**PRESS RELEASE**

30 January 2025

**Patient Access to Quality Healthcare:**

**A Priority in the Romania-Serbia Cross-Border Area, gets support from the European Union**

With the support of the European Union, the Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases in Timișoara, in partnership with the “Sveti Luka” General Hospital in Smederevo and the “Đorđe Joanović” General Hospital in Zrenjanin, is implementing an ambitious project aimed at improving public health infrastructure in the Romania-Serbia cross-border region. The project focuses on acquiring state-of-the-art medical equipment, transferring knowledge, and ensuring patient access to specialised medical care for the treatment of cardiovascular diseases.

**A Cardiac Transplant Unit in Timișoara**

“*In Timișoara, we are developing a dedicated cardiac transplant unit that will offer a lifeline to patients with severe heart failure. This initiative will open new horizons for patients, providing complex and integrated solutions*,” stated Dr Mihaela Valcovici during the launch conference of the project RORS00008 *“Harmonization of cardiovascular diseases management from prevention to heart transplantation in the cross-border area.”*

**A Strategic Health Project**

With a budget of €5 million, 85% of which is co-financed by the European Union, this cross-border project is part of the Interreg IPA Romania-Serbia Programme. It is one of the programme’s three Strategic Importance Projects (*SIP’s*), with the primary objective of improving the quality of life for citizens in Timiș County (Romania) and the Podunavski and Central Banat Districts (Serbia). The project will modernise medical infrastructure and increase the life expectancy of patients with severe cardiovascular conditions.

„*33.5% of the European Union population lives in border areas. This is why the European Commission welcomes every wise and well-thought-out cooperation investment in the health sector. This project has not only a local, but also a European dimension. It addresses challenges such as an ageing population and the need for the digitalisation of health services, which are faced by the Romanian-Serbian border region and by Europe as a whole,*” stated Mr Sławomir Tokarski, Director for Interreg Programmes at European Commission.

**Concrete Results for the Romania-Serbia Cross-Border Region**

Project investments include cutting-edge medical equipment and specialist training for professionals from the three partner institutions. By doing so, the Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases in Timișoara, alongside its partners in Smederevo and Zrenjanin, will strengthen the resilience of the healthcare system in the border area, ensuring improved medical services for patients.

**Launch Event**

Held in the Festive Hall of the Timiș County Council on 30 January 2025, the launch event brought together medical specialists, representatives of public administrations from Romania and Serbia, and Programme experts. The event reinforced the idea that the European Union remains a vital pillar of the European healthcare system through the policies it promotes.

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The European Union Cohesion Policy Programme Interreg IPA Romania-Serbia 2021-2027 has a budget of 74.5 million euros and is financing three types of projects: projects of strategic importance, large infrastructure projects, as well as projects selected through competitive calls related to environmental protection and climate change adaptation, health and education, tourism and culture, and border management, which are to be implemented in the programme area (Timiș, Caraș-Severin, and Mehedinți in Romania and six districts in the Republic of Serbia: Severnobanatski, Srednjebanatski, Južnobanatski, Braničevski, Borski, Podunavski).

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