

ECDC Management Board

**MB16/Minutes
12 November 2009**



**Minutes of the Sixteenth Meeting of the
ECDC Management Board
Warsaw, 24-25 June 2009**

Adopted by the Management Board at its Seventeenth meeting, 5-6 November 2009

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Summary of decisions

The Management Board:

- Adopted the Draft Minutes of the Fifteenth meeting of the Management Board (Stockholm, 24-25 March 2009) with requests for corrections from France and the European Commission (DG Research)
- Agreed to review the 2009 Work Programme and approve it via written procedure
- Adopted the Final Annual Accounts 2008
- Adopted the Supplementary and Amending Budget 2009
- Approved the Access to ECDC Member States Data in TESSy by Third Parties document

The Management Board also:

- Noted the Director's Briefing on ECDC's Main Activities since the last meeting of the Management Board
- Noted the Technical Briefing on ECDC's Work in the Influenza A(H1N1)v Public Health Emergency
- Noted the Briefing on the interactions between ECDC and DG Research, including the 7th Framework Programme (FP7)
- Noted the Technical Briefing from Professor Andrzej Zielinski, National Institute of Hygiene, Polish National Institute of Public Health, and Dr Ilona Stefańska, Polish National Influenza Centre, Polish National Institute of Public Health
- Noted the ECDC 2010 Work Programme Priorities
- Noted the Director's Update on Organisational Changes
- Noted the Feedback on Surveys (How to Improve the Work of ECDC's AF and MB)
- Noted the Report from the New Management Board Working Group: Working with Member States: Needs, Expectations and Capacities
- Noted the Extension of ECDC Premises: future building for the Centre
- Noted the update on the Draft Seat Agreement
- Noted the update regarding the European Commission's Vision of a European System of Reference Laboratories for Pathogens for Humans
- Noted the update on JCG Meeting (Copenhagen, 21 April 2009)
- Noted the dates and places of its meetings in 2010

Opening and welcome by the Chair

1. The Chair of the Management Board (MB), Prof. Dr. Hubert Hrabcik, welcomed everyone to the 16th meeting. Special thanks were bestowed to the representatives of Poland for having invited the Board to Warsaw. The Chair highlighted that contact with Member States' institutions helps in bringing new ideas to ECDC.
2. A warm welcome was extended to the newly appointed members from Ireland and Romania and to the observer from WHO/Europe, Lucianne Licari, who will commence her work at ECDC as Head, Country Relations and Coordination, Director's Cabinet, effective 1 August 2009.
3. Apologies were duly received from Denmark, Latvia, Liechtenstein and Slovenia.

Keynote address from Mr Adam Fronczak, Under Secretary, Minister of Health, Polish Ministry of Health

4. Mr Fronczak welcomed everyone to Warsaw and presented an overview of health policies and activities in Poland. He listed several national programmes and campaigns coordinated by the Polish Ministry of Health. He also explained how control and prevention of infectious diseases are carried out in his country and emphasised that collaboration with ECDC is of vital importance to Poland.

Presentation from Dr Jaroslaw Pinkas, Director, National Institute of Hygiene, Polish National Institute of Public Health

5. Dr Pinkas welcomed his colleagues to Warsaw and gave a brief overview about the history of the Polish National Institute of Public Health and its noteworthy names from the past. Following his summary, he invited all participants to pay a visit to the Institute on 25 June 2009.

Item 1. Adoption of the Draft Agenda (and noting of the Declarations of Interest and proxy voting) (document MB16/2 Rev. 2)

6. The agenda was adopted without changes.
7. Declarations of Interest forms were duly distributed to the members for their completion. Under agenda item 5 (Access to ECDC Member State Data in TESSy by Third Parties), Ildefonso Hernández Aguado, Spain, declared that he may be a potential user in the future. Under agenda items 3 (Final Annual Accounts 2008) and 4 (Supplementary and Amending Budget 2009), Mr John F Ryan, European Commission declared that he is a sub-delegated Authorising Officer for DG SANCO. Under agenda item 5 (Access to ECDC

Member State Data in TESSy by Third Parties), he is responsible for EU legislation Decision 2119/98. Under agenda items 6 (Director's update on organisation changes), 9 (Director's Briefing on ECDC's Main Activities since the last meeting of the MB), 11 (Feedback on MB and AF Surveys), 13 (Report from the new MBWG) and 14 (Update on the Draft Seat Agreement), he declared that he is responsible for the Unit in charge of liaison with ECDC. With regard to agenda items 7 (ECDC 2010 Work Programme Priorities), 8 (Extension of ECDC Premises: Future Building for the Centre), 10 (Technical Briefing on ECDC's Work in the Influenza A(H1N1) Public Health Emergency), 12 (Briefing on the interactions between ECDC and DG Research, as well as on the Seventh Framework Programme [FP7]), he is Head of Unit for Health Threats within the European Commission.

Item 2. Adoption of the Draft Minutes of the Fifteenth meeting of the Management Board (Stockholm, 24-25 March 2009) (*document MB16/4*)

8. Anna Lönnroth, representing the European Commission's (EC) DG Research, pointed out a minor correction on page 3 of the draft minutes. On paragraph 14, it should read "Innovative Medicines Initiatives", instead of "eMedicines".

9. The representative of France pointed out that corrections/clarifications are needed in paragraphs 12, 25, 34, 61, 64 and 69. The Chair requested that she provide a draft with suggestions for these paragraphs.

10. The draft minutes with the above-noted requested corrections were then adopted.

Item 9. Director's Briefing on ECDC's Main Activities since the last meeting of the Management Board

11. The Chair first thanked and complimented the Director and ECDC staff for the excellent support given to Member States during the influenza pandemic.

12. ECDC's Director thanked the Polish delegates for their generous hospitality and for having kindly invited the MB to Warsaw, Poland. She also recalled that due to logistics, the 2010 meeting in Spain cannot be rescheduled for March or November and will convene instead in June. The Director reiterated that it is preferable to hold the annual meetings outside of Stockholm during March or November, since June is normally a very pleasant month to visit the Swedish capital. She also took the opportunity to reconfirm that Ireland will be hosting the 2011 meeting.

13. She then provided an update on the Centre's activities since the previous MB meeting. Since 27 April 2009, ECDC has been operating on Public Health

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Event (PHE) level 1 or 2 due to the influenza pandemic. The Director explained that, due to the extra work that the Centre has been executing, it may not be possible to fully implement the 2009 Work Programme (WP). She suggested implementing all of the important activities and ensuring a satisfactory budget execution, but proposed to circulate a review of the 2009 WP. In recalling Article 9 of the Rules of Procedure of the MB, the Director advocated that approval is needed and that a written procedure is the preferred option.

14. Among the other successful initiatives described by the Director were activities related to the Czech EU Presidency and plans for the Swedish Presidency in the second half of 2009; meetings held within the EU (including the Heads of Agencies meeting in June); WHO events; and country missions (China, Poland, Romania, EU Candidate and Potential Candidate Countries).

15. The Chair opened the floor for discussion and several members expressed agreement with the written procedure for approval of review of the 2009 Work Programme. Influenza was suggested as one of the priorities for the remainder of 2009, and one member requested ECDC to provide information on the types of documents the Centre is working on and their delivery dates to avoid duplication of work in the Member States.

16. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the role of ECDC in the influenza pandemic. Issues that were brought up included: influenza pandemic vaccine policy, antivirals policy, antivirals resistance, contact tracing and the transition between containment and mitigation.

17. The representatives of the EC, Andrzej Rys and John Ryan, explained that a meeting would be held in Jönköping, Sweden, the following week, to discuss most of the issues raised regarding the pandemic and prepare a document to facilitate the decisions that will be taken by the Council of Ministers.

18. The Director thanked the members for their support of the written procedure for approval of review of the 2009 Work Programme. She fully concurred with the points raised by the Board regarding new priorities for the Centre and added that it may also be necessary to drop some activities planned for 2010. She also pointed out that many recent ECDC publications address the issues raised by the members, such as surveillance in a pandemic and antivirals. In terms of vaccines, ECDC is working on this matter with the Commission and the European Medicines Agency (EMA). Furthermore, she clarified that the meeting in Jönköping will be at a strategic technical level and its objective is to develop a discussion of possible scenarios in a pandemic to prepare for a Council decision. She also thanked the Board for its support regarding inter-institutional collaborations, and added that ECDC always ensures that WHO is kept informed about its scientific output. She noted that while the Centre and WHO work well together at the technical level, there is a need to improve collaboration at the strategic level. Finally, following a question from the floor, the Director responded that ECDC does not have

access to national action plans for preparedness in their entirety since some of the health security systems may contain confidential information.

Item 10. Technical Briefing on ECDC's Work in the Influenza A(H1N1)v Public Health Emergency

19. Denis Coulombier, Head of ECDC Preparedness and Response Unit, presented the influenza A(H1N1)v situation report. He described the timeline of a pandemic distribution of cases by regions and countries. Presented figures indicate all regions of the world are already affected with the new virus, however, with varying intensity. Among the European countries, France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom report the highest cumulative numbers of confirmed cases of the influenza A(H1N1)v. He stressed the need to further improve reporting on the distribution of cases versus the rates of infection by the country. Although the reports contain the cumulative rates per 100.000, they do not include information about a country's total population. ECDC continuously monitors the influenza A(H1N1)v situation through individual and aggregated case reports provided by countries in EWRS. In addition, the regular 24-hour reports are published on ECDC's website.

20. In her absence, Denis Coulombier presented the epidemiology of influenza A(H1N1)v in Europe prepared by Andrea Ammon, Head of ECDC's Surveillance Unit. He brought up EWRS, the official information provided by the national public health websites, and routine ILI reporting as a major source of data used by ECDC to monitor and report the epidemiological situation related to influenza A(H1N1)v. Young people remain the most vulnerable group to the infections caused by influenza A(H1N1)v. He mentioned the next steps that are underway, such as plans for the migration of case-based data into TESSy, migration of the former EISS sentinel system platform, including the integration of reports (seasonal ILI/ARI and influenza A(H1N1)v). He also informed about the meeting with the Competent Bodies to review the surveillance strategy for the EU, which will be held on 14-15 July 2009.

21. The Chair pointed out that some scientists question the reliability of figures on influenza A(H1N1)v as it embraces only the group of confirmed (registered) cases but does not include undetected infections in people with mild symptoms, for instance.

22. Johan Giesecke, Head of ECDC's Scientific Advice Unit, informed of the need to prepare for a major spread of the pandemic virus in the EU following summer. He underlined that ECDC is prepared for this scenario and it has a list of activities to be carried out in the next few months. He stressed that activities related to a new influenza A(H1N1)v may influence planned work in other areas and the Work Programme for 2009 can be revised. He referred to ECDC's website wherein the most recent ECDC documents and information on influenza A(H1N1)v are published. The MB members have

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been acquainted with the emerging themes (from North America) related to a potential influenza A(H1N1)v pandemic scenario.

23. Karl Ekdahl, Head of ECDCs' Health Communication Unit, informed MB members about the upcoming communication activities related to influenza A(H1N1)v. ECDC targets its information towards health professionals and policymakers. The information addressed to the general public will take a long-term educational form. The main activities related to a new virus include the following: updating ECDC websites with edited documents; organising webcasts and on-line virtual press rooms for journalists; publishing an on-line magazine *Eurosurveillance* (the number of its subscribers is gradually increasing) and; supporting the Health Security Committee's communicators network.

24. The representative for Germany stressed the importance of proper wording of communication during the crisis situation. He recommended the avoidance of language such as "war and peace" per se. He referred to the Expert Conference on Pandemic Flu in Jönköping (2-3 July) and the fact that the Member States were not provided with sufficient information about the event (e.g. the main theme of the Conference, who should participate, the types of documents and materials that will be provided). He asked to specify when the information about the Conference will be made available. He added that Member States should be kept regularly informed about new materials which are to be published on ECDC's website. He also remarked on the importance of ensuring transparency and efficiency and avoiding the duplication of work in times of crises.

25. The representative for Spain congratulated the Centre for its recent work related to influenza A(H1N1)v. He stressed the need for information on risk assessment, scientific evidence and studies. These elements impact upon proper decision making (e.g. on taking appropriate preventive measures) especially when there are many unknowns related to the new influenza A(H1N1)v (e.g. undetected infections in people with mild symptoms).

26. Referring to the Conference in Jönköping, the Deputy Chair agreed that Member States should have access to information and documents and requested the Centre to formulate key themes and questions which are to be addressed during the Conference and to circulate them to the Member States prior to the event.

27. On the request of the representatives for Germany and Spain in the later part of the MB meeting, the Head of ECDC Scientific Advice Unit presented the list of previously produced ECDC on-line materials (divided in two groups: general information and technical information) related to influenza A(H1N1)v and also the list of planned publications.

28. The representative of the European Commission suggested that themes and documents which will be brought up during the Expert Conference on Pandemic Flu in Jönköping could be presented earlier and reviewed by the

Centre, the Health Security Committee and members of the MB. Thereafter, the specially formed Advisory Group, including members of ECDC, EC Health Security Committee, and EMEA, could present documents during the informal meeting of Ministers of Health (Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council), which takes place in Jönköping on 6-7 July.

29. The representatives from the Netherlands and Ireland inquired about who should represent countries during the Conference in Jönköping and what ECDC's expectations from the Member States are. They also requested receiving the documents that will be discussed during the Conference.

30. The Head of ECDC Scientific Advice Unit informed that the themes that will be discussed during the Conference will not go beyond what is already published and available on ECDC's website. However, he stated that he would prepare a more detailed list of topics in due course. Referring to the studies on influenza A(H1N1)v, he informed that for the purpose of the Conference, the list can be prepared in the form of an executive summary. He added that more detailed documents shall be available during the Surveillance and Studies in a Pandemic meeting (14-15 July 2009).

31. ECDC's Director informed that the MB will be kept informed of the latest work of the Centre pertaining to influenza A(H1N1)v on a weekly basis.

32. The representative for Sweden informed that due to the urgent situation related to influenza A(H1N1)v, the previously planned Expert Meeting on Zoonoses and Climate Change taking place in Jönköping on 2-3 July has been postponed and replaced with the Expert Conference on Pandemic Flu. In the later part of the MB meeting, she briefly presented the main themes of the workshops, aims for the expert conference, as well as the information on practical arrangements.

33. The representative for Italy suggested elaborating the strategy of tackling with the new virus. There are many uncertainties and the real impact of influenza A(H1N1)v remains unknown. Therefore, there is urgent need to define precisely what is required to properly assess the threat. He suggested developing a document about uncertainties related to the new virus.

34. The representative of the European Commission suggested gaining from the experiences of countries outside Europe in tackling the pandemic.

35. The representative from the United Kingdom updated MB members with the country's latest experience in tackling the new cases of influenza A(H1N1)v. She underlined the necessity to be well prepared before the onset of the winter season as it may bring new cases of influenza A(H1N1)v. The long-run preparedness should not be underestimated. Although the UK has been preparing for a pandemic situation for two years now, the results show that improvements are needed. She cited a cluster approach and shifting activities to a local level (clinical diagnosis, laboratory diagnosis) as being

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highly efficient during pandemics. She stated that a country's policy should be flexible, and if necessary, adjusted to the local needs. The seasonal flu vaccination programme should remain ongoing (75% of UK population over 65 years of age vaccinate against seasonal flu). Referring to antiviral policy, the representative expressed a willingness to share the experience with other Member States. Hand hygiene and hospital hygiene per se have been mentioned as commonly promoted influenza preventive measures. A sufficient number of vaccines can be purchased and the national policy assumes that 100% of the UK population will be able to receive the vaccine against flu. The timeline of its delivery is being prepared. She also mentioned media pressure as one of the key factors in stimulating the decision-making process at the local level (e.g. closing schools) in certain parts of the country. She asked the EC and ECDC for advice on policymaking and taking decisions at the local level.

36. The Chair suggested that the UK prepare a document on tackling influenza A(H1N1)v in the country and to circulate it among interested Member States.

37. The representative for the UK declared that such a document already exists and can be circulated during the Expert Conference on Pandemic Flu in Jönköping on 2-3 July.

38. The representative for Austria raised the feasibility of having 100% of the population vaccinated against seasonal flu. She noted that in many countries, citizens are reluctant or do not vaccinate (17% of the population of Austria receive the vaccine against seasonal flu).

Item 12. Briefing on the interactions between ECDC and DG Research, including the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7)

39. The Alternate for the EC, Anna Lönnroth, representing the EC's DG Research, presented an overview of her organisation's structure and of the Seventh Framework Programme's (FP7) activities in the field of health. Within the health theme, the programme supports research in infectious diseases, and she focused her briefing on those. Among the EU-funded fields of research are: antimicrobial resistance, influenza, HIV, malaria, tuberculosis, potentially new and (re-)emerging epidemics and neglected infectious diseases.

40. One member commented on the lack of proper interaction between basic scientific research and public health. Further work in this field is required. The Chair underlined that success in the area of public health can be achieved through a collaborative approach among politicians and scientists.

Item 15. Technical Briefing from Professor Andrzej Zielinski, National Institute of Hygiene, Polish National Institute of Public Health, and Dr Ilona Stefańska, Polish National Influenza Centre, Polish National Institute of Public Health

41. Professor Zielinski, from the Department of Epidemiology NIZP-PZH & IHR National Focal Point, briefed the MB members about the Polish experience during the current pandemic. He described how the Polish health authorities reacted during the first few days of the pandemic and how an entire structure was put into action to diagnose cases of influenza A(H1N1)v. He informed that the first confirmed case of influenza A(H1N1)v was diagnosed in Poland on 13 May 2009 by the lab of the Influenza Centre. He explained that, at present, the enhanced surveillance system in Poland is being developed based on weekly compulsory reports of influenza and influenza-like syndromes. Further planning includes: virology diagnosis of all serious respiratory syndromes, reports of all acute and distant flu complications and the monitoring of influenza drug resistance during pandemic. Along with enhanced surveillance, a deep review of the pandemic preparedness plan is being carried out. The plan embraces the public health preventive measures, slowing down the spread of infections related to the oncoming pandemic, as well as minimising its social and economic impact.

42. Dr Stefańska, National Influenza Centre (NIC) of the National Institute of Public Health – National Institute of Hygiene (NIZP-PZH), acquainted MB members with how the diagnostics of influenza A(H1N1)v are carried out in Poland. The NIC is the only institution in the country that performs diagnostic tests of the influenza A(H1N1)v virus. Up to 24 June 2009, 233 specimens had been tested by NIC, but only 13 of them (5.83%) tested positive for the new influenza A(H1N1)v. The highest percentage of suspected human cases of influenza A(H1N1)v derived from middle-aged people. The majority of laboratory-confirmed cases were male and middle-aged patients.

Item 3. Final Annual Accounts 2008 (*document MB16/5*)

43. Theodoros Orfanos, Head of Finance and Accounting, ECDC, presented the developments regarding ECDC's financial accounts for 2008 since the MB approved them in March 2009. In April, the Court of Auditors visited the Centre and did not identify any omissions or misstatements, attesting that the Final Accounts do not differ from the provisional version presented in March.

44. Although the Court's preliminary Statement of Assurance gave a positive opinion on both the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of the transactions, the Court commented on the high level of carryovers, the number of vacant posts at the end of 2008, and the possible threat to the Centre's staff members due to the lack of a Seat Agreement and the 'personnummer' issue.

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45. The Chair of the Audit Committee (AC) and member for Sweden, Iréne Nilsson-Carlsson, provided feedback from the meeting held on 23 June 2009. The AC has reviewed the accounts and the audit findings, and on that basis, prepared a draft opinion on the accounts, which was put forward to the MB for decision.

46. The Final Annual Accounts 2008 were approved by unanimity.

Item 4. Supplementary and Amending Budget 2009 (*document MB16/6*)

47. Theodoros Orfanos presented the first Supplementary and Amending Budget for 2009, which consists of: amendment of the amount of EFTA countries contribution from € 1 000 000 to € 1 154 400; adjustment of the 2007 reuses from € 1 600 000 to €1 595 489.18; the inscription in the Budget of € 192 817 for actions with Candidate and Potential Candidate Countries in 2009; and the increase in the Establishment Table by 40 temporary agent (TA) posts after the amendment was approved by the European Parliament.

48. One member inquired about how ECDC is moving ahead with the recruitment of 40 new Temporary Agent posts, to which the Director responded that several posts have been advertised and it is anticipated that the majority of them will be filled. However, there is still a high turnover of staff, she added, and those positions need to be refilled. Although the pool of specialist staff in Europe is small, she said, highly qualified staff is more important than speedy recruitment. By the end of 2010, the Centre will be fully established and all of the posts will be filled.

49. Another question related to the strategy to spend the budget dedicated to EU Candidate and Potential Candidate Countries. The Director explained that ECDC is already working towards establishing Memoranda of Understanding with these countries. The resources would be used for supporting these countries essentially in the area of preparedness and response. A final question pertained to the strategy to improve the execution of the budget. The Director responded that while the commitment rate is high, on the payment side, ECDC has been reducing carryovers by three percent every year.

50. The Chair of the Audit Committee suggested that the MB decide according to the proposal.

51. The Supplementary and Amending Budget 2009 was adopted by unanimity.

Item 7. ECDC 2010 Work Programme Priorities (*document MB16/9 Rev.1*)

52. The Director presented the first draft of the 2010 Work Programme Priorities for discussion with the MB. A detailed list of activities for 2010 will be prepared by ECDC during the summer and the final version of the

document will be sent to the MB for approval in November 2009. In 2010, ECDC will reach full capacity in terms of resources (budget and staff) and the year will also mark a turning point in strategic terms: the main focus will shift from Public Health Functions to Disease-specific Programmes (DSP).

53. The Director introduced a list of activities based on priorities for scientific advice ranked and approved by the Advisory Forum (AF) and key activities for disease-specific programmes and public health functions, also listed in document MB16/9 Rev.1. She suggested that in the future these priorities be classified as a “basic package of deliverables”.

54. One member inquired about the ranking of priorities. Johan Giesecke, ECDC’s Chief Scientist, explained that the AF was allocated a certain number of points to distribute in each area of activity. Therefore, the points only indicate priorities within each specific area, and it does not mean that one area is more important than the other.

55. One member suggested the inclusion of activities related to vulnerable groups in the Work Programme, such as migrant populations. The Director responded that ECDC is already working on this and reports in this area will soon be published.

56. One member inquired about a possible reduction of ECDC’s budget in the future. John Ryan, representing the EC, responded that the EC is also suffering from the financial crisis and is under pressure to constantly review staff expenditures and to operate using a lower budget. The Council, he said, has already made severe budget cuts to the Commission, including the staff budgets of other EU institutions during the first reading of the Budget 2010. He recommended prudence and having in place a Plan B, in case the budget expected by ECDC is reduced. However, due to the summer holidays, it is unlikely that any decision regarding this will be done before the middle of September 2009.

57. In the light of this discussion, the Director said that the pandemic situation is one Plan B and assured the MB that she will study two possible scenarios for the budget. By November, she will have a clear picture about the budget and the implementation plan. In response to a question from the floor, she explained that a detailed internal planning of the Work Programme will include cost itemisation by activity, which would facilitate the selection of items to drop, if necessary.

58. The representative of the EC, John Ryan, noted that the EC is planning to update the Community Influenza Plan in 2010 and will need ECDC’s input and support. Other items suggested by him to be included in the 2010 Work Programme include best practices in i) risk assessments for influenza A(H1N1); ii) scientific advice (underpinning measures for the Network Committee); iii) childhood vaccination; iv) antimicrobial resistance (patient safety); v) emerging and vector-borne diseases and; vi) HIV AIDS

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(neighbouring countries). He also underlined that the work should be targeted towards those Member States with the greatest needs.

59. The Chair affirmed that the Work Programme priorities will be further discussed and fine tuned possibly via teleconference and a paper will be presented for the Board's approval at the next meeting in November.

Item 6. Director's update on organisational changes (follow-up to external evaluation and internal needs) (*document MB16/8*)

60. The Director presented a review of the internal organisation of the Centre with the objective of strengthening corporate leadership and the disease-specific programmes. The proposed new organisation chart includes the establishment of a Deputy Director position, the separation of the roles of Chief Scientist and Head of Scientific Advice Unit, the upgrade of the Coordinator of the Cabinet to Head of Cabinet, and the creation of a Corporate Communication function. The new plan also aims at further developing the work of the Executive Management Committee (EXC), and other changes might be required in the future, such as a strategic advisor post.

61. Regarding the DSP, the proposal is to move away from a matrix structure and to have instead sections shared by two units (twinning arrangements). The section heads would have budget and line management responsibilities and their spokesperson would attend EXC meetings. The Director reminded the Board that it is necessary to move slowly with these new changes due to the fact that after September, ECDC could have a new director. She heeded against making any hasty decisions without the new director's input.

62. In the discussion that ensued, members generally agreed that the new director needs to be involved in the decisions. Some members acknowledged that more details are needed on the job profiles and the responsibilities for each position should be listed and discussed at a subsequent MB meeting.

63. The Director remarked that the MB must be involved in the decision-making due to the required upgrading of the posts, but obviously decisions should be delayed until the new Director is in place and all decisions on selections should be done by the new Director. She assured the MB that she will clarify the procedures for setting up and upgrading positions and also for the other proposals. The changes should be included in the Multi-annual Staff Policy Plan. In response to a question from the floor about the flexibility of the proposed organisation structure, the Director said that it should maintain the same flexibility as with the matrix structure, since most ECDC staff have specialised knowledge in more than one area, and it would be possible to quickly bring resources to priorities, if needed.

64. One member inquired whether these changes would depend on budget growth. The Director replied that the posts are not necessarily new – they can be created by upgrading old posts.

Item 11. Feedback on Surveys (How to Improve the Work of ECDC's AF and MB)

65. The Director presented the results of two surveys completed in the beginning of June 2009, about how to improve the work of the Management Board and the Advisory Forum. The results were analysed separately and described in the presentation.

66. The main conclusions drawn from the surveys were that the basic structures for both groups are well established, but both need a facilitating structure to improve the efficiency of the meetings. An internet-based, password protected exchange of information and shared minutes of meetings were suggested. An annual joint meeting was also considered, albeit details need to be specified, such as whether an additional meeting would be needed or simply an existing one, and if it would have a specific theme. Another conclusion from the surveys is that the role of Competent Bodies (CB) needs further clarification.

67. The Director proposed that the final report on the surveys be presented at the 17th MB meeting in November and subsequently at the 20th AF meeting in December, together with proposed terms of reference, composition, rotation and selection for the MB Executive Committee, which would be elected at the end of 2009 and operational from 2010 onwards.

68. Members of the Board requested to receive the results of the surveys in advance of the November MB meeting. The Director confirmed that she will share the documentation in due course. In response to a question about how the incompatibilities in the survey answers will be dealt with, the Director explained that the rules of procedure of the AF are defined by the MB, thus the latter will decide on this issue. She said that the issues related to the AF will be discussed at the next AF meeting and reported to the MB in November. She also clarified that there were two questionnaires: one for the MB and another for the AF (and not the Competent Bodies). She also invited members of the MB to work with ECDC on documents about how to work with the Competent Bodies.

69. One member recalled that the surveys dealt with methodology of work, and the external evaluation of ECDC stipulated that the roles of the AF and MB need to be defined. In his opinion, defining methodology without defining the role is troublesome.

70. The Director clarified that the criteria for the selection of members of the MB Executive Committee will be included in the paper that will be put forward to the MB in November. The availability of members will be a decisive factor in the selection process. The existing ECDC Joint Working Group on Working with Member States: Needs, Expectations and Capacities might aid in clarifying the various issues and relations vis-à-vis the Competent Bodies.

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71. Some members pointed out that the surveys' results were confusing, and some expressed difficulties with the terminology (Steering Committee versus Working Group, for instance).

72. It was not clear to some members if the majority of members actually support the creation of an MB Executive Committee. One member, for instance, recalled concerns among members at the previous MB meeting and cautioned about the potential for marginalisation of members who are not affiliated with the MB Executive Committee.

73. The Chair stated the survey results clearly demonstrate that the majority of respondents do not wish to modify the current structure of the governing bodies. The majority of respondents also affirmed the need for an MB Executive Committee in order to strengthen the efficiency of their work.

74. The Chair confirmed the next steps will be to present the results in the next AF meeting in September. During the fall, a document will be prepared for the MB/AF meetings in November/December 2009. The document will include the final reports from the surveys, including a proposal for Terms of Reference, composition, rotation and selection for the MB Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will be selected by the end of 2009 and will become operational from 2010 onwards.

Item 5. Access to ECDC Member States Data in TESSy by Third Parties (*document MB16/7*)

75. As agreed in the previous meeting, Andrea Ammon, Head of ECDC's Surveillance Unit, presented a revised version of the document that describes the procedures for third parties to have access to MS data contained in the TESSy database. Comments received from the MB were incorporated in this version as well as new annexes added (a data request form, the terms of reference for peer-review group, and the model contract on access to and use of TESSy data). ECDC is obliged to make its information available, and a number of examples of legislation related to this topic were shown. Andrea Ammon assured the MB that the proposed document for approval takes into account current legislation and suggested that the document be reviewed in 2010.

76. Some members requested clarifications regarding payment for the data and whether Member States will be able to approve requests for their data. The representative of Malta also commented that small countries need to be informed when case-based data are supplied to third parties. Andrea Ammon responded that payments will not be done for the data itself but for the effort of extracting it from the database. She also said that all countries that supply data for a certain disease will be able to see data from other countries for that disease. Publications, she continued, will be sent to Member States for comments, not agreement. It is also foreseen that Member States will be informed of requests for their data. Review groups may involve a lot of time, but a trial run can also be used to determine the extent of the workload. The

representative from the Commission, John Ryan, suggested some items to be included in the review 2010: i) the review of the fee system and; ii) the satisfaction of the third parties with the system.

77. Without objections, the proposed document was approved by the MB. ECDC will review the document again in the November 2010 meeting of the MB.

Item 13. Report from the New Management Board Working Group: Working with Member States: Needs, Expectations and Capacities (*document MB16/11*)

78. The Chair presented a summary of the activities of the new working group responsible for analysing the needs, expectations and capacities of the Member States vis-à-vis ECDC's Founding Regulation. The Chair introduced the composition of the group, its terms of reference, the main discussion points of the first meeting (8 June 2009) and a proposed workflow. According to this workflow, a draft report is expected to be finalised by March 2010 and a final report is planned to be presented to the MB in June 2010.

79. There were no comments or questions from the floor about this item.

Item 8. Extension of ECDC Premises: future building for the Centre (*document MB16/10 Rev.1*)

80. Elisabeth Robino, Acting Head of ECDC's Administrative Services Unit, informed that the current building capacity is insufficient to cover the needs arising from the Centre's growth. ECDC's current premises have a capacity of about 275 work stations and the staff is spread over three unconnected buildings in proximity to each other. There is an urgent need to accommodate staff as well as for new meeting and technical rooms (e.g. servers, machines, etc.). ECDC has initiated discussions with its landlord (Akademiska Hus) for the construction of a new building. In order to proceed with the project, ECDC would sign an agreement with Akademiska Hus for the planning phase (including programme specifications and plans, design and construction documents). The envisaged agreement provides that the cost of this phase would be covered by future rents. It also states that, should the Centre decide not to pursue the project or not to sign the lease at the end of the planning/design phase, Akademiska Hus would be entitled to compensation from ECDC to cover costs incurred. It was mentioned that the future average rent would remain in accordance with the local market prices in Solna.

81. A discussion ensued about the purpose and the timing of the project. The representative of the Commission inquired about the rationale for ECDC's current planned expansion of the premises. He suggested generating space by moving certain activities to other ECDC buildings (e.g. EOC). He also suggested the potential use of other premises (e.g. within the Karolinska

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Institute campus or other places in Stockholm). He stressed the difficulty to discuss the proposed project as it needs further clarifications (e.g. the way the new space will be used), more details including a cost-benefit analysis of different options. He recalled the planning policy of the European Commission, which assumes “minimum space” rather than “maximum space” required to accommodate staff. He underlined that it is premature to take any decisions as there is a new EU Parliament and there might be implications to the Centre’s budget. He inquired about potential consequences of not taking the decision immediately.

82. Several members acknowledged the need for expansion of the premises, but underlined that the proposal requires further analysis of costs and the cost-benefit analysis of other options are required.

83. The Director informed that the selection of ECDC premises at Tomtebodavägen was the best option at the time. The premises’ rental costs are below market value. The current contract with the landlord remains effective until 2018. In the future, ECDC would pay more if it does not extend the lease contract with Akademiska Hus. The Director stressed the lack of suitable premises in Stockholm that offer satisfactory working conditions at a reasonable cost. She added that ECDC staff will increase to 350 employees by the end of 2010, but the number of desks needed can be expanded even further due to EPIET fellows and interns. All factors must be considered. Referring to the EOC, she stressed the need to move it to a new location as it operates in unsafe and unsecure conditions. The Director also mentioned an urgent need for a cafeteria, a place to meet ECDC guests, including an additional space for representatives of Member States. As a comparison, she recalled that other European agencies (e.g. ECHA in Finland) are able to offer a separate office for each EU country when they attend meetings and events at the Agency.

84. One member asked whether the construction work would be paid from the previously approved budget or whether new funds would be required. The Director clarified that the construction work will be financed from the existing approved budget and countries will thus not be paying any additional costs. The Chair added that financing of the project is a matter of allocation of costs within the same budget.

85. Elisabeth Robino stressed that the agreement of MB members is needed to kick start the planning phase of the project and that the first step is the notification of the project by the MB to the budgetary authority. She recalled that the planning phase agreement provides for compensation of incurred costs to Akademiska Hus should ECDC decide not to pursue the project; the maximum amount due in that case was not yet fixed.

86. The Director added that the final approval is in the hands of the budget authority and that the lack of consensus from the MB about starting the project may delay the entire process.

87. The Chair asked for the approval of MB members to initiate the planning phase. He also requested to receive additional details regarding potential compensation to Akademiska Hus including the contract with the construction company (the assessment of associated risks).

88. One member suggested contacting the construction company to specify consequences if there is no decision taken on the planning phase during the MB meeting, as well as to specify the obligations of both parties.

89. The representative for France asked if the document MB16/10 Rev.1 will be presented to the budget authority. She pointed out that it lacks many important points (e.g. proper justification of the project, potential costs, etc.) and that it cannot be accepted in its present form. Several members agreed that the document is incomplete and should not be presented to the budget authority as it is.

90. The Director stated that ECDC will include in the revised document different options for consideration, and a revised document can be presented to the budget authority after receiving initial approval from the MB.

91. The Chair proposed to update document MB16/10 Rev.1 within four weeks and then the MB would vote via written procedure on the planning phase of the construction in order to start work according to the schedule.

92. The members voted on the proposal of the Chair. Eleven members were against deciding on this issue via written procedure, and 14 members voted in favour of the proposal.

93. The Member from Poland suggested that the MB agree to a conditional decision if the precise figure of ECDC's potential compensation to Akademiska Hus and the financial details of the contract with the construction company are made known.

94. Due to the balance of those in favour versus those in opposition to advancing the process, the Chair resolved that the paper will be revised and finalised for decision for the next MB meeting. He also confirmed that a working group will be formed in September in order to make progress on the revised document. The MB will take a decision on this matter at the next meeting in November.

Item 14. Update on the Draft Seat Agreement

95. The representative for Sweden informed the MB members that ECDC has decided to wait for the impact of the new Swedish legislation on "Personnummer" before finalising the Seat Agreement. The new legislation on "Personnummer" will be in place from 1 July 2009. The Swedish Ministry of Social Affairs will follow up the impact on the conditions for ECDC staff. The

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representative for Sweden will update the MB members on the situation during the next meeting in November.

96. Elisabeth Robino confirmed that ECDC needed to assess implementation of the new legislation on the situation of staff and that other issues (voting rights, social protection for working spouses, etc.) were still pending.

97. John F Ryan, EC representative, requested that ECDC provide him with theoretical and practical points regarding the realisation of voting rights of ECDC staff situated in Sweden.

98. The Chair added that the MB, together with the EC, will be monitoring the living conditions of ECDC staff in Sweden under the new law. The issue of voting rights of ECDC staff in Sweden will also be raised during the next MB meeting in November.

Item 16. Other matters

99. In connection with a letter sent by the representative of Germany to the ECDC Director, the Director clarified that the European Surveillance System (TESSy) is maintained by ECDC and it is the only data ECDC systematically collects from Member States and therefore there is no need to expand the document to cover other data.

a) Update regarding the European Commission's Vision of a European System of Reference Laboratories for Pathogens for Humans

100. The representative of the European Commission referred to European programmes linked to activities of laboratories. He informed about tenders organised and monitored by the EC. He recalled the Second Programme of Community Action in the Field of Health (2008–2013) adopted jointly by the European Parliament and the Council. This programme aims at ensuring high quality diagnostic cooperation between laboratories to respond to health threats. In addition, it encourages the establishment of a system of Community reference laboratories.

b) Update on JCG Meeting (Copenhagen, 21 April 2009)

101. Arun Nanda, WHO Liaison to ECDC and Adviser to the Director, presented examples of political, strategic and operational collaboration between WHO/Europe and ECDC in the period between 2005 and 2009. He mentioned that prevention of and response to outbreaks is an international and multi-agency task based on solid national systems of Member States. He brought up examples of efficient collaboration between WHO and ECDC and concluded with some principles for collaboration.

c) Confirmation of dates and places of future meetings

102. The following dates and places of meetings of the Management Board in 2010 were proposed:

- MB18 – 17-18 March 2010, ECDC, Stockholm
- MB19 – 17-18 June 2010, Lazareto, Spain
- MB20 – 9-10 November 2010, ECDC, Stockholm

103. The Board noted the above-noted dates and places of its meetings in 2010.

104. The Chair then proceeded to adjourn the meeting, thanking the members of the MB for the interesting and helpful discussions. He also took the opportunity to thank ECDC staff for having prepared the meeting, including the documentation, and thanked the interpreters for their superior work.