



## **EpiSouth Report 7/2009**

### **EpiSouth Project Executive Summary of the Third Project Meeting Report (Sofia, 30 March – 1 April 2009)**

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>AFRO</b>	WHO Regional Office for Africa
<b>BS</b>	Baseline Survey
<b>CDTR</b>	ECDC Communicable Disease Threat Report
<b>CSR</b>	Communicable Diseases Surveillance and Response
<b>ECDC</b>	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
<b>EFSA</b>	European Food Safety Authority
<b>EI</b>	Epidemic Intelligence
<b>EMRO</b>	WHO Regional Office for Eastern Mediterranean
<b>ENWA</b>	EpiSouth Network Working Area
<b>EPIET</b>	European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training
<b>EPIS</b>	Epidemic Intelligence Portal
<b>EC DG AIDCO</b>	EuropeAid Cooperation Office
<b>EC DG RELEX</b>	European Commission Directorate General for External Relations
<b>EC DG SANCO</b>	European Commission Directorate General Health and Consumer Protection
<b>EURO</b>	WHO Regional Office for Europe
<b>EUROMED</b>	Euro-Mediterranean Partnership/Union for the Mediterranean
<b>EUROMESCO</b>	Euro-Mediterranean Study Commission
<b>EWRS</b>	Early Warning and Response System
<b>FP</b>	Focal Point
<b>HCDCP/KEELPNO</b>	Hellenic Center for Diseases Control and Prevention, Greece
<b>HPH</b>	Human Public Health
<b>IHR</b>	International Health Regulations
<b>INVS</b>	Institut de Veille Sanitaire, France
<b>IOM</b>	International Organisation for Migration
<b>ISCIII</b>	Istituto de Salud Carlos III, Spain
<b>ISS</b>	Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Italy
<b>LYO-HQ</b>	WHO Lyon Office – Head Quarters
<b>MoH</b>	Ministry of Health
<b>NCIPD</b>	National Centre of Infectious and Parasitic Diseases, Bulgaria
<b>OIE</b>	World Organisation for Animal Health
<b>SANIT</b>	International Health Forum, Rome (Italy)
<b>SC</b>	Steering Committee
<b>SO</b>	Specific Objective
<b>ST</b>	Steering Team
<b>TAIEX</b>	EU “Technical Assistance and Information Exchange” Instrument
<b>VPD</b>	Vaccine preventable diseases
<b>VPH</b>	Veterinary Public Health
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization
<b>WP</b>	Work Package
<b>WPST</b>	Work Package Steering Team

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*EpiSouth aims to support and strengthen the relations between the European and non-European countries through meetings, training courses and electronic correspondence; EpiSouth also seeks to build intimate human relationships through love and respect among all.*

*(A Focal Point reply to set of questions for network development evaluation)*

# 1. Project description

## 1.1 EpiSouth General Objective

The general objective of the project is to create 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.

## 1.2 Specific Objectives and Areas of Activity

Several areas of activity were identified and are being developed through specific Work Packages (WP) as follows:

1 - Co-ordination of the project (WP1), with the main specific objective (SO) of guaranteeing a high quality performance of the project.

2 - Dissemination of the project (WP2), with the main SO of disseminating the information produced by EpiSouth within the participating countries and to those who need to know through an ad hoc created website and an electronic bulletin.

3 - Evaluation of the project (WP3), with the main SO of evaluating the project and its achievements in terms of milestones, deliverables, and indicators.

4 - Network of public health institutions (WP4), with the main SO of facilitating the networking process and activities among participants in order to strengthen solidarity and cohesion.

5 - Training in field/applied epidemiology (WP5), with the main SO of strengthening the early response capacity of participating countries to health threats and infectious diseases spread.

6 - Cross-border epidemic intelligence (WP6), with the main SO of establishing a common platform on epidemic intelligence where participating countries may find broad internationally as well as regionally focused information.

7 - Vaccine-preventable diseases and migrant populations (WP7), with the main SO of assessing the access to immunisation and exchanging information on cases/outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases of migrant populations.

8 - Epidemiology and preparedness to cross-border emerging zoonoses (WP8), with the main SO of providing a platform for the communication of human (HPH) and veterinary public health (VPH) officials, describing risk assessment methods and providing a mechanism for exchanging information between HPH and VPH.

## 1.3 Methods

The main partner (ISS Italy) has developed a framework where all the managerial aspects are being included (WP1) and the information produced by the project are being disseminated (WP2).

Three vertical WPs, "Cross-border epidemic intelligence-WP6" (InVS, France), "Vaccines and migrants-WP7" (NCIPD, Bulgaria) and "Cross-border emerging zoonoses-WP8" (HCDCP, Greece) constitute the technical basis.

The two horizontal Work Packages, "Networking-WP4" (Padua, Italy) and "Training-WP5" (ISCIII, Spain) provide tools that help fulfilling the objectives of the vertical Work Packages. The project is evaluated through a dedicated Work Package (WP3).

## 1.4 Project Network Organisation

Once the project had been approved by EC-DG SANCO, the effort done by the EpiSouth Project Steering Committee was to verify the strategic possibility to involve in the Project all the interested countries of Mediterranean area.

In this framework, the 1<sup>st</sup> Project Meeting was organised in Rome in March 2007. In addition to the 9 Countries which were involved in the project from the beginning, 13 countries from the Balkans, North Africa and Middle East participated in the meeting together with representatives of EU DG SANCO, EU ECDC, and WHO. Once the EpiSouth project objectives and methodology were discussed, the new organization and partnership were elaborated.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Project Meeting took place in Sofia on 30<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 and, in addition to the Countries that attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting in Athens in December 2007, Libya was invited as potential partner of EpiSouth Network.

The Project Steering Committee is now composed by the 6 WP leaders Countries plus ECDC, EC-SANCO C3, WHO EURO, WHO EMRO and WHO LYO-HQ representatives as observers, in order to facilitate synergies and avoid overlapping. In addition Focal Points from non-EU countries such Algeria, Tunisia, Lebanon and Albania were invited as observers as well.

The participation of the Countries and the International Organisations to the project foresees three different levels of active involvement:

- a) Focal Points (FPs) of the Episouth Network (WP4). Each Country/International Organisation identifies and appoints one or two relevant persons acting as Focal Point (FP) of the Episouth Network and conveying all the communication/information to the relevant officers in their respective Countries/Organisations.
- b) Collaboration in the Work Packages Steering Teams (WPSTs). In order to facilitate and enhance the work, each Country/International Organisation actively collaborates in one or two WP Steering Teams, which is in charge of identifying the countries' needs, developing the tools and the conducive project environment in accordance with the specific objective and requirements of the related WP.
- c) Participation to the Work Packages activities. Each participating country takes part in the activities of one up to all the WPs in accordance with their needs and interests. The involvement in the activities of the WPs that are not chosen can be requested by the country in the coming years.

As per March 2009, the Network counts 26 Countries, which have identified and appointed a total of 65 Country Focal Points (30 from EU-Countries and 35 from non-EU Countries) plus 5 representatives from International Organisations and 2 representatives from the Italian Ministry of Work, Health and Social Policies as part of the Network.

## 2. Executive Summary

### 2.1. Introduction

The 3<sup>rd</sup> EpiSouth Meeting took place in Sofia from 30<sup>th</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009. The meeting was hosted by the National Centre of Infectious and Parasitic Diseases (NCIPD), leader of WP7 “Vaccine Preventable Diseases and Migrants”.

Twenty-two countries involved in the Network were present, including EU and non-EU partner countries. Among them, 9 were from Southern Europe (Bulgaria, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Romania, Slovenia and Spain), 3 from Balkans (Albania, Kosovo and Serbia), 4 from North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco) and 6 from the Middle East (Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria and Turkey). Libya was also represented.

The participation of non-EU partner countries representatives was made possible by the Italian Ministry of Work, Health and Social Policies through the EpiMed project.

International Organisations (i.e. ECDC, WHO-EURO, WHO-EMRO and WHO-LYO/HQ) were present and actively involved. Guest scientists from Institut Pasteur (France) as well as from international agencies such as OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health), EFSA (European Food Safety Authority) and IOM (International Organisation for Migration) had been invited as speakers.

After the first meeting in Rome (28-30 March 2007) and the second meeting in Athens (10-12 December 2007), the meeting in Sofia represented a further occasion in which project partners could meet and discuss future prospects on the basis of the status of the project activities.

### 2.2 Objectives of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Project Meeting

The Third EpiSouth Meeting was meant to discuss, starting from the project state-of-the-art, the future prospects; define advanced outlines of the four strategic documents to be produced by the project; identify strategic lines of activities and potential options of financing the network after the project end. It was the occasion to strengthen the cooperation among the countries that formally take part in the Network as well as to further extend the Network. It also represented the occasion to exchange views for working more concretely on specific issues (Epidemic Intelligence, VPD and Migrants, Zoonoses), make explicit their expectations and express their interest by profiting of the lectures of experts.

The objectives of the meeting were as follows:

- To share status of the project activities and discuss future prospects
- To work together on the development of the four strategic documents
- To identify strategic lines of activities and potential options for sustainability of the Network
- To further extend the EpiSouth Network to other Potential Countries and strengthen the Network itself

This was expected to be achieved through four meeting approaches:

- *WP Steering Teams*, restricted and focused on the Project Work Packages objectives;
- *Parallel Sessions*, vertical issues oriented and focused on WP5, WP6, WP7 and WP8 strategic documents outlines;
- *Small Discussion Groups*, focused on relevant topics resulting from the individual interviews and the questionnaires sent to all Focal Points before the meeting;
- *Plenary Sessions*, open to the meeting audience with contribution of experts.

### 2.3 Main Outcomes

#### 2.3.1 Achievements of the second year and ongoing activities

These are the main outcomes of the second year of the project.



**WP1 – Coordination of the project.** The enlargement of the Network was progressing passing from 9 to 26 EU and non EU countries (9 from Southern Europe, 7 from Balkans, 4 from North Africa, 6 from Middle East), plus six representatives of International Organisations taking part in the project ([https://www.episouth.org/list\\_participating\\_countries.html](https://www.episouth.org/list_participating_countries.html)).

Funds to guarantee the active involvement of non-EU countries were obtained also for the second year by EC EuropeAid and DG Enlargement through the TAIEX facility that allowed 40 non-EU participants to attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> Project Meeting (Athens, December 2007) as well as through the Italian Ministry of Health (EpiMed Project) that financed 18 non-EU attendees to the 2<sup>nd</sup> training module in Madrid (June 2008) as well as the participation to the WP6 Steering Team Meeting in Marrakech (November 2008).

Visibility and participation to international events was highlighted as well: Escaide Conference (October 2007), EuroMED Conference on Health (December 2007), SANIT-Italian MoH Conference (June 2008), EU Open Days (October 2008), EuroMesco Conference (October 2008), EuroMED Conference on Health (November 2008), Escaide Conference (November 2008). As major events to be held before project end will be the 5<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting (Venice, November 2009) and the 4<sup>th</sup> Final Project Meeting together with “*Conference on CD and health threats in the Mediterranean Region*” that will be held in Rome on 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2010.

**WP2 – Dissemination of the project.** The electronic bulletin was released quarterly (n. 4 issues from September 2007 to July 2008 with a total of 592 recipients).

An increase of number of visitors and number of accesses took place from the beginning of the project with 9079 visitors for a total of 14895 accesses in the period October 2007 – September 2008 with a change in the profile of the users driven from specific interests.

A total of 150 documents have been uploaded with a monthly average of 12.5 documents compared with 9.0 documents in the first year of activities. There have been a total of 3276 downloads with an average of 21.8 downloads per document compared with 13.5 downloads in the first year.

**WP3 – Evaluation of the project.** Four main monitoring tools were developed and implemented for the project monitoring and evaluation: Meeting Evaluation and Network Development Monitoring Tools, on-line questionnaires relating to project management (WP1-5) and vertical packages (WP6, 7 and 8). Furthermore, a set of questions about project key aspects was submitted to all FPs before the 3<sup>rd</sup> project meeting; telephone interviews involving 10 FPs from 9 participating countries investigated more in depth similar issues. In general, it came out that EpiSouth Network had become wider and more solid. As a whole the vertical WPs were successful, but more focus on specific problems and solutions as well as more involvement of non-EU institutions in decision making were required.

**WP4 – Network of public health institutions.** The Public Health Institutions Directory was made accessible on the Web public area (16/26 participating countries included) and a Networking framework document was drafted.

A simplified version of the outline for the Strategic Documents (WP5, 6, 7 and 8) was prepared in co-operation with WP1 and related WPs.

**WP5 – Training in field/applied epidemiology.** The second training module, based on Time and Spatial Analysis, Infectious Disease dynamics and modelling methods, was carried out in Spain in June 2008 with 29 participants from 21 countries. A directory of training courses and fellowships (upcoming events, inventory of courses, inventory of fellowships, training resources) is being developed.

**WP6 – Cross-border epidemic intelligence.** Three additional FPs joined the WP6 since 2008. Two ST teleconferences were conducted and one face-to-face meeting was held in Marrakech in November 2008.

53 weekly epidemiological bulletins were produced reporting 233 health events; 50 health topics covering 90 geographical areas. 8 ad hoc thematic notes were issued (Yellow fever, Crimean-Congo Haemorrhagic fever, Monkey pox, Melamine, Arenavirus, H1N1, Alkhurma). Concerning cross border alerts, an early warning secured platform was produced.

**WP7 – Vaccine-preventable diseases and migrant populations.** The structure of the WP7 ST was updated with inclusion of new members. Additional information regarding definition of migrant population and data on the EU legislation was collected and used for the preparation of the final version of the questionnaire: "Assessment of countries migration status profile & vaccination access of migrant population". A preliminary analysis of data collected was done (22/26 participating countries).

A workshop on "Key topics on migrants and hard to reach populations health in Central-Eastern Europe: advocating and promoting immunization" was jointly organized with ECDC and WHO in February 2008 and results obtained were presented in various international events.

**WP8 – Epidemiology and preparedness to cross-border emerging zoonoses.** The Zoonoses priority list document was uploaded in the ENWA in September 2007. The 2nd SC & 2<sup>nd</sup> Project Meeting in Athens was organized and hosted by HCDCP.

The questionnaire for HPH and VPH officials was finalized and uploaded on the web site for on-line compilation and then on the ENWA. Data collection trials were conducted on-line. The electronic version was uploaded and compiled by 16/26 countries.

### **2.3.2 The development of the four strategic documents**

The strategic document will address the relevant issues tackled by Training (WP5), Cross-Border Epidemic Intelligence (WP6), Vaccine preventable diseases and migrant population (WP7) as well as Epidemiology and preparedness to cross-border emerging zoonotic infections (WP8) in the framework of Networking (WP4).

These issues are currently global and decision makers are looking for new strategies and tools to deal with them effectively and particularly in relation to the implementation of IHR to enhance national and regional public health security.

In this regard, the work done by EpiSouth Network represents a catalytic element of change in the Mediterranean area for its capacity of generating and sharing relevant information.

The strategic document is therefore an opportunity to illustrate a concrete proposal for cross-cutting collaboration as well as integration of major stakeholders in this area.

The future function of the Network will be closely linked to the strategic document recommendations.

The expected audience will include: the European Commission, the European Centre for Disease Control, WHO Europe, WHO EMRO, WHO AFRO, WHO Office for national epidemic preparedness and response Lyon-France, Ministries of Health and national health institutions participants to the project, EUROMED, Arabic League as well as Maghreb Arabic Union.

The editorial board, writing group and scientific board are defined in terms of composition, tasks, timetable and procedures. In particular, the Scientific Board will be composed of WHO representatives, WP leaders, representatives of Northern Africa, Middle East, Balkans area, experts from International Agencies and external referees.

The final document will be presented at the Project Final Conference in Rome, April 2010.

### **2.3.3 International agencies proposal of interaction with EpiSouth**

Representatives from Institut Pasteur, ECDC, IOM, OIE and EFSA illustrated ways of interacting with EpiSouth Network.

The **Institut Pasteur** showed the willingness to open to partnerships with EpiSouth; it proposed to develop "network agreements" and participation in multilateral collaborations.

**ECDC** reasserted its commitment to collaborate with EpiSouth Network. It proposed an external evaluation and assessment for funding specific project components (see point 2.3.5); EWRS, EPIS, MediSys and link with EPIET/Training are opportunities offered to EpiSouth participants by ECDC.

**IOM** expressed its interest to join EpiSouth Network by providing experts in the field of migration. IOM could also offer a wide geographic coverage in the field and concrete support to build the mobility system approach. The need to identify and monitor health related risks and vulnerable populations including socio-behavioural surveillance was stressed.

Tuberculosis, AIDS and HIV were resulted as the most demanding health issues in the real panorama of migrants in Europe.

The **OIE** possible ways of collaboration with EpiSouth were explicitated as follows: sharing information on zoonoses (humans and animals), sharing disease intelligence information on zoonotic diseases, joint epidemiological analysis/forecasting of possible zoonosis emergences in the region, joint workshops and activities between the veterinary and the public health authorities in the region to increase awareness and collaboration between the two sectors on zoonotic diseases, possible involvement of OIE Regional Representations in the Region: Regional Representations of Eastern Europe, of the Maghreb and of the Middle East.

**EFSA** offered access to data and analysis on zoonosis: the Community Summary Report (CSR) on Zoonoses, Zoonotic agents, Antimicrobial Resistance and Foodborne outbreaks in EU and the EU-wide baseline surveys (BS), both based on European directives and regulations.

## **2.3.4 Future developments and financial sustainability of the Network**

### **2.3.4.1 Internal evaluation**

Internal evaluation was carried out throughout the project life using different tools and approaches.

In particular, in view of the Third Project Meeting and project's future perspectives, questionnaires and interviews dealing with *Communication and Networking, Project Organisation, Project WPs relevance and future priority fields and activities* were elaborated and used.

65 FPs, including representatives of 26 countries and international agencies were involved in the evaluation process. Written replies were received from 14 FPs, representing 11 countries. 10 FPs were interviewed by phone representing 9 countries selected according to geographical areas on random basis. A total of 20 countries expressed their views.

The findings showed that the EpiSouth Network is responding to expectations of most members. In terms of process, trusting and helpful working relationships have been established but personal contacts should be formalized.

Successes were acknowledged for all vertical WPs, but more focus on specific problems and solutions was recognised. Efforts should therefore be led toward subject matters, offering concrete solutions relevant to countries, sometimes organized through regional task forces with clear mandates and ample autonomy. At the same time, guidelines concerning analysis, systems and strategies should be devised and help for their implementation should be provided. All the above should be supported through ad hoc training (e-learning) and on site visits.

Project management was deemed valid by participants. However, feasible ways to involve more deeply non-EU participants in key decisions should be adopted.

EpiSouth is two thirds through its implementation phase. The number of countries and institutions which have joined the Network is larger than anticipated, which represents a great success but also brings greater complexity.

### **2.3.4.2 Future developments**

There was a full consensus that the Network should survive the project. As such, EpiSouth should act as a "facilitator" in the development of a "sharing information" culture (or "attitude") in the member countries.

Co-ordination and networking together with monitoring and dissemination should be performed by the coordinating institution. Evaluation should be performed by an external body according to objectives and agenda defined by the Steering Committee.

More interaction with other WPs was requested for WP5. Specifically, training was proposed for health professionals in migrant health.

Cross-Border Epidemic Intelligence platform and activities are to be continued and consolidated strictly linked and in coordination with IHR. A table top exercise organized in collaboration with ECDC and other parties concerning common areas of interest was proposed.

A quarterly bulletin for WP7 and WP8 (paradigm from WP6) with objectives and contents to be decided was also proposed.

As for WP7, EpiSouth could potentially contribute to produce “lessons learned” on good practices by sharing experiences on how to reach migrant populations (particularly illegal migrants) and tackle their health problems. This should be done in collaboration with IOM.

Concerning WP8, the identification of mobility patterns of animals, either natural or resulting from human activities, should be explored in cooperation with OIE. Multidisciplinary Forum should be adopted by each country for data exchange, hazard assessment, and if appropriate, risk assessment. Food Safety Authorities could participate in this Forum and attend joint training on issues regarding both HPH and VPH. The possibility of joint border exercises organized by Ministries of Interior Affairs, Health and Agricultural Development should also be explored.

It was proposed to identify synergies between the IHR and the EpiSouth activities by investigating the core capacities of all WPs concerning the IHR requirements.

Laboratories were the most expressed topic for future activities. Different possibilities were outlined: to add the laboratory component to the other WPs such as zoonosis, EI and training; to have a new WP on laboratory issues; to join an existing network or even to have a WP on laboratories network. Needs assessment, level of functioning and existing networks of labs were suggested as areas to be explored.

It was proposed to consider the possibility of joint publication of topics of interest in the EpiSouth area as well as in the newsletters of the EpiSouth.

#### **2.3.4.3 Sustainability of the Network**

Potential funding options and strategies were presented. Opportunities were investigated by taking into consideration three main funding agencies such as European Commission, National Ministries and International Agencies.

Relating to the European Commission programmes, the following were identified: EC DG Relex/DG Aidco: *EuroMediterranean partnership, European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), Instrument for Stability (since 2007)*; EC DG SANCO/Executive Agency for Health and Consumers (EAHC): *Second Public Health Programme*; DG Research: *Seventh Research Framework Programme (FP7)*; EC DG EAC Education and Culture: Tempus - The Trans-European mobility scheme or university studies.

As an EC epidemiological Network, ECDC is interested in supporting EpiSouth. To do this, an external evaluation and assessment are required.

Due to the peculiarity of EpiSouth, the overall evaluation is needed to be jointly led by ECDC and the EpiSouth Steering Committee. The evaluation work will be carried out by a team of experts in the field.

After assessment, it was decided to apply for the EC Instrument for Stability (IFS) and the Second Public Health Programme in 2009 and to verify ECDC evaluation process.

Concerning opportunities offered by national Ministries of Health, concrete chances of being supported were made by the Italian and French Ministries of Health. Some contacts were taken also with Spanish and Greek Ministries of Health.

WHO could facilitate contacts with donors such as the Gates Foundation that finances projects on immunization.

For the purpose of network sustainability, difficulties have to be tackled. Given the provided overview in terms of programmes and related limits, more than one donor is needed; co-funding of non-EU countries is necessary but difficult and it is required to “adapt” the ongoing project to the different donors’ requirements without affecting the project priorities, contents and structure.

## **2.4 Conclusions**

The Third Meeting in Sofia was an occasion for jointly discussing the work that was done in the first two and half years of the project, the lessons learned as well as thinking over options for the future of the network in respect to strategic lines of activities, sustainability and further developments.

It was the occasion to work on the development of the four strategic documents summarising what was done and highlighting the network potential, above all in consideration of current and future challenges for health in a context of globalisation.

The strategic document including information gathered during the project life together with useful recommendations will be a concrete, important tool to illustrate project outputs, promote a second phase and address policy makers.

Present international agencies expressed their interest in cooperating with and/or joining the network according to different modalities in regard to their possibilities and fields of actions. Exchange of experts, support to build system approaches, partnerships and network agreements were mainly proposed.

It was remarked several times that the project succeeded in creating a network and this aspect has to be considered in the project evaluation. The Steering Teams and annual meetings modalities allowed to create trust among participants and grow interest in cooperating so as to facilitate the exchange of information and consequently support their daily activities.

Project activities were generally appreciated but efforts were requested to further implement them by consolidating the existing ones. Specifically, it was proposed to continue, implement and ameliorate EI and training to respond more widely to the specific needs of the EpiSouth region while few definite activities were to be considered for the other topics to start with concrete cooperation in the information and data exchange.

The participants agreed on recognising the financial limits of the current project for coping with future activities.

For this reason, different financing options were illustrated. Starting from the current opportunities it was remarked that the project in the whole cannot be completely funded. The effort will be made to cover the different project components by applying to different agencies and programmes such as EC IFS, 2° call PH and National MoH.

In this respect, ECDC may conduct a project external evaluation and assessment activity in cooperation with the EpiSouth Steering Committee. In case of a positive evaluation, a specific call will be issued but only project components fitting ECDC mandate can be ensured (Surveillance, Epidemic Intelligence and Training).

The discussion that took place for project re-organisation due to the network evolution (from a project to a network) highlighted the interest of non-European countries to be more involved in the network activities and management. This sincere attention and involvement represents a successful first step towards the real integration but concrete actions have to follow in the future.

## **Annex I – Meeting Agenda**

## Speakers

Philippe Barboza	French Institute for Public Health Surveillance - S. Maurice, France
Karim Ben Jebara	World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) - Paris, France
Frank Boelaert	European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) - Parma, Italy
Yves Charpak	Pasteur Institute – Paris, France
Denis Coumbier	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)- Stockholm, Sweden
Silvia Declich	Italian National Institute of Health - Rome, Italy
Maria Grazia Dente	Italian National Institute of Health - Rome, Italy
Massimo Fabiani	Italian National Institute of Health - Rome, Italy
Roberto Gnesotto	Padua Teaching Hospital - Padua, Italy
Concha Martin Pando	Carlos III Health Institute - Madrid, Spain
Michela Martini	International Organisation for Migration (IOM) - Rome, Italy
Mira Kojouharova	National Center of Infectious and Parasitic Diseases - Sofia, Bulgaria
Pierre Nabeth	WHO National Epidemic Preparedness and Response - Lyon, France
Bogdan Petrunov	National Center of Infectious and Parasitic Diseases - Sofia, Bulgaria
Giovanni Putoto	Padua Teaching Hospital - Padua, Italy
Tencho Tenev	Ministry of Health - Sofia , Bulgaria
Rengina Vorou	Hellenic Center for Diseases Control and Prevention - Athens, Greece

## Venue

Sofia Conference Hall – Grand Hotel Sofia, 1 Gurko Str. - Sofia - Bulgaria

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DG SANCO  
European  
Commission



Ministero del Lavoro, della Salute  
e della Politiche Sociali  
*EpiMed Project*

## Third Project Meeting

30 March – 1 April 2009

# EpiSouth



**Sofia Conference Hall  
Grand Hotel Sofia  
1 Gurko Str.  
Sofia, Bulgaria**



The meeting is partly funded by the Italian Ministry of Work, Health and Social Policies (through the EpiMed Project).

**DAY 1: MONDAY 30 MARCH 2009**  
**Project Status of the Arts and future activities 2009-2010**  
**Chairperson: Denis Coulombier- ECDC**  
**Moderators: Silvia Declich/Djohar Hannoun**

**13.30 - 14.00**      **Registration**

**Plenary Session**

**14.00 - 14.45**      **Opening Remarks**

Welcome address by Bulgarian Authorities (Tencho Tenev and B. Petrunov)

NCIPD Welcome (M. Kojouharova)

Meeting Objectives and Agenda (S. Declich)

Introducing participating Countries

**14.45 - 16.00**      **2<sup>nd</sup> year Activities of EpiSouth**

Project present status and future prospects (WP1 leader)

2<sup>nd</sup> year Activities and the way forward (WP leaders and WPSTs)

**Tea Break**                      16.00 - 16.15

**16.15 - 16.30**      Possible synergies with Pasteur Institut international network (Yves Charpak)

**16.30 - 16.45**      ECDC and EpiSouth (Denis Coulombier)

**16.45 - 17.30**      2<sup>nd</sup> year Activities and the way forward - Discussion

**17.30 – 17.45**      Moderators' conclusions

**DAY 2: TUESDAY 31 MARCH 2009**  
**The Project Strategic Documents**  
**Chairperson: Pierre Nabeth – WHO Lyon**  
**Moderators: Giovanni Putoto/Mondher Bejaoui**

**Plenary Session**

**10.30 – 10.45**      Presentation and working procedures for the 4 Parallel sessions (WP4 leader )

**Parallel Sessions**

**10.45 - 13.00**      PARALLEL THEMATIC SESSIONS (1<sup>st</sup> part):  
                                  [WP5 - Training](#)  
                                  [WP6- Epidemic Intelligence](#)  
                                  [WP7- VPD & Migrants](#)  
                                  [WP8- Zoonoses](#)

**Lunch.**                              13.00 - 14.00

**14.00 - 15.00**      PARALLEL THEMATIC SESSIONS (2<sup>nd</sup> part)

**Plenary Session**

**15.00 - 16.00**      Presentation of the advanced draft documents prepared by each of the 4 parallel thematic session (3<sup>rd</sup> part)

**Tea Break**                              16.00 - 16.15

**16.15 - 17.00**      IOM, OIE and EFSA: Possible future synergies with EpiSouth

**16.45 – 17.00**      WHO Comments and suggestions on Strategic documents finalisation

**17.00 – 17.30**      Discussion

**17.30 – 17.45**      Moderators' conclusions

**Evening**                              Social Event

**DAY 3: WEDNESDAY 1 APRIL 2009**  
**Activities and sustainability of EpiSouth Network after the Project's end**  
**Chairperson: Silvia Declich - Italian National Institute of Health - Rome, Italy**  
**Moderators: Maria Grazia Dente/Nada Ghosn**

**Plenary Session**

**9.00 - 9.30**                      Results from individual FPs interviews and questionnaires done before the meeting and Template for Small Groups discussion: participants, topics and methodology (WP4 and WP3 leaders)

**Parallel Sessions**

**9.30 – 11.00**      Small Group Discussion: 6 groups (1<sup>st</sup> part)

**Coffee Break**                      11.00 – 11.15

**11.15 - 12.45**      Small Group Discussion : 6 groups (2<sup>nd</sup> part)

**Lunch**                                      12.45 - 14.00

**Plenary session**

**14.00 – 14.30**      Potential funding options and strategies to sustain the Network after the Project's end (Project leader)

**14.30 – 15.30**      Results from Small Groups Discussion

**Tea Break**                              15.30 – 15.45

**15.45 – 16.45**      Open discussion and consensus on selected groups of activities and financing options (Participants and Moderators)

**16.45 – 17.00**      Closing remarks (S. Declich and M. Kojouharova)



## **Annex II – List of participants**



## Third Project Meeting

30 March – 1 April 2009  
Sofia

### Participants list

#### EpiSouth Countries

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