

EuroTB Newsletter

Surveillance of tuberculosis in Europe

July - December 2007



WHO Collaborating Centre
for the Surveillance of
Tuberculosis in Europe

EuroTB is financed by the Institut de veille sanitaire in France and the DG-SANCO of the Commission of the European Communities.

Since 1996, EuroTB collects, analyses and publishes epidemiological information on tuberculosis in all countries of the WHO European Region (now 53), with the aim of improving the contribution of surveillance to tuberculosis control.

Coordinating Structure (during 2007)

InVS, Saint-Maurice, France

Fatima Ait-Belghiti
Hedwige Bousquié
Isabelle Devaux
Dennis Falzon
Yao Kudjawa

RIVM, Bilthoven, The Netherlands

Kristin Kremer
Dick van Soolingen

Advisory Committee

Luke Clancy (UNION, European region)
Francis Drobniowski (United Kingdom)
Michael Forssbohm (Germany)
Elmira Ibraim (Romania)
Jean-Paul Klein (Austria)
Maria Korzeniewska-Kosela (Poland)
Vincent Kuyvenhoven (KNCV)
Petri Ruutu (Finland)
John Watson (United Kingdom)
Richard Zaleskis (WHO Europe)

Coordinates

EuroTB - Institut de veille sanitaire
12, rue du Val d'Osne
94415 Saint-Maurice CEDEX
FRANCE
Tel (33) 141 796804
Fax (33) 141 796802
Website: www.eurotb.org

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The last half of 2007 was largely spent collecting the national TB surveillance data in collaboration with WHO/Euro, and preparing for the annual meeting of national TB contact points organised by ECDC in September.

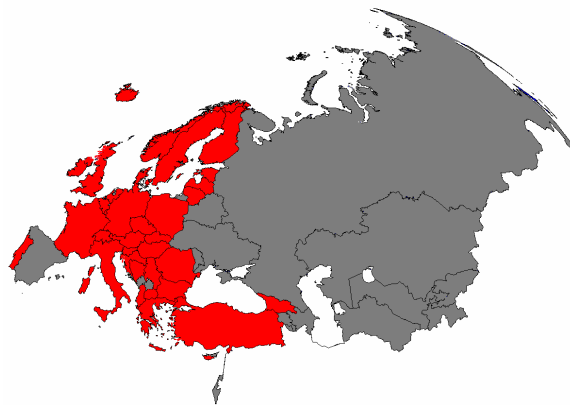


Progress Report

EC funding finished in December 2007 although work will continue until March 2008 to ensure the production of the final surveillance report (data 2006) by World TB Day 2008. The updated information will be made available on the EuroTB website at that time. Work is in progress to prepare the databases and other related project documentation for its final transfer to ECDC.

Between July and December, Dr. Yao Kudjawa worked with EuroTB, supporting the collection and validation of surveillance data from the 53 countries in the European Region in collaboration with WHO/Euro. In October, the Work Package on Molecular Surveillance of MDR-TB was drawn to a close and Dr. Isabelle Devaux moved to Stockholm to start working with ECDC.

The collection of data for cases notified in 2006 (outcomes 2005) was launched on 1 June. This year, the aggregate joint WHO/EuroTB questionnaire was revised substantially, and the specifications for individual data have changed to accommodate the new ECDC case definition. The documentation can be found on the website of both WHO and EuroTB in English and Russian versions. The deadline for submission of data was 3 September. By the end of 2007, all countries except Monaco and San Marino had sent their data to EuroTB and WHO. Of these, 15 had only aggregated notification data, and 36 – shown in red on the Map below – provided also case-based data. A total of 47 countries also completed the drug resistance surveillance questionnaire.



A meeting of the EuroTB Advisory Committee to which all the current members/organisations were present, was held on 19 September in Stockholm just before the annual meeting of national TB contact points. The main item discussed was the Terms of Reference for a future advisory body for the ECDC.



Collaboration with other initiatives

Health Strategies in Europe, Portugal

On July 12–13, I. Devaux participated in the parallel session on “A European Strategy for MDR-TB” held during the Round Table Discussion on Health Strategies in Europe in Lisbon. The main conclusions will be incorporated in the ECDC Action Plan.

TB data management, Switzerland & France

On August 6–7, D. Falzon participated in a meeting held at WHO/HQ, to which participated also ECDC (via video-link) and WHO/EURO. The meeting was a continuation of discussions on technical aspects of TB data management.

On November 7–8, ECDC staff visited the InVS for discussions on the transfer of EuroTB databases, documentation and the website.

ECDC Meeting on TB surveillance, Sweden

On 19–20 September, ECDC invited current EuroTB Contact Points and national laboratory experts to a 1.5 day meeting in Stockholm. There were presentations on the draft Action Plan, on the EuroTB evaluation in 2007 and about the future of TB data management in Europe.

Regional Training in TB Control Programme Management, Poland

On October 15, D. Falzon delivered the session on TB surveillance and monitoring to participants from FSU countries during the training held yearly by WHO and KNCV in Warsaw.

High-Level Ministerial Forum on TB, Germany

On October 22, D. Falzon attended the HLMF organised by WHO/EURO, to which next to all the countries in the Region were represented, many at Ministerial level. The Berlin Declaration on Tuberculosis was adopted (www.euro.who.int/Document/E90833.pdf). Copies of the latest EuroTB report were mailed to participants.

Journées de veille sanitaire, France

A session dedicated to the European surveillance network coordinated by the Institut de veille sanitaire was organised during the InVS's annual scientific congress held in Paris on November 29. Valérie

Schwoebel (erstwhile EuroTB project leader) and John Watson (EuroTB Advisory Committee member) made presentations about the past and present of EuroTB, followed by Karoline Fernandez de la Hoz who spoke about ECDC's future vision for the network.

Project Outputs

Communication

Three oral presentations were made at the Congress of the European Respiratory Society (15–19 September, Sweden):

1. Current tuberculosis patterns in a changing European Union
2. A new case definition for tuberculosis surveillance in the European Union (jointly with ECDC)
3. Molecular surveillance of Multi-Drug Resistant tuberculosis in Europe (jointly with RIVM)

The European Scientific Conference on Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology, Sweden.

On October 18, F. Ait-Belghiti presented a poster titled “In Europe, the geographic origin of tuberculosis patients is a key determinant of site of disease” at the ESCAIDE meeting held in Stockholm.

Molecular Surveillance of MDR TB

The final report of the MDR-surveillance project was prepared by I. Devaux and circulated to correspondents and other partners in mid-November. Data represented 2,494 MDR-TB cases reported by 24 countries. Ten countries reported one or more XDR cases. Eighteen European clusters (composed of 2 to 175 cases each) with similar genotype profile were identified in 16 countries. An attempt has been made to improve the estimates of MDR-TB incidence in participating countries and MDR-TB prevalence in Estonia and Latvia.

Publication

Lefebvre N, Falzon D. Risk factors for death among tuberculosis cases: analysis of European surveillance data. Under review (Eur Respir J).

Visits to EuroTB website mainpage - 2006-2007

