

## UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN- HEALTH FORUM

**Health Senior Official meeting  
Silken Berlaymont Hotel, 11-19 Boulevard Charlemagne  
Brussels, June, 30<sup>th</sup> 2011**

### AGENDA

*NB: The following list of projects is not comprehensive and we warmly welcome any proposals from Partner countries.*

#### **9.00am-9.30am: Welcome and registration of participants**

#### **9.30am-10.00am: Introduction to the meeting**

- Opening words by the Hungarian presidency of the UE: Mrs Ildikó KISSNÉ HORVÁTH , Director of the Health Policy Department, Ministry of National Resources of Hungary.
- Opening words by UfM Co-presidency:
  - o Mrs Agnès LECLERC, Head of the International and European Affairs;
  - o Department of the French Ministry of Labour, Employment and Health;
  - o Dr Hesham EBRAHIM, Head of Curative Care Department, Egyptian Ministry of Health.
- Opening words by Martin SEYCHELL, Deputy Director General Health and Consumers of the European Commission.

#### **10.00am-12-00am**

#### **Item 1: Strengthening of Health Systems**

- 1.1. Presentation of European Commission's programmes in the Mediterranean area: the EC will present a project on increasing public health safety on the Eastern European border lines, dealing with training and guidelines. The EC would like to discuss the feasibility of implementing a similar project for Southern Europe.
- 1.2. Telemedicine project involving Palestine, Jordan and Germany: this project, funded by Germany, will be presented by Mr. Qasem A. Maani, MD, MHSM, DG. for Health Planning and Policies of the Ministry of Health of Palestinian National Authority.
- 1.3. There is a need to establishing a mechanism under UfM that aims to strengthen cooperation in the field of training and capacity building of health professionals.

**12.00am-1.00pm**

**Item 2: Non Communicable Diseases and Chronic Diseases : projects of UFM Partner countries**

2.1. Cancer projects

- There is a need to bring up the taking part of Mediterranean partners in the Cancer projects. Which UfM Partner country would be ready to get involved in the Cancer programmes both as partners and as funders?
- Cancer projects : two main projects are currently being developed:
  - i. *Cancer registry* (presentation by Italian Health Ministry). Core group partners have already met and held some meetings.
  - ii. *Cancer screening and early diagnosis*: partners have met several times and a workshop is planned for June 2011 (presentation by French and Italian Ministries of Health ).

**1.00pm-2.00pm: Lunch**

**2.00pm-3.00pm**

**Item 2: Non Communicable Diseases and Chronic Diseases : projects of UFM Partner countries**

2.2. Transplants projects and network

- “Cooperation with North African countries” by Dr Karim LAOUABDIA (French Agence de la biomédecine).
- Presentation of the Mediterranean Transplant network, by the Italian Ministry of Health.

2.3. Other projects launched or continued by other UfM Partner Countries since the Cairo Declaration.

- “Paediatric heart surgery”, presented by the Italian Ministry of Health;
- “Food induced diseases”, presented by the Italian Ministry of Health  
<http://www.medicel.unina.it/>

**3.00pm- 5.00pm**

**Item 3: Communicable diseases**

3.1. Episouth Plus project, presentation by network coordination team: Istituto Superiore Sanità (ISS), Italy & Ministry of Public health, Tunisia.

*Speakers:* Silvia DECLICH, Project leader, (ISS), Maria Grazia DENTE, WP1 co-leader Istituto Superiore di Sanità (ISS) and Mondher BEJAOUI (Ministry of Public Health, Tunisia)

Progresses since Cairo 2008 of the 27 Countries Network for increasing the health security in the Mediterranean and South-East Europe by enhancing and strengthening the preparedness to common health threats and bio-security risks at national and regional levels. Need to reinforce official commitment from the countries and to find funds to uphold the third phase of this epidemiologic project (after April 2013)  
<http://www.episouth.org/>

3.2. Presentation of infectious diseases priorities, including viral hepatitis, taking into consideration the relevant WHA Resolutions e.g. Res 63.15 and 63.18 of 2010 (Egypt- to be confirmed).

3.3. Presentation of Ship sanitation projects SHIPSAN funded by the EC <http://www.shipsan.eu/>, by Mr Christos HADJICHRISTODOULOU, Assoc. Professor of Epidemiology in the University of Thessaly and Project Leader of the EU SHIPSAN TRAINET.

EPIET -European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training (European Commission) <http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/epiet/Pages/HomeEpiet.aspx>

3.4. Other projects launched or continued by other UfM Partner countries

**5.00pm-5.30pm**

**Conclusions : a consensus on priority areas of work for a “Health projects road map”** should be adopted and presented through the formal channels to the Secretary general of the UfM Secretariat.

(Coffee breaks in the morning and in the afternoon)



Network for the Control of Public Health Threats  
in the Mediterranean Region and South East Europe

## ***EpiSouth-Plus*** - *The new challenge of the EpiSouth Network for enhancing the Control of Public Health Threats in the Mediterranean Region and South-East Europe*

***Silvia Declich (Project leader)***

*Italian National Institute of Health, Italy*



***Mondher Bejaoui (WP1 co-leader)***

*Ministère de la Santé Publique, Tunisia*



on behalf of the EpiSouth Network



**UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN-HEALTH FORUM**  
**Health Senior Official meeting**  
**Brussels, June, 30th 2011**

## Background

- The EpiSouth network was established in 2006
- The Project aim was to create a framework of collaboration on epidemiological issues in order to improve communicable diseases surveillance, communications and training
- The network activities in 2006-2010 were funded by the EU DG-SANCO, with the support of the Italian Ministry of Health and the EU TAIEX facility



EpiSouth

Network for the Control of Public Health Threats  
in the Mediterranean Region and South East Europe

## **EpiSouth Activities (2006-2010)**

The network worked in the past four years focussing on:

- Cross-border epidemic intelligence
- Vaccine preventable diseases and migrants
- Cross-border emerging zoonoses
- Training in field/applied epidemiology

## Lessons Learnt (2006-2010)

The approach based on expectations and regional needs has facilitated countries' interest in participation

The methodology adopted with WP Steering Teams has enhanced co-ownership of participant countries

The presence of international institutions (ECDC, EC, WHO-EURO, WHO-EMRO, WHO-HQ) has allowed sharing views while avoiding overlapping

## Added Values (2006-2010)

The Network:

- raised awareness on regional and countries cross-border issues
- succeeded in creating trust, cohesion and concrete collaboration among PH officers of 27 countries in the Mediterranean region and South-East Europe
- filled a geographical area with common public health problems that is not addressed, as a whole, neither by the European Union nor by WHO

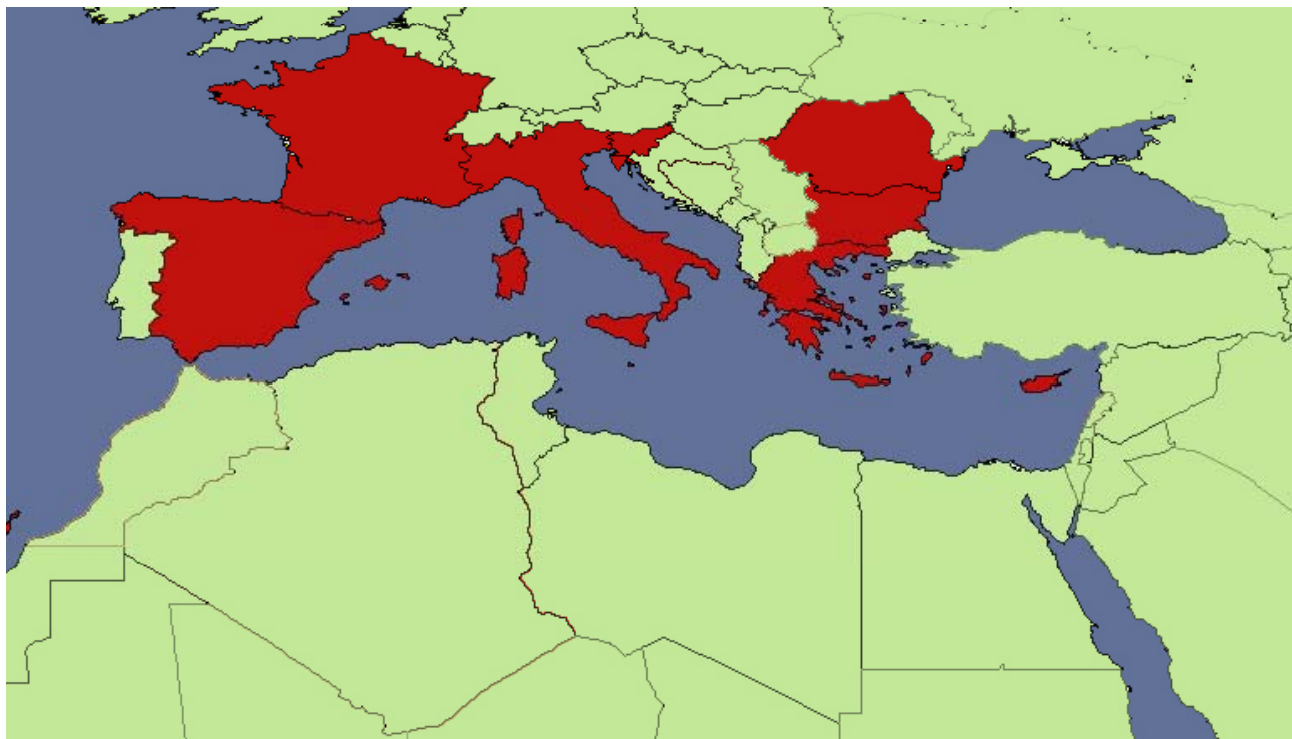




EpiSouth

Network for the Control of Public Health Threats  
in the Mediterranean Region and South East Europe

## From an European project...

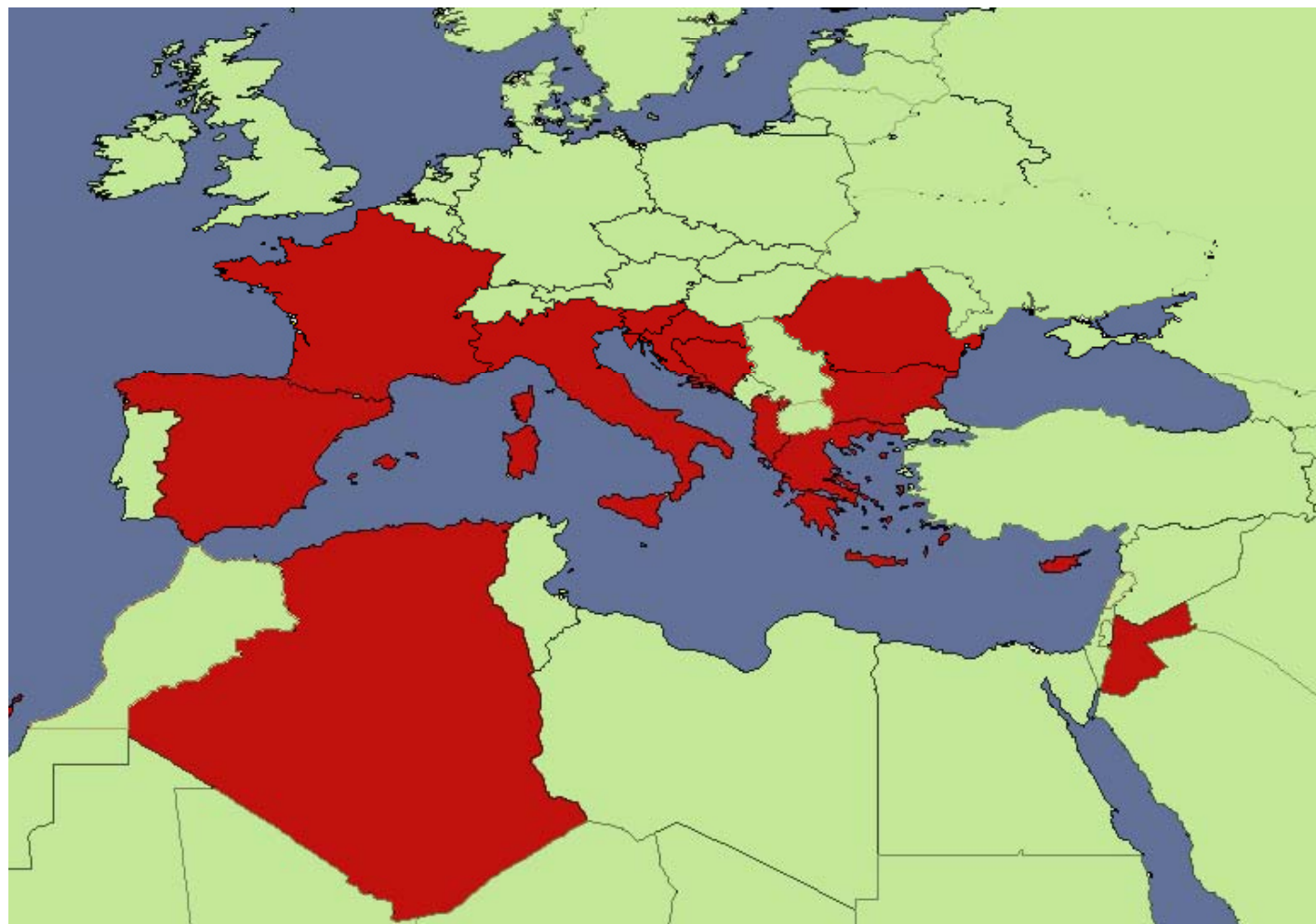


 9 EU countries at the Project starting (October 2006)



EpiSouth

Network for the Control of Public Health Threats  
in the Mediterranean Region and South East Europe

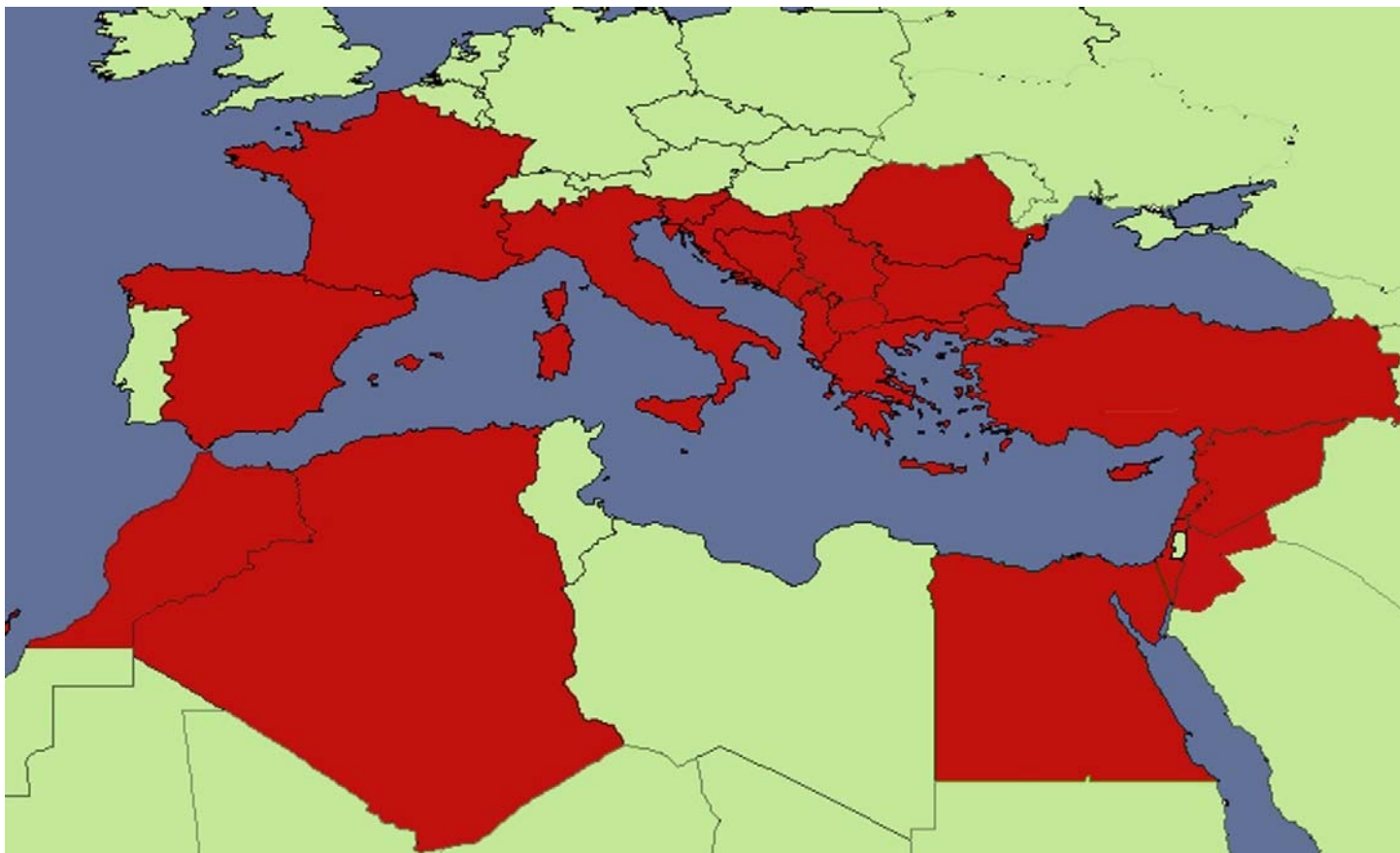


 Countries as per May 2007



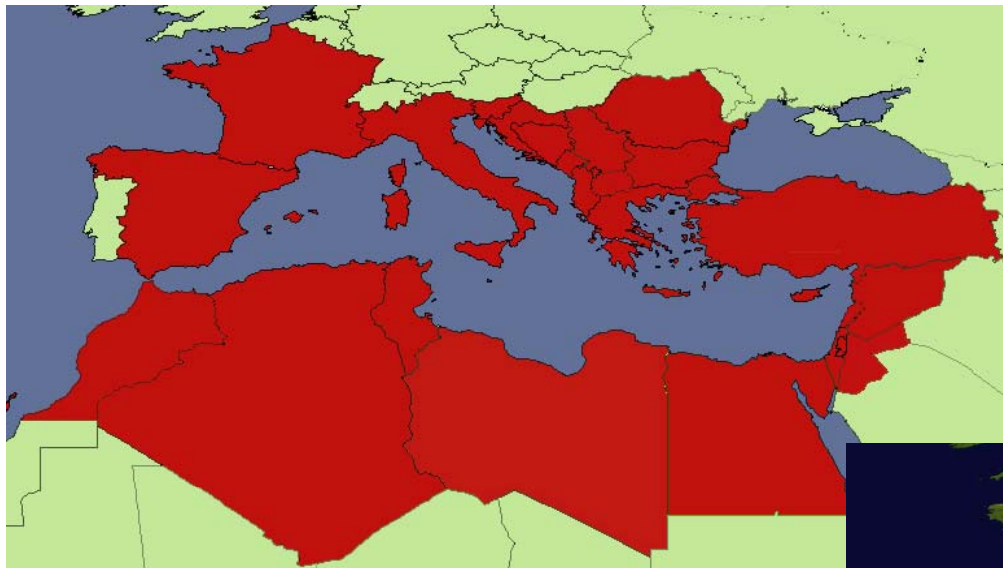
# EpiSouth

Network for the Control of Public Health Threats  
in the Mediterranean Region and South East Europe



Countries as per August 2007

## ... to a Mediterranean Network



27 countries as per June 2010  
(9 EU countries, 17 non-EU  
countries and 1 acceding country)

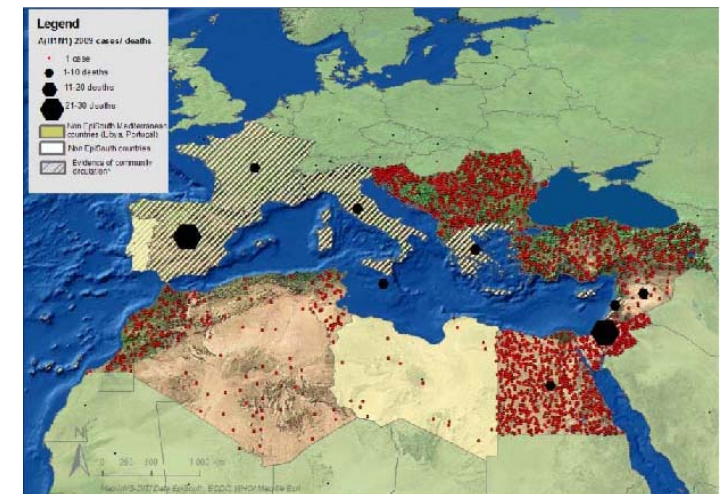
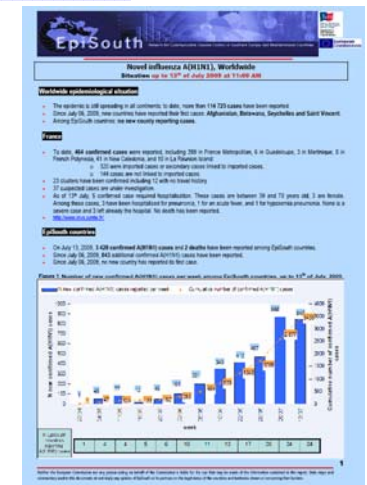
The enlargement implied  
progressive adaptation in  
terms of management and  
coordination strategies to  
allow concrete participation  
of all Countries



## Tools and outputs

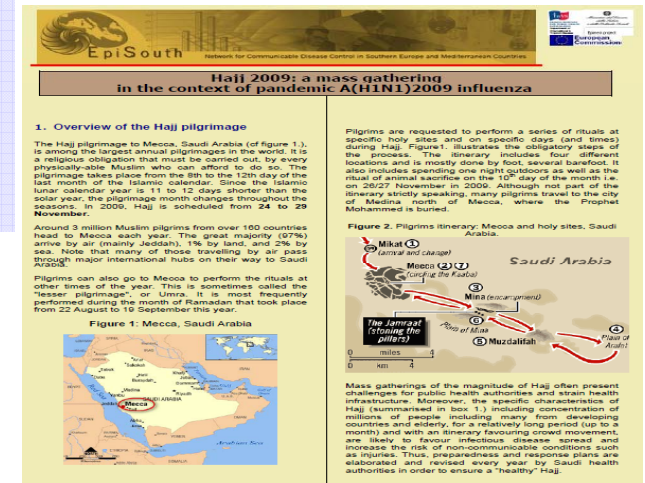
Mediterranean Countries has cooperated in a health threat situation, using tools and outputs from EpiSouth

- Directories of PH institutions and HPH and VPH officials available (WP4-WP8)
- Focal Points identified, trained and trusting each other (WP4-WP5)
- Data shared through the web-based Network Members Area (WP6-WP2)
- Information disseminated through several outputs (WP6-WP2)



## A success example H1N1 Epidemic Intelligence and cross-border activities

- EpiSouth actively involved in Epidemic Intelligence (EI) and Cross-Border (CB) activities since pandemic earliest stages
- Global information originated from EI activities
- CB data originated from Focal Points (voluntary basis)
- Available information was compiled, analysed and disseminated



### Outputs for dissemination

- Frequency: daily, biweekly then weekly according to crisis phase
- 36 A(H1N1) dedicated bulletins
  - 39 dedicated sections in e-WEB
    - 5 thematic notes
    - 29 CB messages posted on secured early warning platform

## Achievements through implemented activities

### **A(H1N1) specific activities implemented served to:**

- Provide regular situation analyses and regional updates avoiding duplication, while sharing useful and relevant information
- Answer requests from Focal Points, relaying on regional expertise
- Facilitate elaboration of countries' own response strategies

### **The crisis provided the momentum to practically implement this collaboration**

- Initial crisis communications prompted Countries to exchange regularly data
- The experience was very beneficial in showing its potential for the management of international crises.

## EpiSouth Activities (2006-2010)

More details are available at [www.episouth.org](http://www.episouth.org)



### The project

#### Project Final Deliverables

#### Participating countries and institutions

#### Directories

#### EpiSouth Bulletins

#### Project outputs

#### Project related events

#### Relevant links and Documents

#### Members' area



This project receives funding from the European Commission (DG SANCO). 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, EuropeAid and DG Enterprise through the TAMEX facility and of the Italian Ministry of Health through the EpiSouth Project is also acknowledged.

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.

Go to the new web-site of the EpiSouth Network  
[www.episouthnetwork.org](http://www.episouthnetwork.org)



## EpiSouth Plus (2010-2013)

The Countries expressed the need to shift Network's activities to a wider approach, building on the knowledge and the regional gaps and needs identified in the 1<sup>st</sup> phase

### General Objective

*to increase the health security in the Mediterranean area and South-East Europe by enhancing and strengthening the preparedness to common health threats and bio-security risks at national and regional levels in the countries of EpiSouth Network*

## EpiSouth Plus (2010-2013)

A new phase of the network activities called “**EpiSouth Plus**” started in October 2010 and is expected to last until April 2013 with a funding partnership from:

- European Union DG-SANCO/EAHC 900.000 €
- European Union DG-DEVCO/EuropeAid 3.000.000 €
- Italian Ministry of Health 250.000 €
- and ECDC 90.000 €
- together with the national partner Institutions (public officials)

The Project is led by the Italian PHI and implemented by 27 countries' public institutions (MOH & PHI)



EpiSouth

Network for the Control of Public Health Threats  
in the Mediterranean Region and South East Europe

## EU Partners in EpiSouth Plus

1. ITALY
  - Institute of Health, Rome;
  - Local Health Unit, Turin;
  - General Hospital, Padua;
  - National Institute of Infectious Diseases, Rome;
  - CINECA, Bologna;
2. FRANCE
  - Institute Pasteur, Paris;
  - Institut de Veille Sanitaire, Saint Maurice Cedex
3. SPAIN (Istituto de Salud Carlos III, Madrid);
4. BULGARIA (National Center of Infectious and Parasitic Diseases, Sofia);
5. CROATIA (Institute of Public Health) as acceding country
6. CYPRUS (Ministry of Health, Nicosia);
7. GREECE (Hellenic Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, Athens);
8. MALTA (Ministry of Health, Valletta);
9. ROMANIA (Institute of PH, Bucharest);
10. SLOVENIA (Institute of Public Health, Ljubljana);

## Non-EU Partners in EpiSouth Plus

1. ALBANIA, Tirana (Institute of Public Health);
2. ALGERIA, Alger (National Institute of Public Health);
3. BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA (Ministry of Civil Affairs, Sarajevo; Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Banja Luka, Republic of Srpska; Public Health Institute, Mostar, Federation of B&H);
4. EGYPT, Cairo (Ministry of Health and Population);
5. FYROM–Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Skopje (Institute for Health Protection; Clinic of Infectious Diseases);
6. ISRAEL (Center for Disease Control, Tel Hashomer; Ministry of Health, Jerusalem);
7. JORDAN, Amman (Ministry of Health);
8. KOSOVO UNSCR 1244, Prishtina (National Institute of Public Health);
9. LEBANON, Beirut (Ministry of Public Health);
10. LIBYA, Tripoli (Infectious Diseases Department Tripoli Central Hospital)
11. MONTENEGRO, Podgorica (Institute of Public Health);
12. MOROCCO, Rabat (Ministry of Health);
13. PALESTINE, Ramallah (Ministry of Health);
14. SERBIA, Belgrade (Institute of Public Health);
15. SYRIA, Damascus (Ministry of Health);
16. TUNISIA, Tunis (Ministry of Health);
17. TURKEY, Ankara (Ministry of Health; Refik Saydam National Hygiene Center);
18. MECIDS-Middle East Consortium on Infectious Disease Surveillance;
19. WHO-IHR International Health Regulations Coordination, Lyon, France



Network for the Control of Public Health Threats  
in the Mediterranean Region and South East Europe

## Collaborating Institutions in EpiSouth Plus

1. ECDC-European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, Stockholm, Sweden;
2. EUROPEAN UNION DG SANCO Public Health Directorate, Luxembourg;
3. EUROPEAN AGENCY FOR HEALTH AND CONSUMERS, Luxembourg;
4. EUROPEAN UNION EuropeAid, Brussels, Belgium;
5. MOH-Ministry of Health, Rome, Italy;
6. WHO–EMRO Regional Office for Eastern Mediterranean, Cairo, Egypt;
7. WHO-EURO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen, Denmark;
8. SHIPSAN- Ship sanitation project
9. SEEHN- South East Europe Health network



EpiSouth

Network for the Control of Public Health Threats  
in the Mediterranean Region and South East Europe

## **EpiSouth Plus complex organisation to accomodate 27 countries**

The General Assembly is composed by the 76 Country Focal Points

Activities are coordinate by 2 WorkPackage co-leaders together with the related WP Steering Team (7-8 countries)

Project Steering Committee ensures project implementation

An Advisory Board composed by EC, ECDC, WHO and international experts advises the Steering Committee

## Areas of activities (Work Packages)

Three horizontal WPs ensure coordination, dissemination and evaluation of the Project and are led by:

– Italian Institute of Health, Rome



– Ministry of Health of Tunisia



– Institute of Public Health of Montenegro



– Local Health Unit of Turin, Turin



The project activities are articulated in four core WPs

## WP4 - Specific Objective

### Establishment of a Mediterranean Regional Laboratories Network

to facilitate common threats detection in the countries  
involved

#### WP leaders:

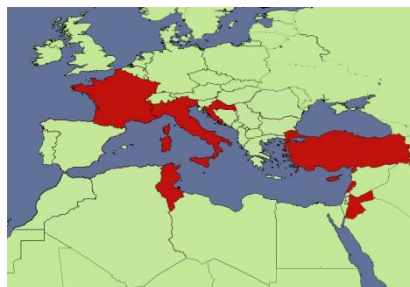
*French Institute Pasteur & Institut Pasteur*  
*Refik Saydam National Hygiene Center, Turkey*



Institut Pasteur



#### WP Steering Team:





## WP5 - Specific Objective

### Promotion of common procedures in Generic Preparedness and Risk Management

Specific capacity building measures address the need of interoperability and intersectoral collaboration of countries' preparedness plans to fit the IHR requirements and to ensure multi-country harmonic and prompt response

#### WP leaders:

*Spanish Instituto de Salud Carlos III &  
Institut National de Santé Publique of Algeria*



#### WP Steering Team:



## WP6 - Specific Objective

### Enhancing Mediterranean Early Warning systems (EWS) and cross-border Epidemic Intelligence

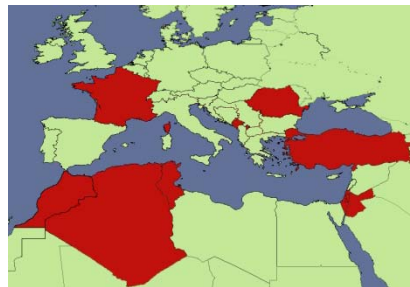
Participating countries share alerts and epidemic intelligence information generated by their national EWS through the EpiSouth EW platform and develop inter-operability with other European EW platforms, especially EPIS and EWRS, as forecast by the current EU legislation

#### WP leaders:

*French Institut de Veille Sanitaire & MECIDS-Middle East Consortium for Infectious Diseases Surveillance- Israel, Palestine & Jordan*



#### WP Steering Team:



## WP7 - Specific Objective

### Facilitating IHR implementation

Specific surveys and assessments will be conducted among the EpiSouth countries to describe how national plans and legislations can interact/interfere with IHR requirements, with the production of a final strategic document with guidelines at national and regional level

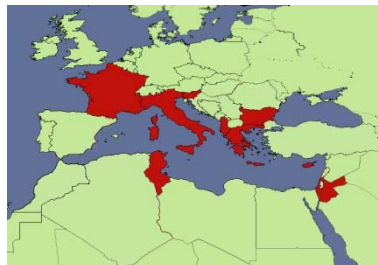
#### WP leaders:

*Italian National institute of Health &  
World Health Organization Lyon office*



World Health  
Organization

#### WP Steering Team:



## Added value for UfM

- The large number of participating countries makes EpiSouth the biggest inter-country collaborative effort for health threats control in the Mediterranean region
- The project promotes the sharing of knowledge, resource and information in the Region and the adoption of homogeneous approaches, tools and definitions

## Added value for UfM II

- The reinforcement of relations of trust in the Region is an objective and an instrument in the scope of project's implementation
- The network contribute to the UfM objective of achieving a common area of peace and stability: *diplomacy of health*
- The network experience is an example of funding partnership and shared commitment

## Looking forward

Create and reinforce collaborations with other networks and partnerships

Discuss the future of the Network after April 2013

Consider **preparedness to common health threats and bio-security risks** among priority areas for Mediterranean

Insert **Health** in the next European Neighbourhood Policy Plan and in the Union for Mediterranean Plan (2013 ...) with specific annual call for project

## Acknowledgements

The EpiSouth-Plus project is co-funded by the European Union DG SANCO/EAHC and EuropeAid together with the participating national partner Institutions.

The financial support of the Italian Ministry of Health and ECDC is also acknowledged.

The Project is led by The Italian National Institute of health and counseled by an Advisory Board composed by EC, ECDC, WHO and other international experts.



The contents of this presentation are the sole responsibility of the authors and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.



Network for the Control of Public Health Threats  
in the Mediterranean Region and South East Europe

## New web-site [www. Episouthnetwork.org](http://www.Episouthnetwork.org)

For more information:  
Dissemination Team  
Tel: +39 06 49904266  
Fax: +39 06 49904267  
E-mail: [episouth@iss.it](mailto:episouth@iss.it)

The screenshot shows the EpiSouth website interface. At the top, there is a blue header with the EpiSouth logo and the text 'Network for the Control of Public Health Threats in the Mediterranean Region and South East Europe'. Below the header is a dark blue navigation bar with white text links: 'Participating Countries and Institutions', 'Events', 'Bulletin', 'Disclaimer', 'Home', and 'Contact'. There is also a search box with a 'Search' button. The main content area is divided into several sections. On the left, there is a 'Activities of the network' section with a list of projects: 'The EpiSouth Plus Project 2010 - 2012' (with sub-links for Networking, Laboratory Network, Pharmaceutical Policy and Risk Management, Cross-border Epidemic Intelligence, Facilitating IHR Implementation, and Evaluation) and 'The EpiSouth Project 2008 - 2010' (with a sub-link for Website). In the center, there is a 'The Network' section with a description of the network's mission and a map of the Mediterranean region. On the right, there is a 'News from the EpiSouth Region' section with a list of recent news items and a 'Partners' section with logos for the European Union and the Italian Institute of Health (ISS). At the bottom left, there is a 'Member's Area' section with a lock icon and a 'Login' button.