



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH AND CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
Public Health and Risk Assessment
Health threats

DRAFT

Workshop on Health Programme projects on Generic Preparedness planning and response in health emergencies

30 September and 01st October 2009

HITEC Building room 02/280

Luxembourg

Starting 30 September at 12:00 and ending 01st October at 13:30

Background

Several projects on health threats topics, such as preparedness planning, information exchange have been financed through the Public Health Programme 2003-2008 and the 2nd Health Programme 2008-2013. The main issue is to establish synergies between projects, share methods and results and orient policies to be developed and implemented at MS and European level. An added value is also the reinforcement of cooperation between Member States at European level through developing collaborations between projects-related experts.

Aim of the workshop

There are two major aims of the workshop. Firstly, project managers of projects related to generic preparedness planning and response with support from the Health Programme will meet and exchange experiences identifying areas of possible cooperation and coordination and knowledge gaps. Secondly, the result of the workshop will be an important input on the identification of Policy needs related to the implementation of the Health Security projects. Participation of members of the Health Security Committee, Sections on Generic Preparedness and CBRN, will ensure dissemination to high EU policy level.

Preliminary programme

30 September 2009 (12.00-18.00)

12.00-13.00 Registration

Chairman: Day 1: Frank Van Loock, Health Threats Unit, DG SANCO

13.00-13.10 Introduction - John F Ryan, Head of unit, Health Threats Unit, DG SANCO

13.10-13.30 **Health threats and the European Commission -**
Per Kulling, Health Threats Unit, DG SANCO

13.30-13.50 **Evaluation, optimisation, trialling and modelling procedures for mass casualty decontamination**, Richard Amlot, Health Protection Agency (HPA)

13.50-14.10 **Alerting System and Development of a Health Surveillance System for the Deliberate Release of Chemicals by Terrorists** - Rob Orford, HPA

14.10-14.30 **MASs-casualties and Health-care following the release of toxic chemicals or radioactive materials**, Åke Sellstrom, European CBRNE Center, Umeå, Sweden

14.30-14.50 **The Public Health Response to Chemical Incident Emergencies-** Raquel Duarte Davidson, HPA

14.50-15.10 **Support health security, preparedness planning and crisis management in EU, EU accession and neighbouring (ENP) countries -**
Dr Gerald Rockenschaub , Disaster Preparedness and Response, WHO Europe

15.10- 15.30 **Summary of session and discussion**, reporter Julio Doncel, Health Threats Unit, DG SANCO

15.30-15.50 **Improve the Preparedness to give Psychological Help in Events of Crisis**, Simona Agger, Evaluation of Investments Group, Italian Ministry of Health.

15.50- 16.10 **Public Health Law to Support Pandemic Influenza Preparedness**
Robyn Martin, University of Hertfordshire

16.10-16.30 **Ethics in our preparedness against an influenza pandemic in Europe today**, Marc Guerrier, Espace Ethique /AP-HP Université Paris 11

16.30-17.10 **Strengthening national pandemic influenza and other epidemic preparedness in Europe - Influenza**, Michala Hegermann-Lindenchrone, Communicable Disease Surveillance and Response, WHO Europe

17.10-17.30 **Modelling the spread of pandemic influenza and strategies for its containment and mitigation**, Andrea Pugliese, University of Trento

17.30-18.00 **Summary of session and discussion**, reporter Albrecht Werner, Health Threats Unit, DG SANCO

01 October 2009 (08.30-13.30)

Chairman: Day 2: Germain Thinus, Health Threats Unit, DG SANCO

- 08.30-08.50 **European Training for Health Professionals on Rapid Response to Health Threats**, Agoritsa Baka, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA)
- 08.50-09.10 **European monitoring of excess mortality for public health action**
Kare Molbak, Statens Serim Institut (SSI)
- 09.10-09.30 **Integrated Decision Support System for HEALTH THREATS and crises management**, Pietro Baroni, Azienda Sanitaria Locale di Brescia
- 09.30-10.10 **European Network for Highly Infectious Diseases**,
Francesco Fusco, INMI, IRCCS "L. Spallanzani
- European Training in Infectious Disease Emergencies,**
European Network of P4 Laboratories,
- 10.10-10.30 **Emergency Data-based System for Information on, Detection and Analysis of Risks and Threats to Health**, Thomas Kraftt or
Alexandra Ziemann, University of Cantabria and GEOMED
- 10.30-10.50 **Summary of session and discussion**, reporter Helmut Walerius Health Threats Unit DG SANCO
- 10.50-11.10 Coffee break
- 11.10-11.30 **Network for communicable disease control in southern Europe and Mediterranean countries**, Maria Grazia Dente, Istituto Superiore di Sanità
- 11.30-11.50 **Response to Emerging infectious disease: Assessment and development of Core capacities and Tools**, Gerard Krause, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit(GTZ) & Robert Koch Institute (RKI)
- 11.50-12.10 **EU Ship Sanitation Training Network**, Christos Hadjichristodoulou, University of Thessaly
- 12.10-12.30 **Establishment of Quality Assurances for Detection of Highly Pathogenic Bacteria of Potential Bioterrorism Risk**, Roland Grunow, RKI
- 12.30-12.50 **Climate Change Adaptation by TRaining, Assessment and Preparedness**
Joris van Loenhout, Public Health Services Gelderland Midden
- 12.50-13.10 **Summary of session and discussion**, reporter Per Kulling, Health Threats Unit, DG SANCO
- 13.10-13.30 **Final remarks: Policy implications of the Health Security projects - they way forward and closure**, Frank Van Loock, Health Threats, Unit DG SANCO

Projects invited

ORCHIDS	Evaluation, optimisation, trialling and modelling procedures for mass casualty decontamination, http://www.orchidsproject.eu
ASHT	Alerting System and Development of a Health Surveillance System for the Deliberate Release of Chemicals by Terrorists - http://www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1220427000012
MASH	MASs-casualties and Health-care following the release of toxic chemicals or radioactive materials - http://www.mashproject.com/
CIE TOOLKIT	The Public Health Response to Chemical Incident Emergencies - http://www.hpa.org.uk/web/HPAweb&HPAwebStandard/HPAweb_C/1217574164393
IPPHEC	Improve the Preparedness to give Psychological Help in Events of Crisis - http://www.ipphec.eu/
PHLawFlu	Public Health Law to Support Pandemic Influenza Preparedness - http://www.ephln.org
Workshop on ethics	Ethics in our preparedness against an influenza pandemics in Europe today - www.espace-ethique.org
WHO Health security	Support health security, preparedness planning and crisis management in EU, EU accession and neighbouring (ENP) countries
WHO epidemic preparedness	Strengthening national pandemic influenza and other epidemic preparedness in Europe
SIDARTHa	European Emergency Data-based System for Information on, Detection and Analysis of Risks and Threats to Health - http://www.sidartha.eu/
ETHREAT	European Training for Health Professionals on Rapid Response to Health Threats - http://euprojects.org/ethreat.info/
HEALTHREATS	Integrated Decision Support System for HEALTH THREATS and crises management - http://www.healththreats.eu/
EURO-MOMO	European monitoring of excess mortality for public health action - http://www.euromomo.eu/
Climate-TRAP	Climate-TRAP – Climate Change Adaptation by TRaining, Assessment and Preparedness, observer
EURONHID	European Network for Highly Infectious Diseases - http://www.eunid.eu
ENP4 Lab	European Network of P4 Laboratories - http://www.euronetp4.eu
EQADeBa	Establishment of Quality Assurances for Detection of Highly Pathogenic Bacteria of Potential Bioterrorism Risk, http://www.rki.de/chn_091/nn_216268/EN/Content/Prevention/EQADeBa/EQADeBa_node.html?__nnn=true
ETIDE	European Training in Infectious Disease Emergencies - http://www.etide.eu
EPISOUTH	Network for communicable disease control in southern Europe and Mediterranean countries - http://www.episouth.org
REACT	REACT - Response to Emerging infectious disease: Assessment and development of Core capacities and Tools - http://www.rki.de/chn_116/nn_203546/EN/Content/Prevention/React/react_node.html?__nnn=true
SHIPSAN TRAINET	EU Ship Sanitation Training Network - www.shipsan.eu/trainet
POLYMOD	Improving Public Health Policy in Europe through Modelling and Economic

	Evaluation of Interventions for the Control of Infectious Diseases, http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/infectious-diseases/emerging-epidemics/projects/142_en.html
FLUMODCONT	Modelling the spread of pandemic influenza and strategies for its containment and mitigation, http://www.flumodcont.eu/index.php/home

List of participants

Invited (costs covered)

1 person/project etc 20

Invited (no costs covered)

ECDC

DG ENV

DG INFSO

DG JLS

FRONTEX

RELEX

DG RTD

JRC

DG ENTR

AIDCO

C 3

Albrecht Werner

Julio C Doncel

Marcin Wisniewski

Paolo Guglielmetti

Franz Karcher

Per Kulling

Frank Van Loock

Germain Thinus

EAHC

Stefan Schreck

Jurkita Kaminskaite

Cinthia Menel Lemos



EpiSouth

Network for Communicable Disease Control
in Southern Europe and Mediterranean Countries

Silvia Declich

Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS) Rome, Italy
(Italian National Institute of Health)

*Workshop on Health Programme projects on Generic Preparedness planning
and response in health emergencies, DGSanco/EAHC
Luxembourg - 30 September and 1 October 2009*





Network for Communicable Disease Control in Southern Europe and Mediterranean Countries

The Mediterranean

The countries of the Mediterranean region have common sea borders in the remarkable ecosystem of the Mediterranean Sea, and, as a result, they share common public health problems and threats



EpiSouth Project Objective

Episouth Network aims at creating a framework of collaboration on epidemiological issues in order to improve communicable diseases surveillance, communication and training across the countries in the area of Mediterranean and Balkans





Project history

- ④ In occasion of the Year of the Mediterranean (2005), 6 European Public Health Institutes agreed to elaborate a framework of collaboration
- ④ In October 2006 the EpiSouth Project started with 9 European countries with a Grant Agreement with DG-Sanco
- ④ In March 2007 countries from S.Europe, Balkans, N. Africa and Middle East, together with WHO and EC met in Rome to elaborate a new partnership, thanks also to EC TAIEX support
- ④ In June 2007 the Italian MOH made funds available for non-EU countries participation

Areas of activities (WPs)

- ④ The project is composed by 8 Work Packages (WPs)
- ④ Each WP is led by a PH Institution
- ④ and developed by a WP Steering Team, constituted by the WP Leader and those countries which have expressed their special interest for the related WP to facilitate participation



Project organisation

• Country Focal Points (CFP)

Each country has identified and appointed 1 or 2 relevant persons, who act as CFPs of the Episouth Network and convey all the communication/information to the relevant officers in their respective countries

• Project Steering Committee (SC)

The project is led by a SC, composed by the WP leaders plus representatives of ECDC, EC-DGSanco, WHO-Euro, WHO-Emro, WHO-HQ and of non-UE countries as observers





Main project achievements:

Enlargement

from a European Project to a
Mediterranean Project

in line with the EU's external actions of Neighbourhood
Policy and the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

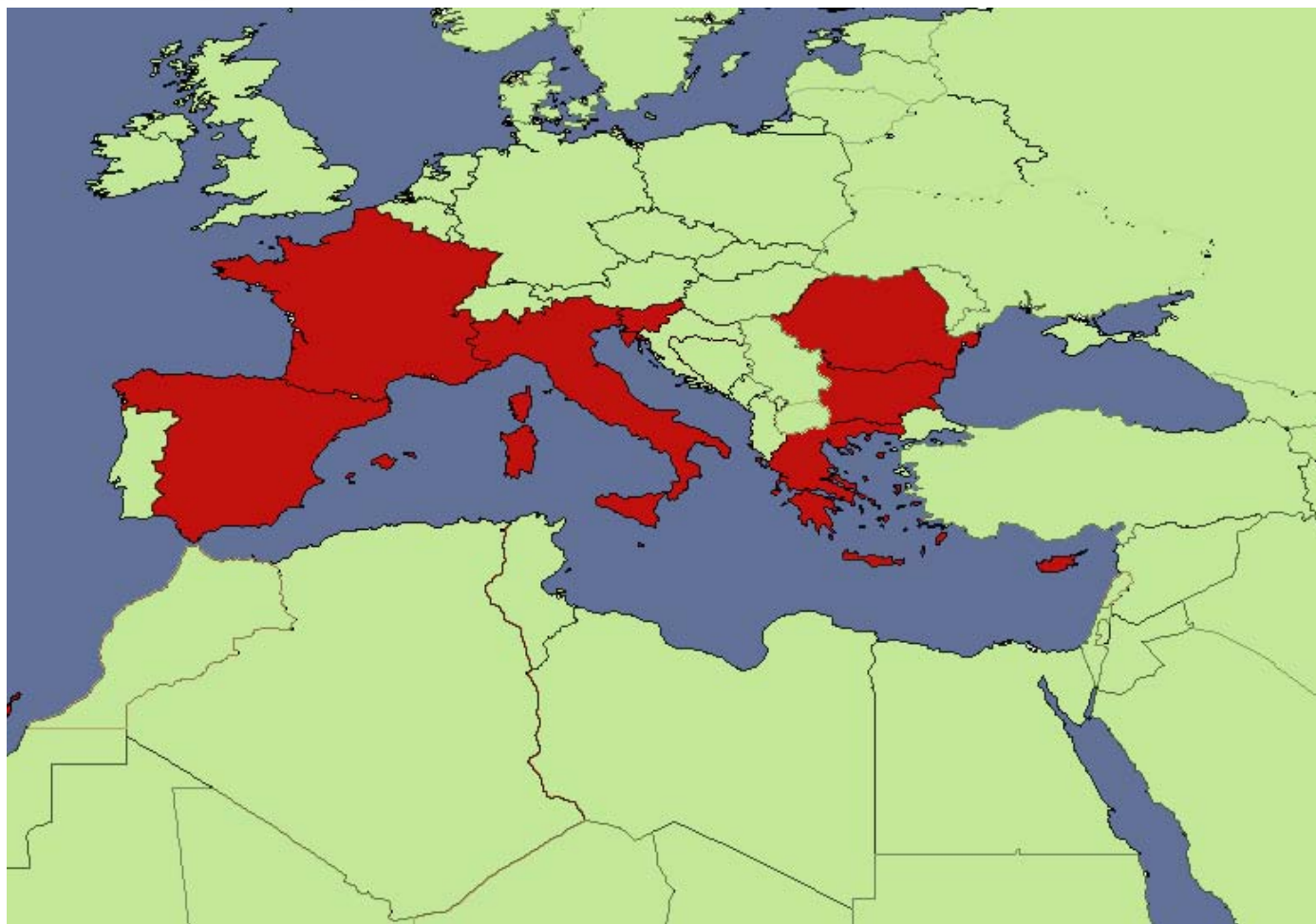


Participant Countries and Organisations

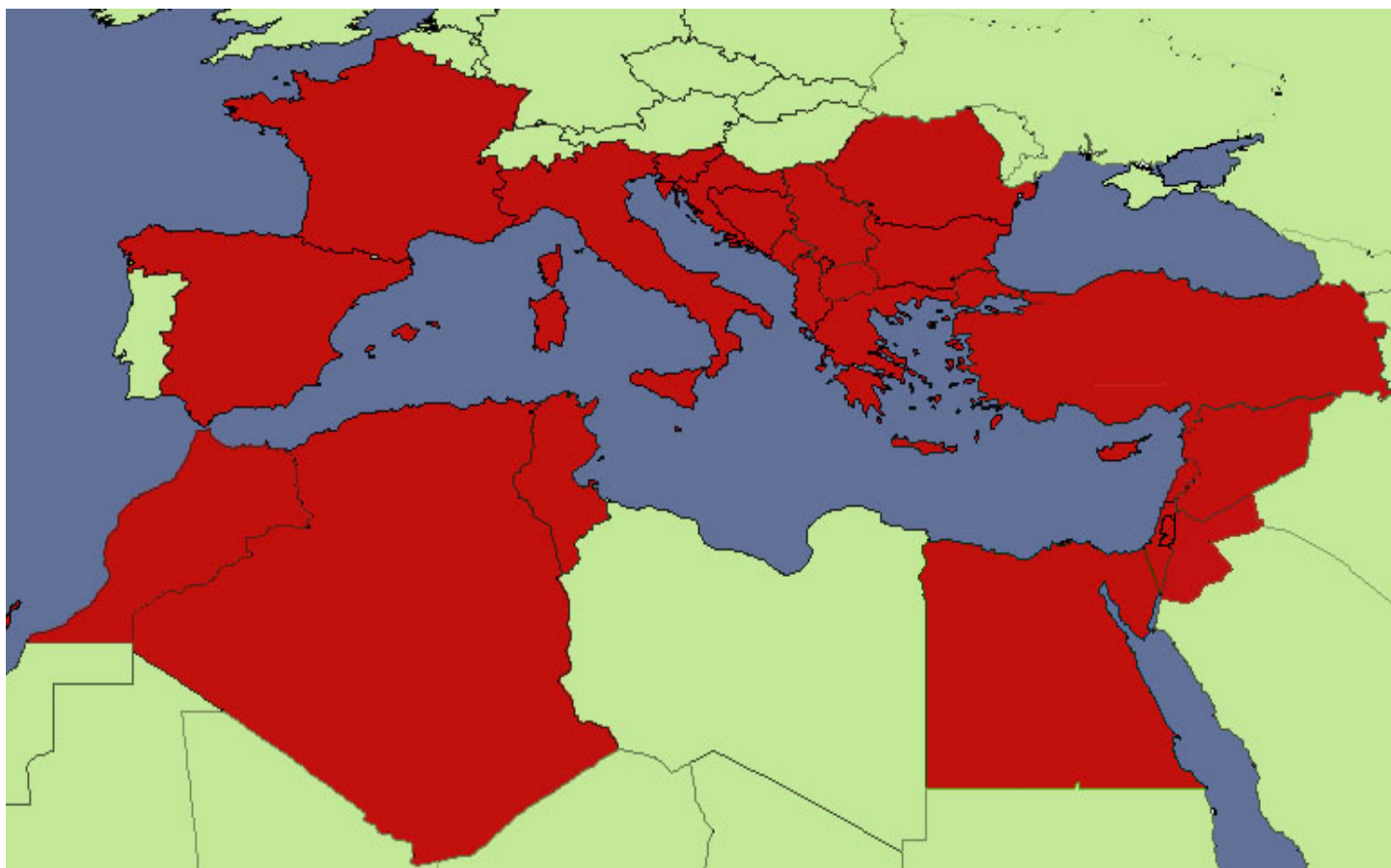
As per September 2009, the EpiSouth Network is composed by:

- 26 Countries with 65 Focal Points (MOH/PH Institute)
- and 4 Collaborating Institutions (ECDC, EC-DGSanco, WHO and Italian MOH)





 EU Countries at the Project starting (Oct 2006)



 Countries as per September 2009

Main project achievements: Networking I

- Project Meetings → [on website](#)
- Project Steering Committee Meetings
- WP Steering Team Meetings & teleconferences
- Directory of participating Public Health Institution → [on website](#)



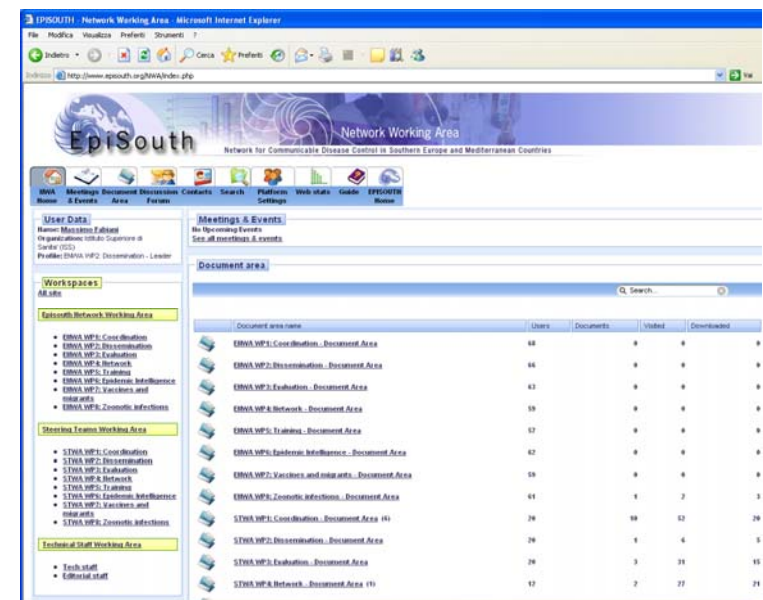
Main project achievements: **Networking II**



A web-based **Network Working Area: a virtualised work environment** where Network participants exchange documents and information in a secure way.

A controlled-access **suite of tools:**

- Meetings and events management
- Document workflow and storage
- Forum for open discussion
- List of contacts
- Data-entry



Document area name	Users	Documents	Visited	Downloaded
ERNSA WP1: Coordination - Document Area	48	9	9	9
ERNSA WP1: Dissemination - Document Area	44	9	9	9
ERNSA WP1: Evaluation - Document Area	43	9	9	9
ERNSA WP1: Network - Document Area	39	9	9	9
ERNSA WP1: Training - Document Area	37	9	9	9
ERNSA WP1: Vaccines and epidemiology - Document Area	42	9	9	9
ERNSA WP1: Zoonotic infections - Document Area	39	9	9	9
STNSA WP1: Coordination - Document Area (1)	24	10	12	24
STNSA WP1: Dissemination - Document Area	24	1	4	5
STNSA WP1: Evaluation - Document Area	24	3	11	15
STNSA WP1: Network - Document Area (1)	17	7	27	21



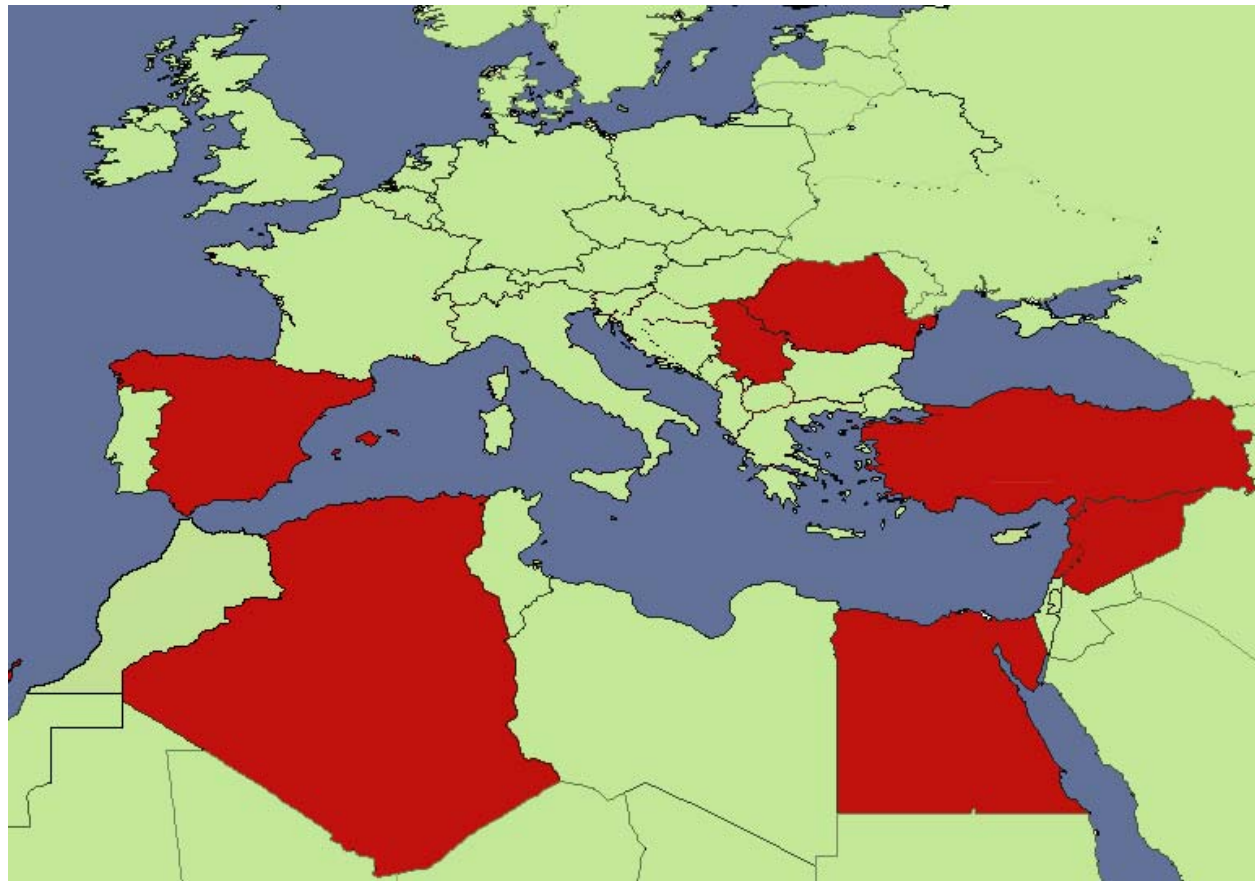
Network for Communicable Disease Control in Southern Europe and Mediterranean Countries

Main project achievements: Training in field epidemiology



- Training needs assessment for all countries (with ad hoc questionnaire) → [Report 6/2008](#)
- First training module (36 participants plus guests)
Madrid, 10-14 September 2007 → [on website](#)
- Second training module (33 participants plus guests)
Madrid, 2-6 June 2008 → [on website](#)
- Third training module (33 participants plus guests)
Madrid, 15-19 2009
- Directory of training courses and fellowships (in progress)






Steering Team WP5
(8 Countries)

- ✓ Spain
- ✓ Romania
- ✓ Serbia
- ✓ Algeria
- ✓ Lebanon
- ✓ Turkey
- ✓ Egypt
- ✓ Syria

Main project achievements: Cross-border Epidemic Intelligence

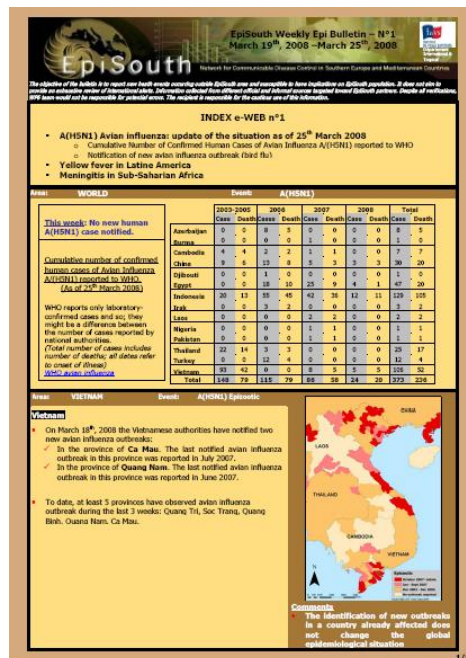


- Pilot assessment of existing epidemic intelligence activities in participating countries (with ad hoc questionnaire)

→ [Report 5/2008](#)

- Epidemic Intelligence weekly bulletins and thematic notes → [on website](#)

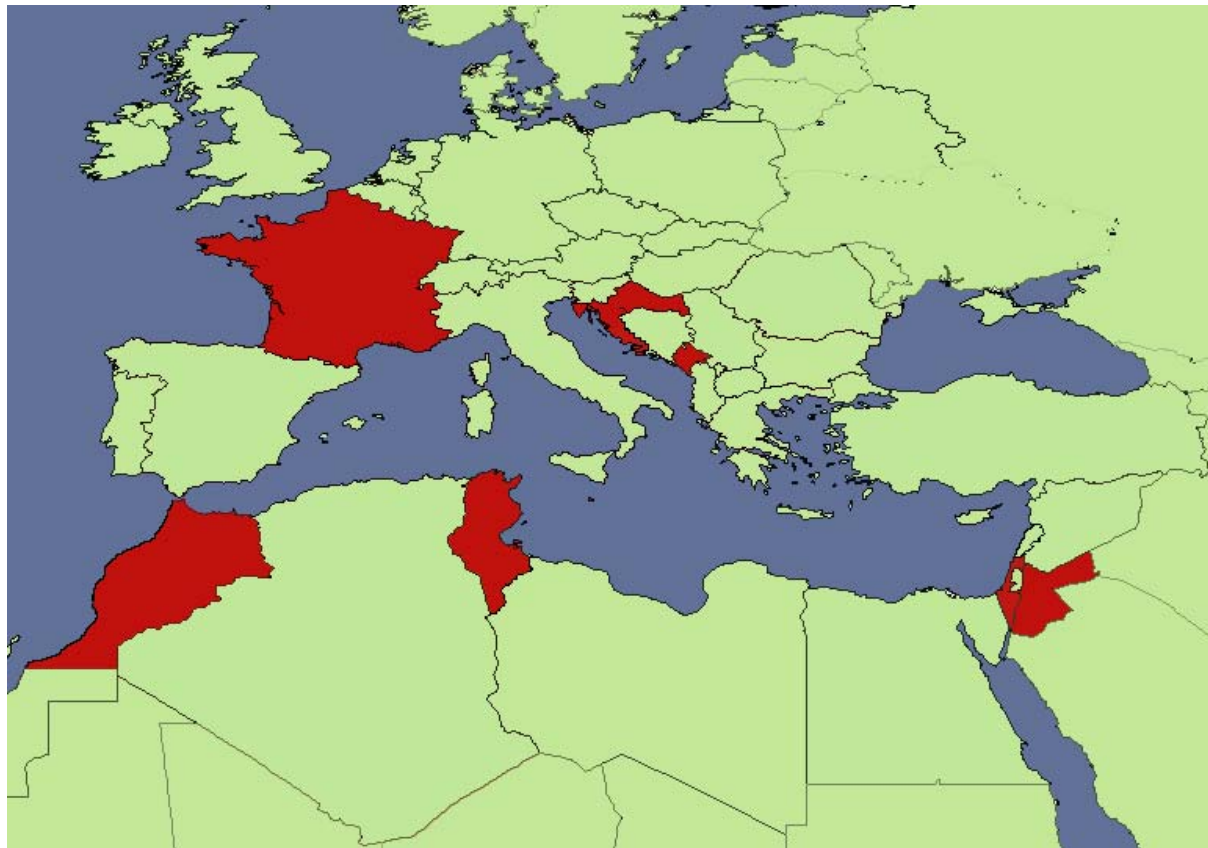
- Website secured section on cross-border epidemic intelligence with alerts originating from partners (in progress)





EpiSouth

Network for Communicable Disease Control in Southern Europe and Mediterranean Countries



Steering Team WP 6
(8 Countries)

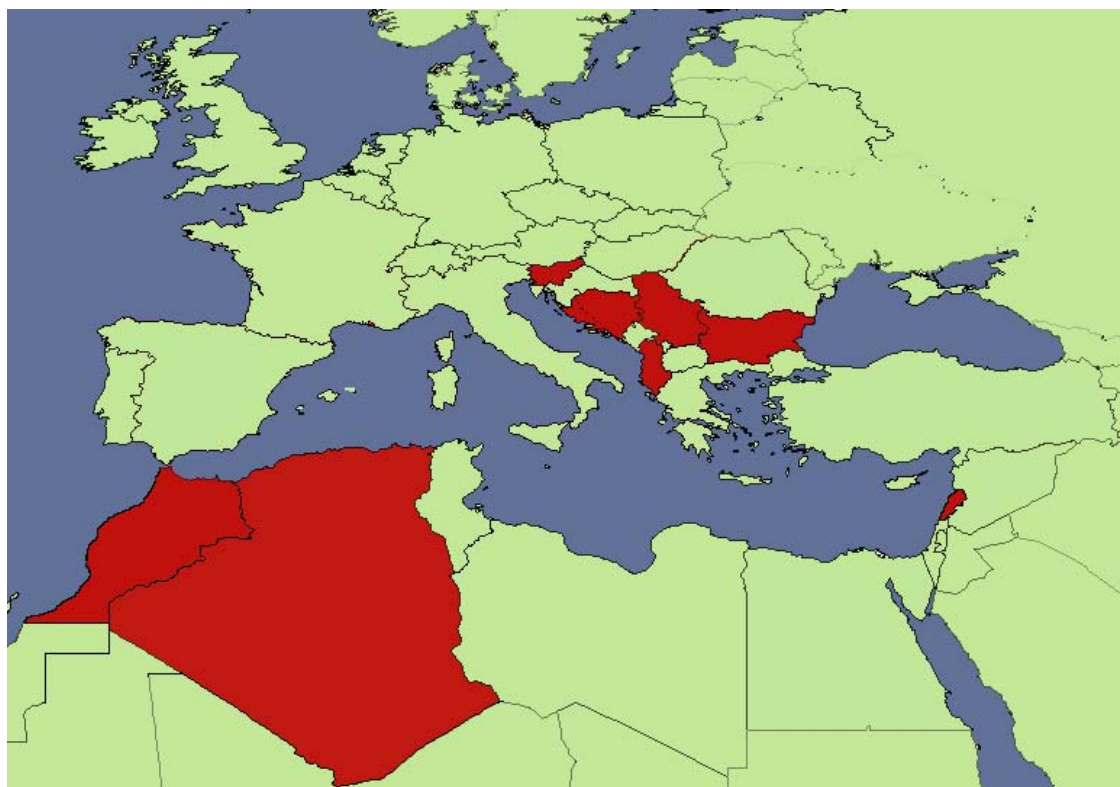
- ✓ France
- ✓ Malta
- ✓ Croatia
- ✓ Morocco
- ✓ Tunisia
- ✓ Israel
- ✓ Jordan
- ✓ Montenegro

Main project achievements:
Vaccine preventable diseases
and migrant populations



- Pilot assessment of vaccine-preventable diseases and migrant populations in participating countries (with ad hoc questionnaire)
- On-line survey on countries migration status profile and vaccination access of mobile population






Steering Team WP7
(8 Countries)

- ✓ Bulgaria
- ✓ Slovenia
- ✓ Albania
- ✓ B&H
- ✓ Serbia
- ✓ Morocco
- ✓ Lebanon
- ✓ _Algeria

Main project achievements:



Cross-border emerging zoonoses

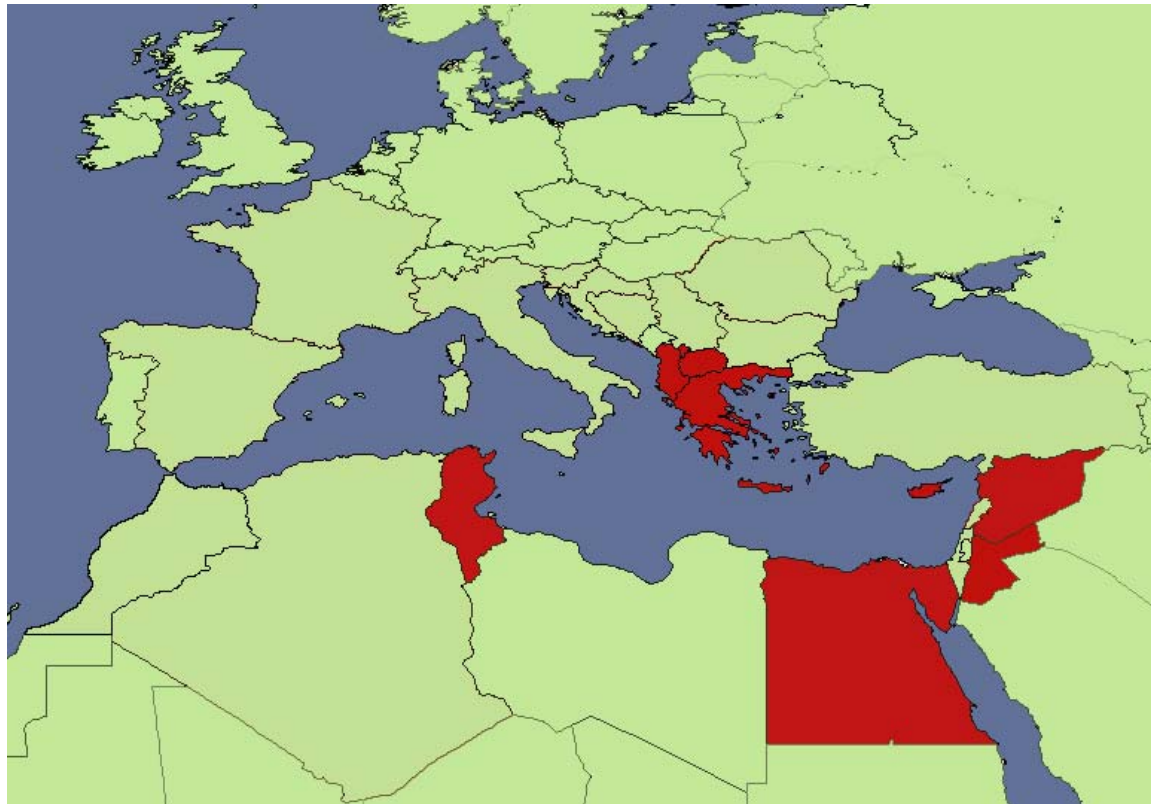
- Assessment and selection of five zoonoses of priority in the Episouth countries (with ad hoc questionnaire) → [Report 4/2008](#)
- Situation report by country regarding: Brucellosis, Campylobacteriosis, Leishmaniasis, Rabies and West Nile Virus
- On-line questionnaire for contacts of countries Human and Veterinary PH officials
- Directory of Human and Veterinary PH officials (in progress)





EpiSouth

Network for Communicable Disease Control in Southern Europe and Mediterranean Countries



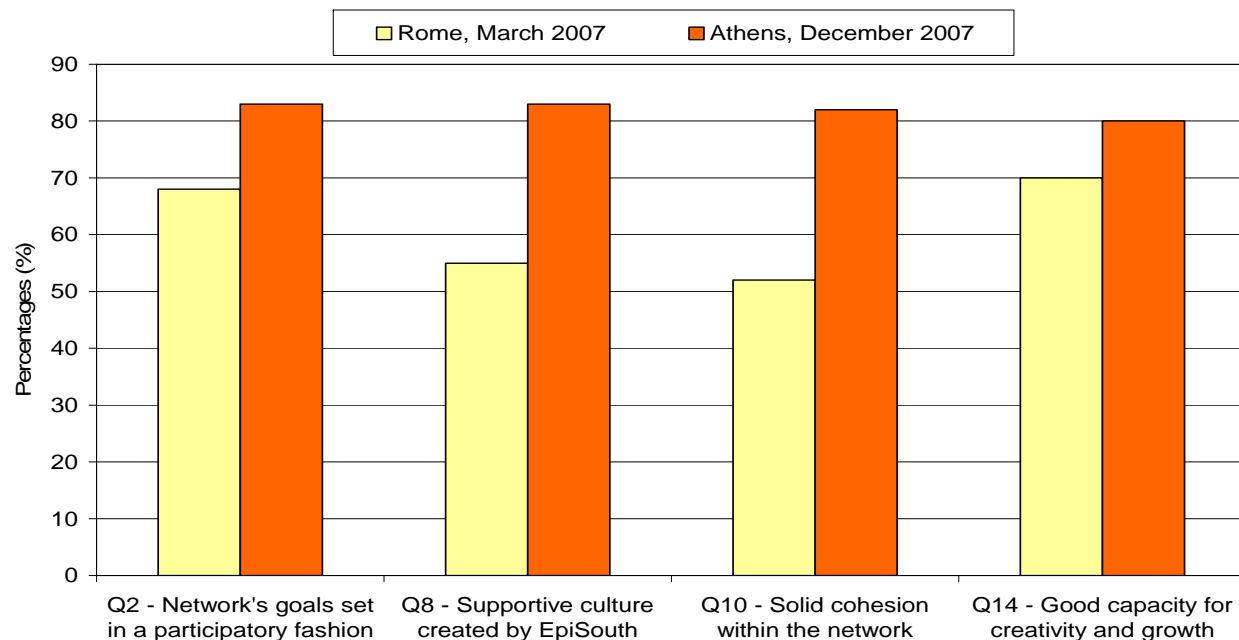
Steering Team WP8

(9 Countries)

- ✓ Greece
- ✓ Cyprus
- ✓ Albania
- ✓ FYROM
- ✓ Kosovo
- ✓ Tunisia
- ✓ Jordan
- ✓ Egypt
- ✓ Syria

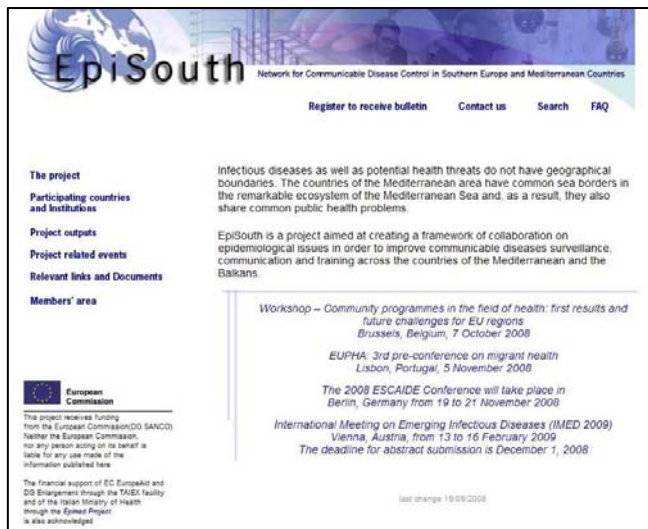
Main project achievements: Monitoring

- Monitoring of Network Development through questionnaires distributed during the 1st and 2nd Project Meetings → [Report 3/2008](#)



Main project achievements: *Dissemination I*

- EpiSouth Web Site www.episouth.org
- EpiSouth Quarterly Bulletins mailed to registered users → [on website](#)



EpiSouth Network for Communicable Disease Control in Southern Europe and Mediterranean Countries

Register to receive bulletin Contact us Search FAQ

The project
Participating countries and Institutions
Project outputs
Project related events
Relevant links and Documents
Members' area

Infectious diseases as well as potential health threats do not have geographical boundaries. The countries of the Mediterranean area have common sea borders in the remarkable ecosystem of the Mediterranean Sea and, as a result, they also share common public health problems.

EpiSouth is a project aimed at creating a framework of collaboration on epidemiological issues in order to improve communicable diseases surveillance, communication and training across the countries of the Mediterranean and the Balkans.

Workshop – Community programmes in the field of health: first results and future challenges for EU regions
 Brussels, Belgium, 7 October 2008

EUPHA 3rd pre-conference on migrant health
 Lisbon, Portugal, 5 November 2008

The 2008 ESCAIDE Conference will take place in Berlin, Germany from 19 to 21 November 2008

International Meeting on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IMED 2009)
 Vienna, Austria, from 13 to 16 February 2009
 The deadline for abstract submission is December 1, 2008

last change 19/09/2008

European Commission
 This project receives funding from the European Commission (DG SANCO) under the European Commission, neither the European Commission, nor any person acting on its behalf is liable for any use made of the information published here.
 The financial support of EC, European and DG Enlargement through the TAIRX facility and of the Italian Ministry of Health through the EpiMed Project is also acknowledged.



EpiSouth Electronic Bulletin
 Issue 1 – January 2008

EpiSouth Documents
 This document is the first issue of the EpiSouth Electronic Bulletin, published on 28th October 2007.

EpiSouth Events
 The 2nd EpiSouth Meeting for Health Professionals (EpiMed) will be held in Rome, Italy.

In this issue:
 EpiSouth Activities: The project is introduced in 8 week packages.
 The EpiSouth Network: The EpiSouth Network after one year of activities.
 Project Update: Conclusions from the Conference "Health and Migration in the EU" better health for all in an inclusive society (October, Portugal, 20-24 September 2007).
 EpiSouth Newsletters: How can the EU EpiSouth Training Module and journal complement the ESCAIDE conference?
 EpiSouth Events: 2nd EpiSouth Meeting for Health Professionals.

EpiSouth Activities
 The project "EpiSouth" is aimed at creating a framework of collaboration on epidemiological issues in order to improve communicable diseases surveillance, communication and training across Mediterranean countries. The Project is articulated in 8 week packages (WP).

1. WP1: Co-ordination of the project
2. WP2: Dissemination of the project
3. WP3: Evaluation of the project
4. WP4: Network of public health institutions
5. WP5: Training in field level surveillance
6. WP6: Cross border epidemic intelligence
7. WP7: Vaccine preventable diseases and related surveillance
8. WP8: Epidemiological and surveillance in cross border emergency responses.

The EpiSouth Network
 Starting as an EU project, EpiSouth managed to gather in Mediterranean countries from all kind of epidemiologists, Public Health, Health Services, Primary, General, and Paediatric, Emergency care providers from international organisations and EU member states, Switzerland, and Southern Africa.

Focus Topic
 The Conference Health and Migration in the EU better health for all in an inclusive society (October, Portugal, 20-24 September 2007) was set to provide the scientific basis and guidelines for important and long overdue theme into the EU health agenda.

last issue

Go back to the previous issue of the bulletin



Main project achievements: *Dissemination II*

- Presentation at Conference and Workshop → on website
- Articles, leaflet and outline → on website

PARTICIPATING PARTNERS

ALBANIA, Tirana (Institute of Public Health);
 ALGERIA, Alger (National Institute of Public Health);
 BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA (Ministry of Civil Affairs, Sarajevo; Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Banja Luka, Republic of Srpska; Public Health Institute, Mostar, Federation of BiH);
 BULGARIA, Sofia (National Center of Infectious and Parasitic Diseases-NCIPO);
 CROATIA, Zagreb (Croatian National Institute of Public Health);
 CYPRUS, Nicosia (Ministry of Health);
 EGYPT, Cairo (Ministry of Health and Population);
 FYROM - Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Skopje (Institute for Health Protection; Clinic of Infectious Diseases);
 FRANCE, Saint Maurice Cedex (Institute for Public Health Surveillance-InVS);
 GREECE, Athens (Hellenic Center for Disease Control and Prevention-HCDCP);
 ISRAEL, (Center for Disease Control, Tel Hashomer; Ministry of Health, Jerusalem);
 ITALY (National Institute of Health-ISS, Rome; Teaching Hospital, Padua);
 JORDAN, Amman (Ministry of Health);
 KOSOVO UNSCR 1244, Prishtina (National Institute of Public Health);
 LEBANON, Beirut (Ministry of Public Health);
 MALTA, Msida (Ministry of Health, Elderly and Community Care);
 MONTENEGRO, Podgorica (Institute of Public Health);
 MOROCCO, Rabat (Ministry of Health);
 PALESTINE, Kamalieh (Ministry of Health);
 ROMANIA Bucharest (Institute of Public Health);
 SERBIA, Belgrade (Institute of Public Health);
 SLOVENIA, Ljubljana (Institute for Public Health);
 SPAIN, Madrid (Carlos III Health Institute-ISCIII);
 SYRIA, Damascus (Ministry of Health);
 TUNISIA, Tunis (Ministry of Health);
 TURKEY, Ankara (Ministry of Health; Refik Saydam National Hygiene Center);
 ECDC-European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, Stockholm; Sweden;
 EUROPEAN COMMISSION-DG SANCO Public Health Directorate, Luxembourg;
 MOH-Ministry of Work, Health and Social Policies, Rome, Italy;
 WHO-EMRO Regional Office for Eastern Mediterranean, Cairo, Egypt;
 WHO-EURO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen, Denmark;
 WHO-LYO Department of Epidemic and Pandemic Alert and Response, International Health Regulations Coordination, Lyon, France.

2nd EpiSouth Project Meeting (Athens 2007) 2nd EpiSouth Training (Madrid 2008)

EpiSouth Project
 Network for Communicable Disease Control in Southern Europe and Mediterranean

www.episouth.org

The project receives funding from the European Commission (DG SANCO). The financial support of EC, EuroAid and EU Enlargement through the TAIEI facility and of the Italian Ministry of Health, through the EpiMed Project is also acknowledged.

Neither the European Commission, nor any person acting on its behalf is liable for any use made of the information published here.

Perspectives

EpiSOUTH: A NETWORK FOR COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION AND THE BALKANS

NG Borso (maria.guzza@dem.univr.it), **M. Fabiani**, **F. Sennaroglu**, **P. Fucini**, **C. Moravanzoni**, **F. Stefan Sarrigi**, **C. Marotta**, **D. Fardet**, **P. Barbone**, **F. Ati**, **Belkhech**, **M. Zojzovic**, **M. V. Lashinova**, **I. Voron**, **K. Malas**, **G. Chiniou**, **S. Dietrich**, for the EpiSouth Network.

1. Istituto Superiore di Sanità (National Institute of Health), National Centre for Epidemiology, Surveillance and Health Promotion, Rome, Italy
2. Padua Teaching Hospital, Training and International Projects Department, Padua, Italy
3. Instituto de Salud Carlos III, (Carlos III Health Institute), National Epidemiology Centre, Madrid, Spain
4. Institut de Veille Sanitaire (French Institute for Public Health Surveillance), Department of Intermedial and Tropical Diseases, Saint-Maurice, France Cedex, Madrid, Spain
5. National Center of Infectious and Parasitic Diseases, Department of Epidemiology and Surveillance of Communicable Diseases, Sofia, Bulgaria
6. Hellenic Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Office for Zoonoses and Foodborne Diseases, Athens, Greece
7. European Commission, Directorate-General for Health and Consumer Protection (DG-Sanco), Luxembourg, Luxembourg
8. The Members of the EpiSouth Network are listed at the end of the article.

The countries around the Mediterranean Sea share epidemiological characteristics and public health problems. In 2006 the EpiSouth Project was started as a framework for collaboration for communicable disease surveillance and training in the Mediterranean basin. As of December 2008, 28 countries from southern Europe, the Balkans, North Africa and the Middle-East are members of EpiSouth and several international organisations and institutions collaborate: the European Commission (EC), the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the Italian Ministry of Work, Health and Social Policies and the World Health Organisation (WHO). The project is coordinated by the Italian national public health institute and three work packages (WP): Cross-border epidemic intelligence, vaccine preventable diseases and migrants and Cross-border emerging zoonoses are operated by the national institutes of France, Bulgaria and Greece. These WPs constitute technical pillars on which the project develops. Networking and Training are WPs dedicated to capacity building and are run by the Padua Teaching Hospital (Italy) and the Spanish national public health institute. A steering committee guides EpiSouth activities while all countries collaborate through WP steering teams and focal points. A number of outcomes have been accomplished and documents with results are available from the EpiSouth website which hosts a public website and a restricted area for direct sharing of information among the participants. Five electronic bulletins were published, two trainings for 65 participants performed, national epidemic intelligence systems were evaluated, a preliminary survey on vaccine-preventable diseases and migrants performed, and a list of priorities for averting zoonoses in the Mediterranean area was selected. Overall the network succeeded in creating cohesion, mutual trust and concrete collaboration on cross-border public health issues in a geographical area that is not addressed as a whole by any other initiative or organisation.

Background
 Infectious diseases are threats to human health that can rapidly spread across geographical regions and borders. Today, a number of them are preventable through effective and safe vaccines however, the majority are still prevented and controlled through a comprehensive approach, in which surveillance plays a crucial role. In order to initiate appropriate public health action, early detection of cases, dissemination of information, and cross-border, harmonic and prompt response are crucial. The countries of the Mediterranean region have common sea borders in the ecosystem of the Mediterranean Sea and share public health problems. To address these common problems, in 2006, experts from Bulgaria, Greece, France and Italy designed a co-operative initiative covering the Mediterranean region and the Balkans, similar to that developed by the EpiNorth Project for the Baltic Region (1). Spain soon joined the initiative and on occasion of the Year of the Mediterranean, in 2009, the project called EpiSouth was proposed to the countries in this area and to the European Commission (EC) for funding. EpiSouth was officially launched on 1 October 2008 and receives funding until 30 September 2009. The general objective of the project is to create a framework for collaboration on epidemiological issues to improve communicable diseases surveillance and communication and provide training for public health experts in the participating countries.

Methods
 To enhance communicable disease control capacity in the Mediterranean region and the Balkans priority areas for activities were identified. Work in these areas is coordinated through specific work packages (WP) and EpiSouth is focusing on the WP: Cross-border epidemic intelligence, vaccine preventable diseases and migrants and Cross-border emerging zoonoses which are expected





Lesson Learned I

Project Organization

revised for sharing responsibilities with all the 26 countries (after the First Meeting)



Lesson Learned II

Countries expectations and needs

All WPs have developed pilot survey for assessing countries expectations and needs in related fields:

- training assessment needs
- epidemic intelligence in place in each country
- VPD and migrants profile in each country
- zoonoses priority for each country



Lesson Learned III

Countries and Institutions are willing to participate and to commit to the Network

(9 EU countries have signed Agreement with EC)

17 countries have voluntarily wrote a commitment letter to the project coordinator

4 institutions are participating
in this partnership



Episouth Network

Added Values

- focuses on regional and countries cross-border issues
- succeeds in creating cohesion and concrete collaboration among 26 countries of South Europe, Balkans, North Africa and Middle East
- fills a geographical area with common public health problems (Balkans and Mediterranean Basin) that is not addressed, as a whole, neither by the European Commission nor by WHO





Balkans and Mediterranean basin

➤ WHO

- **Europe region: WHO-EURO (17/26):** Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Malta, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, FYROM, Turkey
- **Eastern Mediterranean region: WHO-EMRO (7/26):** Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia
- **Africa region: WHO-AFRO (1/26):** Algeria

➤ European Commission:

- **ECDC(9/26):** Southern European Union Countries of Mediterranean: Bulgaria, Cyprus France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Romania, Slovenia, Spain
- **European Neighborhood Policy (18/26):** all EU plus Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia
- **Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (23/26):** all EU plus Albania, Algeria, Bosnia, Croatia, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey



Episouth Network Best practices

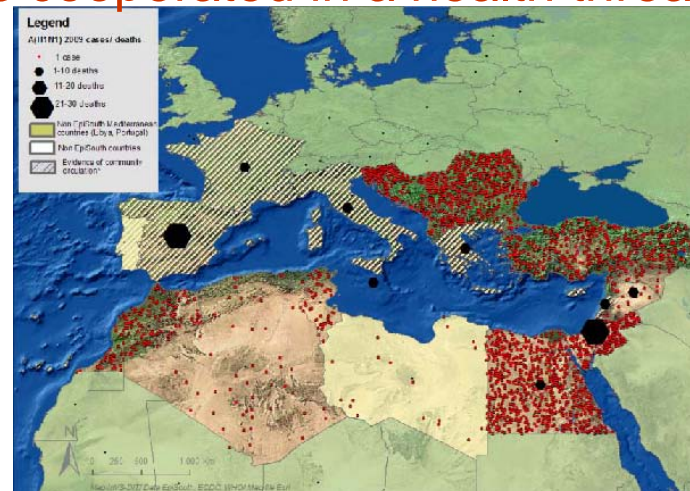
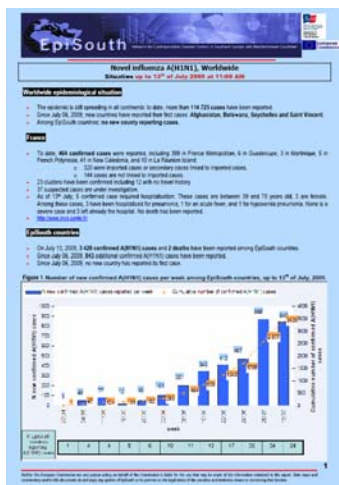
- the approach based on countries expectations and regional needs has facilitate interest in participation
- the methodology adopted has enhanced co-ownership of participant countries
- the presence of international institutions (ECDC, EC, WHO-EURO, WHO-EMRO, WHO-HQ) has allowed sharing views and facilitated interaction



Reaction to H1N1 health threat

- Directories of PH institutions and HPH and VPH officials available (WP4-8)
- Focal Points identified, trained and interacting each other (WP4-5)
- FPs willing to share data through the web-based Network Working Area (WP4-2)
- Information made available through Informative Notes on H1N1 (WP6-2)

Mediterranean countries has cooperated in a health threats situation (WP1)





Episouth Network ***Development and perspectives***

Discussion among partners for identifying priorities and strategies for the Network after the Project end (June 2010)



**New project proposals submitted to
funding Institutions with new lines of
intervention**

Episouth-plus





EpiSouth-plus

Project proposal

aimed at increasing the health security in the
Mediterranean Region and Balkans
by enhancing the preparedness to common health
threats and bio-security risk
at national and regional levels
in the framework of the IHR implementation





EpiSouth-plus

Main Objectives (1)

- i) Establishment of a Mediterranean Reference Laboratories network (including P4 Lab) in order to facilitate common threats detection in the countries involved

- ii) Promotion of common procedures in Preparedness and Risk management plans to fit the IHR-2005 requirements and multi-country harmonic and prompt response



EpiSouth-plus

Main Objectives (2)

iii) Early Warning and alerts' platform able to share information between EpiSouth countries and with other Early Warning platforms

iv) Production of guidelines and strategic documents aimed at facilitate IHR implementation based on assessments and surveys conducted among the EpiSouth Countries



Episouth-plus

Challenges for a real partnership

- Formalizing partnership and commitment of different partners (MS, non-EU countries, international organizations, other projects)
- Sharing responsibilities, especially between EU and non-EU countries (e.g. WP leader and co-leader)
- Avoiding overlapping and enhancing complementary actions
- Needs of different source of funding to include EU and non-EU countries



Episouth-plus

Funding Strategies

A proposal presented to PH call with 9 MS Countries as Associated (with budget) and 17 non-MS Countries as Collaborating Partners (without budget) → currently under negotiation

A parallel proposal presented to EC DG Relex/AIDCO for the participation and funding of the 17 non-MS countries

Further requests are being presented to National MOH (e.g. France, Italy, Spain)





Invitation to interested people and projects in participating to:

Final Project Meeting & Conference on CD in the Mediterranean Region in Rome on 21-23 April 2010

Presentation of 4 strategic documents focused on Mediterranean area for:

- ✓ Cross-border epidemic intelligence
- ✓ Vaccine-preventable diseases and migrant populations
- ✓ Epidemiology & preparedness to cross-border emerging zoonoses
 - ✓ Training on field/applied epidemiology

Discussion of future development



Thank you

