

The Prague Declaration 2004

of the participants at the Conference of Ministers of Health of new acceding countries: the Republic of Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Malta, the Republic of Poland, the Slovak Republic, the Republic of Slovenia, and Ireland, the Republic of Italy, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Republic of Austria, the Hellenic Republic, and with participation of the Council of Europe and the World Health Organization (Regional Office for Europe) .

We, the Ministers of Health,

Shall promote the collection, evaluation and regular exchange of comparable data on migration of patients seeking cross-border health care, while respecting the structure of health care systems in the above mentioned countries so that appropriate measures are taken in time in cases when the health care system in a given country might be at risk.

Shall contribute to creating a transparent, more effective and more rapid process of reimbursement of costs of health care provided in another member state while respecting the structure of reimbursement of health care systems of the above mentioned countries **through a centre providing information and clearing services.**

Shall strive to create an EU network of Centres of Excellence for health care at European level, according to the criteria to be agreed as recommended in the report of the High Level Process of Reflection, of December 8, 2003.

Shall encourage investment of EU Structural Funds in health, health infrastructure, and skills development in objective one areas.

Shall promote and encourage responsible and healthy lifestyle and healthy living conditions.

Acknowledge the possible impact of a continued negative population growth to the sustainability of health care and social policy schemes.

Shall strive for mutual information exchange, and for timely common resolution of issues – including compensatory rest, arising from the implementation of the European Directive on Working Time in the health sector.

Shall undertake to ensure that every effort is made to integrate health and social care for older persons, consistent with the principles outlined in the Report

of the Social Protection Committee, which was presented to the Spring European Council in 2003.

Shall undertake to enhance the consensus in defining the educational and competency requirements of health care professionals, by supporting the principle of mutual recognition.

Shall undertake, *inter alia*, through the proposed draft Directive on professional qualifications, to enhance cooperation between member states' regulatory bodies, dealing with mobility of health care workers, and to remove any barriers to such mobility in so far as patient safety requirements permit.

Declare the constitution of the European Transplant Network to be the official intergovernmental organisation of our countries, designated for mutual cooperation in the field of transplantations.

Signed in Prague, April 2, 2004.

Republic of Austria

Republic of Cyprus

Czech Republic

Republic of Estonia

Hellenic Republic

Republic of Hungary

Ireland

Republic of Italy

Republic of Latvia

Republic of Lithuania

Republic of Malta

Kingdom of the Netherlands

Republic of Poland

Slovak Republic

Council of Europe

World Health Organization (Regional Office for Europe)