

## Dr. Maria Borissova Ruseva



Dr. Maria Ruseva has obtained her Degree in Medicine at the Medical University of Sofia, Bulgaria (MD) in 1975, a specialty degree in Food Safety and Nutrition and Public Health from the National Institute of Public Health of Bulgaria in 1979. Her other medical specialities are Preventive Medicine and Public Health.

To date, Dr. Maria Ruseva is an international expert in Public Health Services. As such she is serving as a consultant to WHO Regional Office for Europe, a Co-opted member of the South-eastern Europe Health Network Executive Committee (SEEHN Ex Com) and a Founding Member of the non-profit international non-governmental association named the “International Health Partnerships Association” (IHPA) with its seat in Sofia, Bulgaria.

In the period 2010-2012, Dr. Ruseva has lead the work in Europe on developing the European Action Plan on Strengthening Public Health Capacities and Services, successfully endorsed by all European Ministers of Health during their 62<sup>nd</sup> Session in Malta in 2012. Prior to that and after that, she has been involved in providing policy and technical support to various European countries, including Tajikistan, on evaluating their PHS, developing PHS strengthening strategies and reforms, developing PH laws and various other important tasks.

She has worked as a Regional Adviser for Public Health Services (PHS) in the Division of Country Health Policies, Systems and Services in the WHO Regional Office for Europe since 2004 and thereafter since 2010 as the WHO Europe PHS Programme Manger. In this position, as well as in the period 2000-2004 she has been supporting the Stability Pact for South East Europe and the ministries of health of nine South-eastern European Member States (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) to elaborate, implement, monitor and evaluate their public health policies and services at national level as to improve the health system service production function in line with WHO principles.

Since June 1995 until December 2000, Dr Maria Ruseva (Haralanova at that time) has been Project Manager in the Department of Environment and Health in WHO Regional Office for Europe. In this capacity she supported the development and implementation of the National Environment and Health Action Plans in all Central and Eastern European countries and in the Newly Independent States.

Just prior to this phase, since March 1990 until June 1995 Dr Maria Ruseva (previously Haralanova) has been the Director-General of Public Health (and *Deputy-Chief Medical Officer*) at the Ministry of Health of Bulgaria. During this period she not only put forward national plans (such as the one for eradication of polio, prevention and control of iodine-deficiencies, tobacco, the introduction of family planning programme, etc.) but also had to face the challenges of designing the reform and the future public health system of the country. During this period she was the national counter part of Bulgaria for WHO Regional Office for Europe in areas as environment and health, public health, food safety and nutrition.

Previously, she has been the Head of the Food Safety and Nutrition Services (1982-1990) at the Ministry of Health of Bulgaria.