

Selected projects

**Official title of the project**

Improving preventive health care services in Serbia

Country

Serbia

Region/ City

Republic of Serbia

Sector

Health

Budget/EC contribution

3.45million euro

Implementation period

2004-2007

Expected results

A healthier population

Coordinator

European Agency for Reconstruction

Beneficiary

The people of Serbia

Partners

Ministry of Health, 25 health centres throughout Serbia, Institutes of Public Health & other Health Institutions.

Contact details:

Mr. John White, Spokesman, European Agency for Reconstruction
Belgrade Centre. + 381 11 302 3400
john.white@ear.europa.eu

Serbia

“Prevention is better than cure” with help from the EU

The old proverb “Prevention is better than cure” applies just as much to Serbia as to other countries, and the European Union has been helping to put it into practice over the past three years, with a €3.45 million project to improve preventive health services. This is part of the €110 million programme over the past 7 years, to support the reform and development of the Serbian health service.

A research study, also funded by the EU and carried out in 2002 into the Burden of Disease in Serbia, showed that 80% of the population die of non-communicable illnesses such as diseases of the heart and blood vessels, diabetes, and cancers of the breast, cervix and bowel.

The overall aim of the project was thus to help prevention and early detection of cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and cancer, at the primary care level of the health system – the health centres present in and run by each municipality, of which 25 were chosen to take part. In each one, a special preventive health care centre was set up as a new and separate department, with staff trained and equipped in the latest methods. Each centre was also given a car to enable staff to reach outlying parts of its catchment area. In addition, state-of-the-art equipment was donated to 10 health centres and 4 hospitals to improve antenatal screening for the early detection of Down’s Syndrome and other genetic abnormalities.

The project also helped to publish guidelines of clinical good preventive practice in five areas - the three disease groups mentioned plus stroke and antenatal care. There was also a special training programme for obstetricians on foetal abnormalities. The most visible part of the programme were two campaigns to raise public awareness of the importance of keeping a close check on one’s health, and developing and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Contact details: john.white@ear.europa.eu Last update: 23.11.2007