

sophisticated health equipment that has been purchased is not yet in use, and there is a lack of professional medical staff.

With regard to **tobacco control** national legislation is partly aligned with *acquis*. The enforcement of tobacco control deteriorated over the reporting period and smoking in public areas is not penalised.

On **blood, tissues, cells and organs**, further efforts are needed to achieve alignment with the *acquis* on blood, tissues, cells and organs. Kidney transplants resumed following a period of shortage of organs and funding.

In the field of **serious cross-border health threats including communicable diseases**, the Ministry of Health has accepted the European Commission's Technical Assessment Report on the country's capacities in the area of **communicable diseases**. Further alignment and implementation with EU *acquis* and standards is necessary. Specialist training is needed to guarantee effective prevention and control of communicable diseases. Strengthening the capacity and the infrastructure for qualitative microbiological surveillance is recommended. Proper funding for early detection should be ensured. State funds for HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis were ensured after the Global Fund withdrew from the region. Prescription of antibiotics needs to be more strictly controlled to strengthen the fight against anti-microbial resistance.

With regard to **patients' rights in cross-border healthcare**, national legislation is not aligned with the *acquis*. The **e-health card** is not used, and the e-medical registers are not yet developed. The lack of financial resources seriously hampers the implementation of public health policies. As regards rare diseases, national registries are yet to be established and properly budgeted. Definition of what is considered a rare disease need to be harmonised with international standards. Funding and access to specialised knowledge for the treatment of rare diseases remained limited and non-transparent and left to civil society organisations or families. National legislation on **medicines for human and veterinary use** is partly aligned with the *acquis*. Maximum sale prices criteria for medicines are set by the Health Insurance Fund but the medicines covered by the national health insurance are available to the patients only in the first days of the month. Supplementary measures for proper quality and traceability controls of **medicines for human and veterinary use** subject to parallel trade need to be introduced.

There were several public awareness campaigns on prevention and control of non-communicable diseases. The national **cancer screening** programme activities continued although the inclusiveness of all eligible patients in the target groups should be improved. The national and regional **cancer** registers are not yet established.

Substantial efforts are needed to improve sanitary and human resource conditions in **mental health** facilities.

With regard to **nutrition and physical** activity the prevalence of obesity among 7 year old children increased.

On **drug abuse prevention and harm reduction**, the population aged 17-27 is most at risk. The most used drug is marijuana.

On **health inequalities**, access to healthcare services and funding for investments and staff for treatment of people with severe physical and intellectual disabilities is poor, particularly in the Roma community.

5.27. Chapter 29: Customs union

All Member States are part of the EU customs union and follow the same customs rules and

procedures. This requires legislative alignment, adequate implementing and enforcement capacity, and access to the common computerised customs systems.

The country has maintained a **good level of preparation** on the customs union. **Some progress** was made on administrative and operational capacity.

As not all 2016 recommendations have been implemented, in the coming year the country should:

→ complete and consolidate its IT systems, safeguard their upgrade and maintenance and ensure business continuity.

In the area of **customs legislation**, the degree of alignment with the *acquis* is generally high. The 2017 customs tariff was adopted in line with the latest changes in the EU Combined Nomenclature. The country is a member of the Common Transit Area, applying EU rules on transit movements. The Regional Convention on Pan-Euro-Mediterranean (PEM) preferential rules of origin is applied. Legislation on customs enforcement of intellectual property rights and provisions on risk management, drug precursors, duty relief and cultural goods are broadly aligned with the *acquis*. Several customs provisions of the law on zones for technological and industrial development are still not in line with the *acquis*. The customs administration has continued to charge a small fee for processing customs declarations, which is also not in line with the *acquis*.

Regarding **administrative and operational capacity**, the standards of professional integrity and quality controls continue to be systematically applied. The country applies automated risk management methods and actively participated in inter-agency cooperation. The customs administration participated in the work of the National Coordination Centre for Organised Crime and the National Border Management Coordination Centre.

Cooperation with other customs authorities in the region continued, including through data exchange and in joint operations. The capacity of the customs terminal at the main border crossing with Serbia was increased. The IT strategy is regularly updated, with the current strategy sufficiently addressing relevant challenges in the IT area. The new electronic system for processing customs declarations and excise documents has yet to be completed. The electronic integrated tariff system (Integrated Tariff Environment) continues to be underutilised. The common transit system (New Computerised Transit System, NCTS) runs smoothly and the number of declarations processed in 2017 tripled compared to 2016. However, the maintenance, upgrade and business continuity of all customs IT systems needs to be systematically ensured. Further increasing awareness of the benefits of the common transit system among economic operators and optimising its use are still priorities for the customs administration.

5.28. Chapter 30: External relations

The EU has a common trade and commercial policy towards third countries, based on multilateral and bilateral agreements and autonomous measures. There are also EU rules in the field of humanitarian aid and development policy.

The country is **moderately prepared** in the area of external relations and **some progress** was made during the reporting period. It continued its good cooperation with the EU, including within the World Trade Organisation (WTO), but its institutional capacity to fully participate in the EU commercial, development and humanitarian policies is still insufficient.

In the coming year, the country should in particular:

→ adopt the relevant legislation and strengthening its administrative capacity in the field of