

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The Republic of Croatia has recognised the importance of urgent action and call for attention requiring strong leadership and joint political commitment of the SEEHN countries that are currently facing great challenges in the field of organ donation and transplantation, a highly demanding and challenging area of public health.

Ministry of Health of the Republic of Croatia under the Croatian Presidency of the South-eastern Europe Health Network (SEEHN) (January-June 2012) is organizing First Regional Ministerial Conference "*Heart to the Region*" – *Beating Towards Self Sufficiency* to be held in Zagreb on June 4th in conjunction with 29th SEEHN Meeting (June 5th and 6th 2012) with a special emphasis on organ donation and transplantation.

The high-level Conference will be attended by the Ministers of Health, National Focal Points, National Health Coordinators and delegates/representatives of the SEE Health Network Member States and partner countries, European Commission, Council of Europe, World Health Organisation, international organizations and experts in the field of organ donation and transplantation.

The Conference is aiming to engage SEEHN Health Ministers and regional policy makers to provide a political support and strong commitment to further developing and strengthening the implementation of successful organ donation and transplantation programmes based on the WHO Madrid Resolution recommendations, WHO guiding principles, the Istanbul Declaration, quality and safety standards and the EU Action Plan on Organ Donation and Transplantation.

Apart from the Plenary Sessions the Conference will include two panel discussion of the Ministers in order to address the following specific goals:

- Highlight the national responsibility in meeting the organ donation and transplantation needs of the population in SEEHN countries
- Provide evidence to government and policy makers of the strong economic and ethical imperative and benefits of the effective organ transplantation programme
- Promote long term regional cooperation between SEEHN countries and support implementation of successful organisational models and EU safety and quality standards in conjunction with the EU Action Plan.
- Facilitate exchange and dissemination of good practices and experiences that can be essential in supporting SEE countries in advancing development of public health and socio-economic progress in the Region.