10th member of the network. WHO/Europe lends technical support to SEEHN's various health projects, after having supplied its secretariat, along with the Council of Europe, from 2001 to 2009.

On 1 January 2010, SEEHN took over ownership of the regional cooperation for health and development under the auspices of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) and the SEE Regional Cooperation Process. The RCC's main purpose is to provide leadership, sustain ownership by the member countries, and maintain the concerted health development action launched with the Dubrovnik Pledge (2001), and maintained through the Skopje Pledge (2005), and the Memorandum of Understanding (2008). The SEENWH signed an MOU on collaboration with the (SEEHN) in November 2014.

Baltic Sea Network

(<http://www.balticseaosh.net/>)

The BSN agreed on collaboration with the SEENWH by signing an MOU in July 2015. The Baltic Sea Network (BSN) network is a voluntary collaborative organization of northern European OH-OSH institutions and experts from ten countries around the Baltic Sea: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, north-western Russia, and Sweden. Like SEENWH, it has a decentralized architecture between fully autonomous national focal points located in the key OSH or OH institutions in each country.

European Agency on Health and Safety at Work

(<https://osha.europa.eu/en/about-eu-osha/what-we-do/mission-and-vision>)

The European Agency on Health and Safety at Work (EU-OSHA) works to make European workplaces safer, healthier, and more productive – for the benefit of businesses, employees, and governments. It promotes a culture of risk prevention to improve working conditions. The EU-OSHA gathers and provides reliable and relevant information, analysis, and tools, to advance knowledge, raise awareness, and exchange OSH information and good practice. The vision is to be a recognized leader, promoting healthy and safe workplaces in Europe based on tripartism,

participation, and the development of an OSH risk prevention culture, to ensure a smart, sustainable, productive and inclusive economy. The EU-OSHA is the European Union information agency for OSH. Its work contributes to the European Commission's Occupational Safety and Health Strategic Framework 2014–2020 and other EU strategies and programmes, such as Europe 2020.

ILO HQ and ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe, Budapest

(www.ilo.org)

(<http://www.ilo.org/budapest/about-us/lang--en/index.htm>)

The ILO is devoted to promoting social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights, pursuing its founding mission that social justice is essential to universal and lasting peace. The ILO is the only tripartite UN agency, and brings together governments and employers' and workers' representatives of 187 Member States, to set labour standards, develop policies, and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men. Today, the ILO's Decent Work agenda helps advance the economic and working conditions that give all workers, employers, and governments a stake in lasting peace, prosperity, and progress. The ILO has four strategic objectives at the heart of the Decent Work agenda:

- a) to set and promote standards and fundamental principles and rights at work;
- b) to create greater opportunities for women and men for decent employment and income;
- c) to enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all; and
- d) to strengthen tripartism and social dialogue.

The ILO Decent Work Technical Support Team and Country Office for Central and Eastern Europe (DWT/CO) provides advisory services, capacity development, and technical assistance to governments and to employers' and workers' organizations in areas related to the mandate of expertise of the ILO, including rights at work, employment creation, social protection, social dialogue, and gender equality. The SEENWH and its member organizations maintain relations with ILO HQ and DWT/CO-Budapest, notably through ILO National Coordinators posted in the region.

Other (national) partners

The SEENWH countries' focal points have close working contacts with several national bodies, including:

- a) the Ministry of Health in each country;
- b) the Ministry of Labour in each country;
- c) universities and medical faculties in each country; and
- d) national associations or societies for occupational medicine or occupational health.

Publications and relevant documents

- Report of the First WHO International Workshop, “Strengthening Health Systems to Address Occupational Health Risks in South-East Europe”, Skopje, R. Macedonia, 18–19 December 2006. The SEE network was established at the WHO International Workshop, organized by the Institute of Occupational Health of FYR Macedonia, with the support of WHO/Europe, in December 2006, in Skopje.
- Implementing the Global Plan of Action on Workers' Health in the WHO European Region.
- Report of the national workshop on occupational health services for vulnerable workers, and the Fourth SEENWH Meeting, Institute of Occupational Health, WHO Collaborating Centre, Skopje, FYR Macedonia, 24–25 November 2008.
- National profiles and priorities in occupational health systems development in the European region. Report of the Second Meeting of the Network of WHO Focal Points on Workers' Health, Struga, FYR Macedonia, 28–29 September 2009.
- Situation analysis and recommendations for occupational health systems in South-East Europe, Report of the Fifth SEENWH Meeting, Podgorica, Republic of Montenegro, 1 December 2009.
- Report on Mission SEE Area 23.6-4.7.2009, Professor Jorma Rantanen.
- National survey on identifying vulnerable workers, and the availability of occupational health services in FYR Macedonia. Karadzinska-Bislimovska J, Minov J, Risteska-Kuc S, Stoleski S, Mijakoski D, Todorov S, Basarovska V, Kisman-Hristovska M. *Med Lav.* 2010 Jul–Aug; 101(4): 262–75.
- Interim second report on social determinants of health and the health divide in the WHO European Region, WHO Euro, 2 August 2011, EUR/RC61/Inf.Doc./5.
- The Bucharest Statement on Occupational Health in the SEE Subregion, Ninth SEENWH Meeting, “Strategy for implementation of the Global Plan of Action on Workers' Health 2008–2017 in SEE countries, Bucharest, Romania, 13–14 July 2012.
- South-East European Network on Workers' Health – one of the essentials in occupational health's collaboration in the region. Jovanka Bislimovska, Barents Newsletter 3/15. Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, 2015.
- The Belgrade Statement on the elimination of asbestos-related diseases in SEE was promoted at the 10th Jubilee Meeting of SEENWH, “Towards an improved environment and health in South-east Europe, reviewing progress in the elimination of asbestos-related diseases”, held in April 2015, Belgrade, back to back to the meeting organized jointly by the WHO Regional Office for Europe, the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC), and the SEE Health Network. The Belgrade Statement was delivered at the WHO MTR Meeting in Haifa, Israel, at the end of April 2015.
- Report of the National workshop on Asbestos-Related Diseases on 12 October 2016 at the Medical Faculty of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, FYR Macedonia. The workshop was organized alongside the 12th SEENWH Meeting and the Second National Congress on Occupational Health, 12 October 2016.
- Road map on priority actions for the health and safety of vulnerable workforces in South-East Europe (vulnerable workers, underserved workers, and high-risk sectors). This document outlines planned activities of the SEENWH, and guidance for the joint work of SEENWH's members for the period 2016–18, to ensure timely and effective

implementation of the Bucharest Statement focused on the priority – vulnerable workers, underserved populations, and high-risk sectors in South-East Europe. The road map identifies key objectives and priority actions, defining the roles of different cooperation and action channels for SEENWH members to follow up on priorities at international and national levels. Prepared by Professor Jadranka Mustajbegovic and Professor Jovanka Bislimovska, 2016.

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ANNEX SEENWH member institutions

Albania

National Institute of Public Health, Tirana, Albania

(www.ishp.gov.al)

(<http://www.ianphi.org/membercountries/memberinformation/albania.html>)

Dr Arben Luzati, MD PhD, arbenluzati@gmail.com

Dr Hajdar Luka, MD, hluca_6@yahoo.it

The National Institute of Public Health (NIPH), under the Ministry of Health, is the key institute for occupational health. Albania does not have a specialist institute of occupational health, but the Department of Occupational and Environmental Health of the NIPH provides services and supports research and the development of occupational health services.

The NIPH profile covers general public health activities plus occupational and environmental health. The ministry is responsible for health protection, particularly the prevention and control of infectious diseases, and the national vaccination programme, environmental health, and the monitoring of drinking water and air quality. It works mainly through the district public health services. Monitoring of food quality is a responsibility shared by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health. The Department for Health Education and Promotion coordinates health promotion activities, covering:

- a) policy analysis;
- b) health care surveys – health facility or community based;
- c) access to hospitals and primary health care;
- d) transition (demographic and social) of the country's health system;
- e) monitoring of child and adolescent health;
- f) occupational health; and
- g) population surveys, including epidemiology and biostatistics.

In part, the State Sanitary Inspection (SSI) carries out the functions of an institute of occupational health.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Department of Occupational Medicine, Medical Faculty of University Tuzla & Department of Occupational Pathology and Toxicology, Primary Health Care Centre, Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina

(<http://medf.untz.ba/web/bs/>)

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<https://fmm.ba/tf-untz-ba>

The only B&H developed Department of Occupational Medicine at Medical Faculty of University Tuzla was introduced in 1997 in curriculum of graduate study of Medical Faculty University of Tuzla, which organizes, implements, and promotes undergraduate and graduate university studies in medicine, nursing and safety at work, as well as postgraduate studies. Department of Occupational Medicine is a teaching and scientific student oriented education department and important part of postgraduate doctoral study program "Scientific approach to Public Health". The Department school carries out research and professional work, and professional and scientific training of employees in science, health, and other institutions. The mission of the Department of Occupational Medicine is to develop experts, methods, and standards in the field of public health, with the aim of raising the level of health in the working population by means of scientific research and professional activity, graduate and postgraduate training, and continuous education programmes. The Department of Occupational Pathology and Toxicology (DOPT) is a teaching and clinical department of occupational medicine, whose main tasks are counselling work in making clinical decisions in the field of occupational pathology and toxicology, and implementing preventative health activities in workplaces. The DOPT's work includes: risk assessments and specific diagnostics; data collection of preventative measures in the workplace; general prevention measures; physical and mental rehabilitation measures; measures for professional rehabilitation; workplace adjustment; prevention measures for absenteeism and presenteeism (working while sick); opportunities to return to work; and preservation of work ability and performance at work. In its tasks, the DOPT uses: scientific methods; methods for detecting new hazards and hazards at work; methods for risk assessment and outcomes; methods for risk detection at work; methods for pharmaco-vigilance at work; salutogenic methods; methods for the promotion of workers' health; screening; prognostic methods; methods for mediation, teaching, counselling, and education; and statistical methods for social research. Through the curriculum of the Department of Occupational Medicine of the Medical Faculty, the DOPT offers teaching to undergraduate and postgraduate students. The DOPT is the only body in Bosnia and Herzegovina that carries out complex scientific, teaching, and clinical tasks.

The DOPT attempts to identify new risks and dangers in the workplace, and detect early symptoms and signs of illness and trauma in workers, posed by risk at work – all with the aim of preserving the health and work ability of workers, the success and performance of healthy work organizations, and, indirectly, to reduce material costs and damage.

The Department of Occupational Medicine at Medical Faculty of University Tuzla is active in international collaboration with the SEENWH, WHO in field of workers health and numerous professional organisations such as JRC EU, COST-EU, EASOM, and UEMS.

Bulgaria

The National Center of Public Health and Analyses, WHO Collaborating Center for Occupational Health, Sofia, Bulgaria

(<http://ncpha.government.bg/index.php?lang=en>)

Associate Professor Katya Vangelova, PhD

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The National Center of Public Health and Analyses (NCPHA) is a body within the national health care system, and carries out activities to protect public health, prevent diseases, and provide information for health care management.

In conformity with its main activities of protecting and promoting health, the NCPHA: examines the population's health status and the relationship with environmental and occupational factors and living conditions; conducts epidemiological surveys and evaluates risk factors for chronic non-communicable diseases; participates in the development, coordination, and performance of national programmes and action plans, and in international research programmes oriented to strengthen public health (including mental, reproductive, and sexual health); carries out intervention activities; holds training workshops; publishes information and methodical materials; assesses exposure and health risks from the impact of biological, chemical, and physical hazards in the ambient and working environments; conducts monitoring on nutrition and the nutritional status of the population; and develops manuals for nutrition in target population groups.

The NCPHA leads, controls, monitors, and coordinates information activities in healthcare, and develops and unifies medical and statistical documentation for population health status reports and for the resources and activities of hospitals. The mission of the NCPHA is to integrate these diverse activities into achieving good health benefits for the population.

The NCPHA is a WHO collaborating centre for occupational health, with the terms of reference available at: http://apps.who.int/whocc/Detail.aspx?cc_ref=BUL-16&cc_code=bul:.

The NCPHA also carries out advisory and information services:

<http://www.ilo.org/safework/countries/europe/bulgaria/lang--en/index.htm>.

The NCPHA is engaged in developing and carrying out several national programmes including the National Programme on Safety and Health at Work, a strategic document following the policy of the EU outlined by the European Commission in the priorities of the Europe 2020 Strategy for Smart, Sustainable, and Inclusive Growth, and the EU Strategic Framework for Health and Safety at Work 2014–2020, defining the priorities of the country and the commitments of state bodies and institutions, employers' and employees' organizations, and NGOs. The main objectives are to improve the implementation of health and safety legislation; to prevent occupational risks, including new and emerging risks; to prevent work-related and occupational diseases; and to draw up the national asbestos profile.

The NCPHA provides training in four medical specialities – occupational medicine, toxicology, nutrition and dietetics, and social medicine; trains PhD students and professionals in different public health topics; provides expertise at the national and international levels in all areas of competence; and publishes two journals – the *Bulgarian Journal of Public Health and Health and Safety at Work* (both available free on the NCPHA website) – as well as guidance and information papers on different topics of public health, including occupational health.

The Department of “Health at Work” coordinates research, training, and national and international collaboration in the field of health and safety at work for the NCPHA.

Recent research has been directed towards the investigation of ergonomic risk factors; visual and musculoskeletal complaints; stress; burnout and health among Bulgarian teachers; health and work ability of the ageing workforces; health and safety and occupational health care for agricultural workers; and testing and assessment of mineral fibers. Current studies include occupational

risk factors for the health and work ability of health care workers; and the effects of overtime and shiftwork, such as sleep deprivation, fatigue, and work-related diseases.

Croatia

Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, WHO Collaborating Centre for Occupational Health, School of Public Health, Andrija Štampar School of Medicine, University of Zagreb, Croatia.

(<http://ncpha.government.bg/index.php?lang=en>)

(<http://mef.unizg.hr/en/about-us/organisation/school-of-public-health-andrija-stampar>)

Professor Jadranka Mustajbegovic MD PhD

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The Andrija Štampar School of Public Health was founded in 1927 and today is a scientific and educational branch of the University of Zagreb School of Medicine (ZSM), which organizes, implements, and promotes undergraduate and graduate university studies in medicine and nursing, as well as postgraduate studies. The school carries out research and professional work, and professional and scientific training of employees in science, health, and other institutions, primarily in the field of public health. The mission of the Andrija Štampar School of Public Health is to develop experts, methods, and standards in the field of public health, with the aim of raising the level of health in the population by means of scientific research and professional activity, graduate and postgraduate training, and continuous education programmes.

The school scientifically and professionally supports the planning, development, and evaluation of public health programmes and policies in the governmental and non governmental sector. International cooperation has been deeply embedded in the outlook of the Andrija Štampar School of Public Health since its founding. For years, the school has organized international programmes in the planning and management of health care in developing countries, and now runs international programmes in education and research in its area of expertise. After the death of its founder, Dr Andrija Štampar, the school took his name. Dr Štampar was one of the founders of the WHO, and an internationally recognized leader in the field of social medicine and public health. His principles, written back in 1926, are still valid and accepted in the international community.

Since 27 April 2009, the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, the Andrija Štampar School of Public Health, the School of Medicine, the University of Zagreb, has been a WHO collaborating centre for occupational health. In 2008 and 2009, WHO/Europe supported Croatia in the preparation of a national action plan to implement the WHO Global Plan of Action on Workers' Health. A national workshop was organized in Sinj in April 2009, with a focus on access to, and the quality of, OHS (objective 3 of the GPA).

In 2015 has been prepared by the Ministry of Health in cooperation with the WHO Collaborating Centre for Occupational Health in the Republic of Croatia, the Ministry competent for labour issues, and organizations responsible for the protection and improvement of occupational health and safety of persons employed in health care in the private and the public sector the National Programme on Occupational Health and Safety for Persons Employed in Health Care for the period 2015 – 2020 (<https://zdravlje.gov.hr/programi-i-projekti/nacionalni-programi-projekti-i-strategije/ostali-programi/nacional-programme-on-occupational-health-and-safety-for-persons-employed-in-health-care-for-the-period-2015-2020/2194>). It was done in line with the ILO and WHO

prepared the Joint Global Framework for National Occupational Health Programmes for Health Workers, in order to assist countries in the drafting of national programmes. The framework for the drafting of national programmes is compliant with the ILO Convention on Occupational Safety and Health (C No. 155), and the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (C No. 187). The WHO European Regional Office has supported the development of occupational health programmes and training, through the biennial collaborative agreement (BCA).

As a contribution to the SEENWH training of occupational health professionals, SEEWA was founded in 2010, and is hosted by the Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, the WHO Collaborating Centre, School of Public Health (SPH), and the Andrija Stampar School. SEEWA has organized sub-regional courses on the prevention of needlestick injuries among health-care workers.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Institute of Occupational Health, WHO Collaborating Centre for Occupational Health, Faculty of Medicine, the University of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, Skopje, FYR Macedonia

([https:// www.imt.mk/](https://www.imt.mk/))

(<http://seehn.org/partnerships-in-health/partners/south-east-european-network-on-workers-health-seenwh/>)

Professor Jovanka Karadzinska Bislimovska, MD, PhD

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The Institute of Occupational Health was founded in 1967 and has a multi-professional profile with a staff of 45. It is the top national organizer of health-related, methodological, educational, and scientific activities, and its main missions are research, education, training, advisory and practical services, and provision of information. It establishes criteria and methodologies, proposes and fulfils preventative and scientific programmes, and initiates and creates legislation and standards in the field of health and the work environment. The Chair for Occupational Medicine, within the Medical Faculty, University "Sts Cyril and Methodius", Skopje is situated in the Institute .

The institute has well-established capacities for research and clinical practice in occupational medicine, and specialist training in occupational medicine and occupational health, and has been instrumental in renewing the national curriculum for specialist training in occupational health according to the EU principles. Interest among the young physicians in residence, training in occupational medicine and occupational health, is very high (currently 21 residents), and there is no shortage of trainees seeking experience in this field.

The institute serves as a national public health institution, and has adopted a unique, integrative approach for the protection and promotion of workers' health, by providing methodological, educative, and scientific activities, and the coordination of private and public OHS work through the Occupational Health Network at the national level.

As a WHO collaborating centre in occupational health since 2003, the Institute has been active in international collaboration within the framework of the WHO global network of collaborating centres in occupational health, as well as in the corresponding European network, and in SEENWH.

The main activities of the institute are:

- a) Production of national profiles, indicators, national policies, strategies, and action plans.
In 2017, the Institute participated in the development of recently adopted National Strategy for Safety and Health at Work 2020 with Action plan 2017-2020.
- b) development and expansion of OH and OSH infrastructure and methods; including public health intervention projects for vulnerable groups of workers (agricultural workers and unemployed) research, provision of information, and interventions in – psychological factors at work; risk assessment; occupational asthma, allergies, and aerobiology; prevention of hazards and protection of workers health; prevention programs for health care workers, child and adolescent workers; and occupational health and climate change;
- c) development of training programmes and modules aimed at increasing knowledge, the exchange of experience, capacity building among researchers and lecturers, the improvement of educational processes and communications, and strengthening contemporary approaches and attitudes in occupational health education; and
- d) communication of research-based information on occupational health, for a wide range of target groups, policy-makers, experts, employers, workers, and the public at large.

The institute is active in international collaboration, working closely with the WHO Regional Office for Europe, the WHO/HQ Workers' Health Programme, the European and global networks of the WHO collaborating centres in occupational health, the SEENWH (which is coordinated by the representative of the Macedonian Institute of Occupational Health), and with numerous professional organizations such as EASOM, UEMS, ASPHER, and GA2LEN.

Montenegro

Department of Occupational Health, Medical Faculty of Podgorica, University of Montenegro, Podgorica, Montenegro

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Associated Professor Ljiljana Cvejanov Kezunovic MD, PhD

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The Department of Occupational Health of the Medical Faculty of Podgorica, University of Montenegro has played a key role in the development of national strategies, programmes, and research projects in occupational health. The department also serves as the key Montenegrin counterpart for international collaboration with the WHO, EU, professional associations, and research and expert communities.

Montenegro is particularly active in training medical experts in occupational health, from basic to postgraduate levels. The aim is to introduce occupational health, not only for OHS doctors, but also for family medicine and other clinical specialities. Montenegro has participated in the implementation of the WHO Global Plan of Action on Workers' Health 2008–2017, and contributed to the implementation of the SEENWH Work Plan of Action (http://hdmr.hlz.hr/6kongres/pdf/6k-prez--Cvejanov--Implementation_of_Global.pdf).

Within the SEENWH, Montenegro has prepared a National Occupational Health and Safety Strategy (2010), with Plan of Action 2010-14, which was adopted by the Montenegrin Ministry of Health and Government. This was also requested by objective 3 of the Bucharest Statement: Development of human resources for occupational health services by making use of and upgrading the competences and capacities of the existing resources, particularly in occupational medicine, and by training the other professional groups for multidisciplinary expertise (Bucharest Statement on Occupational Health in the SEE subregion, adopted by the Ninth Meeting of the SEENWH, Bucharest, Romania 13–14 July 2012).

Romania

Ministry of Health

Public Health Directorate B. / Authority, Ministry of Health, Bucharest, Romania

(<http://www.ms.ro/>)

Dr Liliana Rapas, MD, PhD, *occupational medicine expert* for drawing up technical comments on the documents under discussion at Community level.

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The Ministry of Health is the central administration body in the field of public health. With the Ministry of Labour and Social Justice, it is involved in regulations of the labour framework (insurance, inspection, and workers' rights), and transposes into practice the governmental policies for the health care sector, both within the public health care system and in private medical units.

In the occupational health area, the Ministry of Health is drafting regulations for the medical sector, particularly for the development of health-at-work activities, in line with the EU legislation in force. At the same time, the ministry promotes the education of occupational medicine physicians at academic level, in collaboration with the Ministry of National Education, through occupational medicine clinics hosted by the biggest hospitals in the country.

The Ministry of Health is also elaborating and implementing adequate strategies and programmes through a network of directorates of public health, *in particular the D.P.H. Bucharest, intended for assessment of working conditions for all main national occupation groups* the improvement of health at the workplace, and the reduction and elimination of risk factors that may result in severe occupational diseases and significant costs in terms of human life and financial resources.

The ministry contributed to the production and implementation of the Bucharest Statement on occupational health in the SEE subregion, adopted in 2012 by the Ninth Meeting of the SEE network. The statement calls for continuous collaboration by members on the following topics:

- a) the development of OH and OSH infrastructures;
- b) strengthening institutions' structure and support;
- c) training of occupational medicine doctors and other professionals for a multidisciplinary expertise;
- d) projects for vulnerable groups;
- e) the development of national systems for occupational health information;
- f) preparation of a national asbestos profile;

- g) programmes for occupational health of health care workers; and
- h) practical research on extreme weather events, primary prevention of hazards, and risks of exposure to carcinogens and asbestos.

The National Strategy for Safety and Health at work 2018-2020” enforced in April 2018, brings together all stakeholders (ministries of labor and health, their institutional framework – directorates of public health, labor inspectorates, N.I.P.H., National pension house and social partners) and fulfills a convergence approach of the European Pillar of Social Rights, the strategic European framework for safety and health at work and the National Strategy for health 2014-2020, the ILO conventions, the WHO G.P.A. for workers’ health, the laws and Constitution: it refers to improvements of the laws, small and medium size enterprises, inspections campaigns, good practices, linking aging-risks-diseases, the management of statistical data, new committee for monitoring progress at national level, the new industries, new technologies, new fields – “green workplaces”

The Ministry of Health also coordinates the activity of the Public Health Institute, in charge of monitoring public health at the national level, including workplace-related diseases, and the evidence of occupational diseases. The Public Health Institute acts as a major workplace health promoter, and contributes to occupational health education and the improvement of working conditions in all sectors. The institute is also developing public health regulations, and substantiates to a large extent the national public and occupational health strategies and policies to be drawn up by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labour and Social Justice. The Public Health Institute also develops and coordinates specific health services in the area of public health surveillance and occupational health promotion.

Serbia

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The Serbian Institute of Occupational Health, Dr Dragomir Karajovic, in Belgrade, is the national institute of Serbia. The institute works closely with the Chair of Occupational Health at the School of Medicine, University of Belgrade, and the Chair of the Occupational Health Section of the Serbian Medical Society.

The institute’s activities are:

- a) acting as a reference institution for occupational health services for the working population;
- b) carrying out methodological activities in the field of occupational health;
- c) occupational medical care and the introduction of new methods in diagnostics, therapy, and rehabilitation in the field of occupational diseases and work-related diseases;
- d) ensuring protection from ionizing and non-ionizing radiation for health care workers;

- e) carrying out scientific and research projects; and
- f) providing education and training in occupational health and related fields.

The institute has been internationally active during its whole history. It is a member of the European and global networks of WHO collaborating centres for occupational health, and has the following terms of reference:

- a) implementation of priority objectives of the WHO Global Strategy on Occupational Health for All into the national agenda;
- b) adoption of all relevant national legislation in the fields of OH and OSH, and their harmonization with the legislation of international and intergovernmental organizations (WHO, ILO, EU);
- c) reconstruction and rebuilding of the OH and OSH system to be compatible with the reformed national health care system;
- d) development of education and training courses for graduate and postgraduate students (masters of science, residents, and sub-specialists) in occupational health, work ability assessment, occupational toxicology, occupational epidemiology, clinical toxicology, radiological health, pulmonology, and work physiology, to cover and incorporate new occupational health hazards and problems, and new types of work organization;
- e) scientific research in the various fields of occupational health related to major occupational health problems in the country;
- f) regional collaboration with objectives to obtain capacity building (infrastructure and human resources) to improve environmental and occupational health; and
- g) collaboration with other centres of the network on joint projects and exchange of information and know-how.

The projects for the WHO collaborating centres' network for the period 2010–13 were:

- a) the promotion of changes and updates to occupational health teaching in the basic curriculum in schools of medicine in Europe;
- b) strengthening of the health system to address occupational health risks – and development of a national strategy on occupational health and safety; and
- c) the Sustainable Waste Management Initiative for a Healthier Tomorrow (SWIFT) – a comprehensive, sustainable approach focused on the determinants of social exclusion, poverty, and health in the Roma population in Belgrade, Serbia.

The Institute is a founding member of the SEENWH and the SEEWA.

Turkey

Institute of Research and Development of Occupational Health and Safety Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Ankara, Turkey

(<http://www.isgum.gov.tr/>)

Dr Buhara Onal, MD, PhD in occupational health
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Institute of Research and Development of Occupational Health and Safety (ISGUM)) was founded in March 1969 by Decree No. 6/11568 of the Council of Ministers, following the ratification of the Pre-Implementation Agreement on Special Funds for Occupational Health and Safety, signed in 1968 by the representatives of the Republic of Turkey, the Special Fund Administration for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the ILO, within the scope of the Programme for the Improvement of Working Conditions and Environment (PIACT), aiming to meet OSH requirements in Turkey. In the years following its foundation, several attempts were made to strengthen the capacity of ISGUM through regional laboratories. In addition to the central institution in Ankara, ISGUM has regional laboratories in six provinces: Adana, Bursa, Istanbul, Izmir, Kayseri, and Kocaeli.

ISGUM is affiliated to the Directorate General of OSH under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. It provides technical and laboratory support to workplaces, organizes training for safety and health professionals, and performs tests for the compliance of personal protective equipment to standards. Recently, the institute, following the enactment of a regulation on authorization for occupational hygiene laboratories, has started to authorize private institutions for occupational hygiene measurements, testing, and analysis. The institute conducts studies on research, measurement, analysis, and on-site activities, such as conducting risk assessments and health surveillance of employees, training activities (training of asbestos removal expertise is newly added), consultancy on OSH, and sampling of individual exposure and analysis. Several measurements are carried out, including on gases, dust, thermal comfort conditions, and noise and vibration.

ISGUM has two sets of mobile laboratories; each set consists of three vehicles – one for evaluation of heart and lung functions, the second for the measurement of medical and biological parameters, and the third for physical measurements. Mobile vehicles serve SMEs, in particular, to examine workers in their workplaces (reducing absenteeism), and to carry out measurements in the workplace.

ISGÜM's duties and responsibilities are to:

- a) carry out activities for the prevention of work accidents and occupational diseases, at national and international levels;
- b) ensure the prevention of harm from workplace hazards, or, if not possible, to minimize them to protect workers' health;
- c) carry out measurements, analyses, tests, and risk assessment studies for workplaces;
- d) carry out training programmes;
- e) carry out studies to develop recommendations for legislation, standards, and norms;
- f) develop projects and guides on a sectoral basis;
- g) organize seminars, conferences, and meetings;
- h) produce brochures, posters, and films, to increase the safety culture in the community;
- i) collect data in its area of interest, and develop information for use by relevant institutions;
- j) define strategies, targets, and activities, and follow their implementation; and
- k) carry out other works given by the Directorate General of OSH.

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