

EUROPEAN MIDWIVES HAVE GATHERED IN CROATIA

The general meeting of the European Midwives Association took place in Zagreb on September 27th and 28th 2013

The Croatian Chamber of Midwives hosted the general meeting of the European Midwives Association (EMA) held this week in Zagreb. Midwives came from 25 European countries to discuss matters relating to their education, research and practice. Time was also spent considering possible solutions to the challenges currently facing the profession. It is the first time that Croatia has hosted the meeting; a fitting event in the year that Croatia joined the EU.

Prim.mr.sc. Marijan Cesarik, Deputy Minister of Health, opened the meeting and, in his address, noted the well-established cooperation between the Ministry and the Croatian Chamber of Midwives. After this meeting, Prim.mr.sc Marijan Cesarik and his associates expect further information and recommendations on the application of best midwifery practice to the Croatian situation.

In her welcome address Barbara Finderle, President of the Croatian Chamber of Midwives, remarked that the absence of a Midwifery School in the University of Zagreb adversely affects the possibility of higher education for midwifery graduates throughout Croatia. “The consequence for our health care system is the departure of midwives to other related professions and a consequent decrease in the number of practicing midwives”, said Mrs. Finderle.

Mervi Jokinen, President of EMA, underlined the importance of open dialogue and the exchange of experiences between EMA delegates. She praised the Croatian Chamber of Midwives for the active role they play in the EMA.

Amongst the topics discussed at the EMA meeting were the inadequate utilization of midwifery personnel, the low level of continuity of midwifery care for women, limited choice for childbearing women and restricted opportunities for midwives to work independently. Midwives throughout Croatia and their European colleagues are actively seeking solutions to these problems. It is worthwhile noting that the implementation of the EU Directive relating to Personal Indemnity Insurance will be a further challenge for European midwives.

***About the European Midwives Association:** the European Midwives Association (EMA) is a non-profit and non-government organisation of midwives (over 100 000) representing midwifery organisations and associations from the member states of the EU, members of the Council of Europe, the European Economic Area and EU applicant countries. The EMA provides a forum for European midwives to meet and discuss issues concerning midwifery and women's health. It promotes minimum standards of midwifery education and practice within the EU and maintains a presence and contribution at venues affecting health policy and midwifery within the EU*

***About the Croatian Chamber of Midwives:** the Croatian Chamber of Midwives has been established in 2009 with a vision of accomplishing independent midwifery in Croatia and the development of the profession in general. The Croatian Chamber of Midwives protects the rights and interests of midwives, promotes the identity and the dignity of the profession, and develops midwifery through the improvement of education and legislation. The strategic goals of the Chamber are: systematic informing, educating, empowering and connecting midwives; strengthening the Chamber as a relevant subject through promoting the Chamber's work and the rights and interests of midwives; encouraging the harmonization and improvement of the legislative environment on midwifery with other Croatian legislation and EU legislation; encouraging the development of a corresponding midwifery education system; strengthening the institutional and financial capacities of the Chamber.*

***About the Croatian Association for promotion of midwifery:** the Croatian Association for Promotion of Midwifery was established with the purpose of protecting and promoting midwifery and parenting. Some of the more important goals of the Association are: advocating the dignity of patients, especially newborns and women, promotion of parenting; intercede for general welfare and the right of choice in a pregnancy, child birth or breast feeding time; promoting, supporting and protecting breast feeding and educating pregnant women, breast feeding mothers and parents; commitment to the possibility of choosing maternal care; care the expertise development of midwives etc.*

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