

**ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF IHR IN  
FYRO- MACEDONIA, CHALLENGES AND EXPERIENCE IN  
TESTING THE PREPAREDNESS TO RESPOND OF  
SUSPECTED CASE AT POINT OF ENTRY  
(POE)**

# FYRO - MACEDONIA: COUNTRY PROFILE

- 2.06 million inhabitants
- Area - 25,713 km<sup>2</sup>
- Capital and the largest city – Skopje
- 2 international airports  
(Skopje and Ohrid)
- 5 bordering countries
- 14 border crossings





# ACTIVITIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IHR IN RM

- ▶ WHO provided translation, printing and distribution of the IHR 2005 to health workers and other sectors.
- ▶ In 2009 was established a Multidisciplinary Committee in MOH for the implementation of the IHR 2005.
- ▶ Prepared Action Plan for implementation of the IHR.
- ▶ Designated a National contact point for the IHR. (Director of IPH-Formed a team of 5 people - experts from different areas of IPH in support of a National Contact Point for IHR and institutions.
- ▶ Appointed contact institution for the IHR (IPH).
- ▶ Attendance of meetings and workshops on IHR topics in the country and abroad.

# NATIONAL IHR FOCAL POINT

- ▶ INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC HEALTH OF FYR MACEDONIA (IPH)
  - ▶ EXPERT ADVISORY BODY TO THE DIRECTOR
  - ▶ ACCESSIBLE AT ALL TIME (24H/7)
  - ▶ For urgent communication with WHO IHR Contact point
  - ▶ Dissemination of information to/from relevant sectors

# OTHER INSTITUTION INVOLVED IN IMPLEMENTATION OF IHR

## Main fields of interest

- Public health
- Environment / Chemical safety
- Radiation safety
- Food safety
- Transport
- International points of entry, airports, ground crossings
- Customs
- Emergency preparedness and response

## The relevant national institutions

- Institute of Public Health
- Ministry of Health/Environment
- Agency for Radiation Safety
- Food and veterinary agency
- Ministry of Transport
- Ministry of Interior
- Crisis Management Centre
- Directorate for protection and rescue
- Ministry of defense



# ACTIVITIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IHR IN RM

- ▶ Our country develops, strengthens and continuously maintains basic public health capacities for surveillance and response, using existing national resources. (National preparedness plan for pandemic influenza, Operational plan for dealing with catastrophes and disasters, etc.).
- ▶ List of potential events (hazards) is being prepared.
- ▶ Operational plan for action in case of public health threat of international concern.
  - ▶ SOPs for action during the event.  
Appointment of key operational entities for the field activities:
    - **RAPID RISK RESPONSE TEAM (RRRT)**
    - **RAPID RISK ASSESMENT TEAM (RRAT)** both within the MoH

- RRRT is **composed** of experts from different fields with extensive professional experience and expertise, in their own field

Within an **1 (one) hour** check the accuracy of the information, the size of the event, collect information about the event, take material for microbiological or other diagnostic procedures and inform **RAPID ASSESSMENT TEAM** within the MoH.

- **RAPID RISK ASSESSMENT TEAM – (RRAT)**

- receives statement and information from Rapid Response Team about the size / weight of the event, information gathered from field research, and other essential information.
- prepares a draft decision (information) which will be disseminate to the Minister of Health about the next procedures and actions on the field.

**The Two teams are advisory body of experts to the Minister of Health.**



# OVERVIEW OF IHR IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

## IMPLEMENTATION OF IHR (2005) AND EWARN IN THE COUNTRY

- 2007** – initiated implementation of IHR in the country; Institute of Public Health assigned as IHR focal point
- 2008** – legislative analysis and identification of laws/ regulations relating to the IHR implementation especially in health sector
- 2009** - Committee for implementation of IHR by the Ministry of Health
- 2010** – new Public Health Law was adopted – incorporated provisions concerning IHR, for points of entry
- 2013** – Inter–Ministerial Committee for implementation of IHR within the Ministry of Health
- 2013** – overall legislative and capacity analysis related to implementation of IHR was performed, including all relevant sectors and needs for further interventions
- 2014** – protocols for IHR implementation developed and adopted at national level (biological, ionizing radiation and chemical hazards)

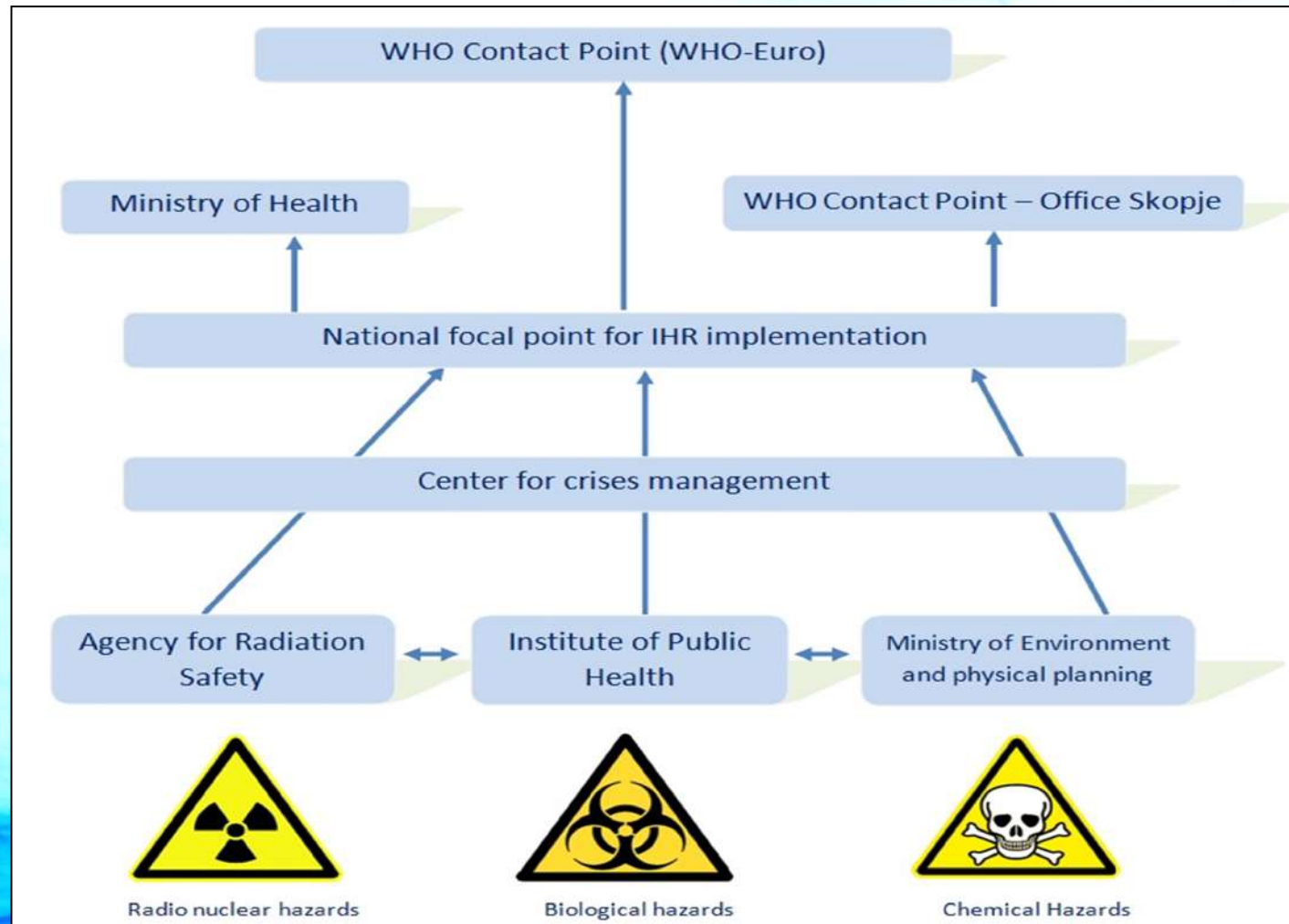


# CORE CAPACITY IMPLEMENTATION

Procedures and communication at point of entry -  
Skopje airport in PHEIC by biological agent

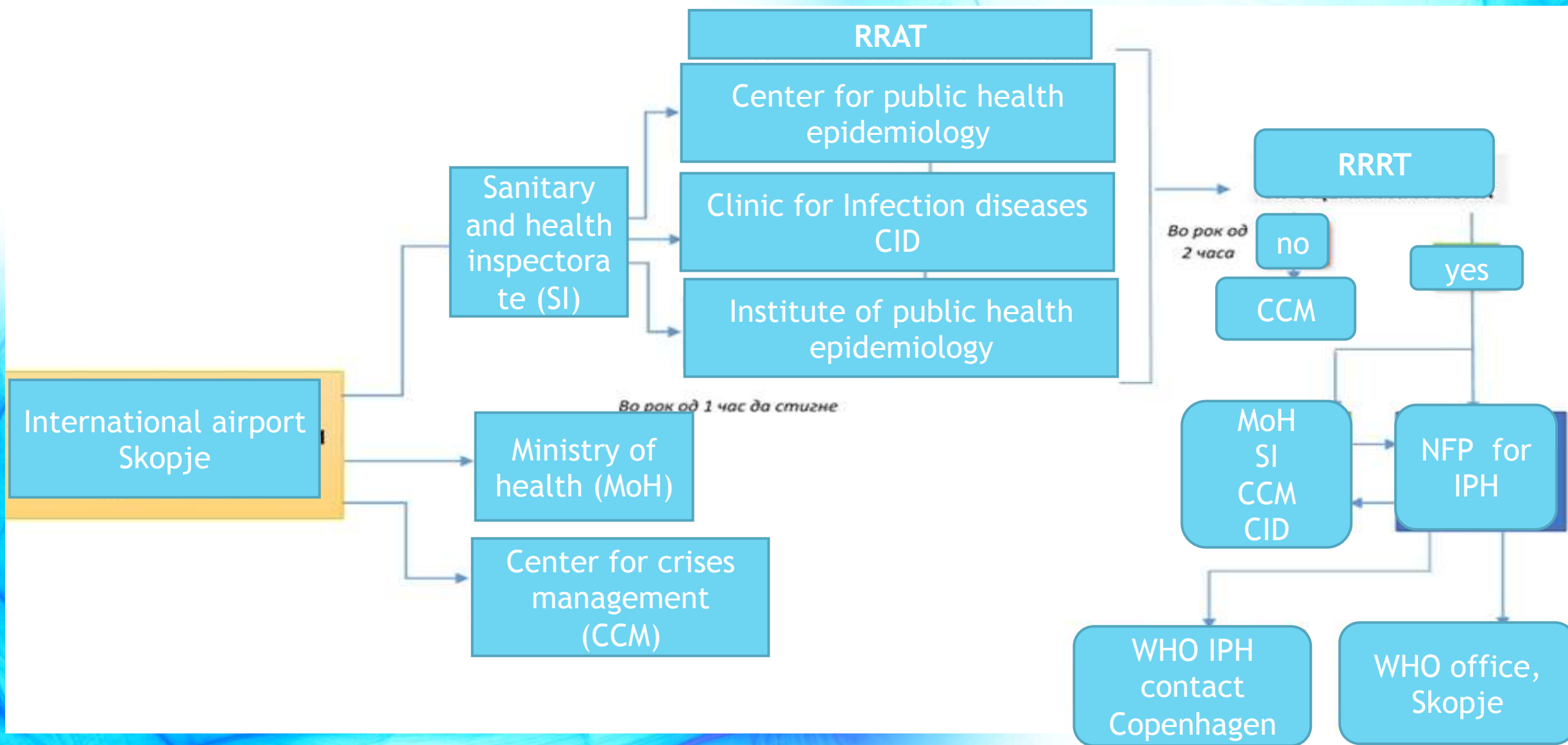


# Administrative structure and notification pathways for events with IHR relevance:





# BIOLOGICAL RISK – POINT OF ENTRY ON THE AIRPORT SKOPJE



# Introducing an Early warning system (ALERT)

- ▶ The early warning system (ALERT) was implemented in the country from 2009:
- ▶ For priority communicable diseases;
- ▶ to complement the routine surveillance system which notifies individual confirmed cases;
- ▶ to improve readiness on local, regional, national and international level;
- ▶ to limit and early response the spread of the diseases and
- ▶ to reduce the health, economic and social damages.



# **ALERT (EWARN) is a system:**

- ▶ for surveillance of communicable diseases,
- ▶ based on the clinical description,
- ▶ has the potential for early warning,
- ▶ The main goal is for epidemics detection and response.

# CHALLENGES WITH IHR IMPLEMENTATION

- ▶ Harmonizing domestic and EU legislations concerning IHR and field implementation
- ▶ Continuous training and education for recognition of the importance of IHR from other sectors
- ▶ Improvement of coordination among various sectors
- ▶ Human and laboratory capacity building for timely detection of hazards
- ▶ Awareness and familiarizing of relevant stakeholders for IHR
- ▶ Simulation exercise - national, international, cross-border



# Simulation exercise at the POe

## Suspected case of Ebola at point of entry

- ▶ On November 18, 2014, at the airport "Alexander the Great", a simulation exercise was held in order to make the first test of standard operating protocols (SOP) regarding the treatment, communication and coordination of the health system on possible occurrence of dangerous infectious diseases - Ebola.
- ▶ The exercise was attended by Ministry of health of the RM and the Director of the WHO Office for Europe - Zsuzsanna Jakab, as well as several ministers from nine neighboring countries, members of the Health Network of South East Europe (EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE HEALTH NETWORK).

# TESTING FOR PREPAREDNESS OF POINT OF ENTRY

- ▶ Test the IHR protocols for the designated point of entry “Skopje Airport”,
- ▶ the simulation exercise was organized on 18 November 2014,
- ▶ the scenario was based on a suspected case of Ebola virus disease.
- ▶ The main objective:
  - ▶ to test the coordinated response in Public Health Event of International Concern (PHIEC) by biological agent;
  - ▶ to implement IHR protocols in real - life situation;
  - ▶ to organize the rapid response teams and rapid assessment teams;
- ▶ To test the new medical supplies personal protective equipment and tools for Health and safety hazards;
- ▶ To check the responsibilities and readiness of all relevant institutions in the country to act in proper early warning situation;
- ▶ To check the knowledge and competence of persons who participated directly in the implementation (reaction) in an emergency.



















































**Количка за транспорт  
на случај на ебола**

