



Programme of Community action in the field of Public Health

Projects funded under Call for Proposal 2009



Directorate-General for
Health & Consumers



Executive
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EpiSouth+: a Network for the Control of Public Health Threats and other bio-security risks in the Mediterranean Region and Balkans (EpiSouth Plus)

ABSTRACT

1. General objectives

General Objective: To increase health security in the Mediterranean Area and Balkans by enhancing and strengthening the preparedness for common health threats and other risks at the national and regional levels in the EU Countries of the existing EpiSouth Network in the framework of the International Health Regulations implementation.

The EpiSouth Network includes 27 Countries (9 EU and 18 non-EU).

Specific objectives:

1. Establishment of a network of Mediterranean Regional Laboratories able to support the priority diagnostic needs relying on the existing facilities and capacities (WP4)
2. Promotion of common procedures in interoperable Generic Preparedness and Risk management among the countries involved in the Network (WP5)
3. Enhance Mediterranean Early Warning Systems (EWS) allowing alerts and Epidemic intelligence information sharing among EpiSouth countries and developing interoperability with other European EW platforms (WP6)
4. Production of a strategic document, with guidelines based on assessments and surveys, aimed at facilitating IHR implementation (WP7)

2. Strategic relevance and contribution to the public health programme

EpiSouth Plus replies and supports the existing EU framework especially referring to the Neighbourhood Policy and to the "Strategy towards the Health Security in the European Union and Internationally". Specific needs will be addressed to enhance the control of Public Health Threats.

In particular, the Laboratories in the Mediterranean area should be better connected and coordinated to ensure cross-border lab services, complementarity among vertical, fragmented lab networks presently operating and to overcome national logistic and legislative constraints.

Common procedures in interoperable Generic Preparedness and Risk management Plans should be promoted to reduce the variability of procedures by country, enhance capacity building and cross-border concerted actions and facilitate the elaboration of a national GPP and communication strategy. Sharing of alerts and information between EU and non-EU MS should be facilitated especially by enhancing "horizontal" cross-border, international alert sharing and interoperability of existing systems.

3. Methods and means

This project has a mirror project funded by EU/AIDCO for the non-EU Partners. This will ensure that each WP is led by one EU and one non-EU Partner.

Beside the three mandatory WPs (Coordination, Dissemination and Evaluation), four core WPs constitute the clue sectors on which the project intends to develop in order to achieve the Four Specific Objectives.

The Project implementation will rely on the guide of the Steering Committee which includes the WP leaders and the representatives of the collaborating Institutions.

The Project Advisory Board will be established with experts in the sectors addressed by the Project but not involved in its management and implementation, with the role of advising the Project Management. The project will rely on Country Focal Points, officially nominated by their Government, involved in preparedness and risk management of CD and other PH threats mainly at a central level and working in IHR and or EWRS Focal Point departments.

WP Steering Teams will be established to support the implementation of all the activities planned by each WP.

4. Expected outcomes

- I) The decryption of the laboratory capacity in the region, the Mediterranean Network Lab Directory available on-line in the project website and recommendations for training strengthen laboratory capacities, the surveillance system and the response to the diseases covered under EpiSouth.
- II) National Preparedness plans and risk management procedures improved in accordance with the IHR requirements avoiding conflict with their national procedures and in syntony with those of other Mediterranean countries.
- III) International EI activities enhanced by strengthening synergies and avoiding repetition. Inter-operability among EW systems facilitated.
- IV) IHR implementation facilitated by addressing possible interferences and unexpected impacts at national level.

The international impact is ensured through the participation of collaborating non-EU Countries (Albania, Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, FYROM, Israel, Jordan, Kosovo, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Montenegro, Palestine, Serbia, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey) and through coordination with EU, ECDC and WHO offices.



Main Beneficiary:

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Institut de Veille Sanitaire, France
Institut Pasteur, France
Institute of Public Health Bucharest, Romania
Institute of Public Health of the Republic of Slovenia, Slovenia
Istituto de Salud Carlos III, Spain
Istituto Nazionale per le Malattie Infettive, Lazzaro Spallanzani, Italy
Ministry of Health, Cyprus, Cyprus
Ministry of Health, Malta, Malta
National Center of Infectious and Parasitic Diseases, Bulgaria

EC Contribution:

EUR 900,000.00

Duration:

30 month(s)

Keywords

Diseased Outbreaks
Health facilities
Capacity building
Risk management
Europe, Eastern