



The Republic of Serbia
MINISTRY OF HEALTH
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WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
HEADQUARTERS IN GENEVA

Att.: Ms. Catherine Le Galès – Camus, Assistant Director for Noncommunicable
Diseases and Mental Health

SUPPORT TO THE GLOBAL STRATEGY ON DIET, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND HEALTH

Recognizing intensive activities and great concern the World Health Organization has already given to the prevention of noncommunicable diseases through reduction of risk factors, we fully support the Global strategy on diet, physical activity and health, which WHO is launching.

In South East European sub-region modern life styles, but also existing economic difficulties affected national diets. Serbia and Montenegro experienced these problems and nowadays we are facing an everyday raising number of overweight and obese, but also high prevalence of malnourished persons and persons suffering some hidden nutritional deficits. Certain vulnerable groups of population are mostly affected, namely infants where prevalence of stunting is up to 5%, and rapid rise in overweight children. Also, some preliminary reports from dietary studies show bad nutritional intake during pregnancy. Old people due to low income have predominantly plain diet intake with excessive use of simple carbohydrates and saturated fats.

Thus, we support the need for introduction of education in healthy nutrition and diet along with popularization of different types of physical activities in order to enhance healthy life styles.

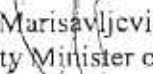
We have to stress out that in our country there is a lack of valuable data on national dietary pattern, as well as on dietary pattern of certain population groups. In order to obtain information relevant scientific studies should be conducted. Based on this evidence national guidelines on nutritional intake and physical activity followed with national strategy and action plan will be formulated. Ministry of Health recognizes the need to incorporate nutritional strategy into national agricultural policy and strategy.

In Serbia number of activities have, already, been taken in order to raise public awareness on risk factors for noncommunicable diseases. They will be continued and facilitated in future.

Reform of the health system in Serbia on the way and prevention of noncommunicable diseases is a milestone in this process. Thus, public health initiatives are strengthened and will increase in number and force in future.

We appreciate all the expertise and assistance WHO will give in this area. Also, we would like to emphasize the importance of regional project on Strengthening Food Safety & Nutrition Services in South East Europe conducted jointly with Stability Pact for SEE. The Project is complementary to activities planned in Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health and could be well incorporated in further activities within Sub-regional project.




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