

PRESS RELEASE

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For immediate release

EPISOUTH PLUS

The first Workshop on Public Health Preparedness and Response & Training session on Spatial Analysis of Surveillance Data were held in Madrid on 27- February- 2 March 2012.

The EpiSouth Network includes 27 countries (9 EU and 17 non-EU, plus one EU candidate country). It is therefore the biggest inter-country collaborative effort of this kind in the region. Since October 2010, with the approval of a new project phase, the network focuses on increasing health security in the Mediterranean Area and South-East Europe by enhancing and strengthening preparedness to common health threats and bio-security risks at national and regional levels in the countries of the [EpiSouth Network](#).

[Work Package 5 \(WP5\)](#), co-led by the Health Institute "Carlos III" of Spain and the National Public Health Institute of Algeria, aims to promote the development of common procedures in interoperable Generic Preparedness and Risk management among the [countries involved in the Network](#).

The [first WP5 Workshop on Public Health Preparedness and Response](#) took place in Madrid on 27-29 February and was attended by 44 national Focal Points and other public health officers from both EU and non-EU countries of the EpiSouth Network and international organizations. The main outcomes of the workshop were the identification of the framework of a guide for developing and strengthening generic preparedness plans in EpiSouth countries, with particular emphasis on aspects concerning communication, and the identification of the basic characteristics and specific objectives of a simulation exercise for testing preparedness in this region.

Finally, based on training priorities previously identified through a needs assessment survey, most of the workshop participants also attended a two-days training session on cluster analysis, which was held in the same venue on 1-2 March 2012.

For more information, please contact:

The EpiSouth Dissemination Team

Tel: +39 06 49904266; Fax: +39 06 49904267; E-mail: episouth@iss.it



The EpiSouth-Plus Project is led by the Italian National Institute of Health (ISS) and counseled by an Advisory Board composed by EC, ECDC, WHO and other international experts

Address: Viale Regina Elena, 299
Rome 00161 - Italy
Tel: +39 06 49904266
Fax: +39 06 49904267
E-mail: episouth@iss.it

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