



ECDC Management Board

# Minutes of the Twenty-eighth Meeting of the ECDC Management Board Stockholm, 19-20 June 2013

*Adopted by the Management Board at its Twenty-ninth meeting, 13-14 November 2013*

## Contents

Summary of Proceedings – ECDC Management Board Meeting.....	1
Opening and welcome from the Chair (and noting the Representatives).....	2
Welcome from the Director, ECDC.....	2
Item 1 – Adoption of the draft agenda (and noting the declarations of interest and proxy voting, if any) ( <i>Documents MB28/2 Rev.3; MB28/3 Rev.2</i> ).....	2
Item 2 – Adoption of the draft minutes of the 27 <sup>th</sup> meeting of the Management Board (Stockholm, 20-21 March 2013) ( <i>Document MB24/4</i> ).....	2
Item 3 – Election: Appointment of reporting officers for the appraisal of the Director.....	3
Item 5 – ECDC Management Board meeting dates for 2014 and 2015 ( <i>Document MB28/6</i> ).....	4
Item 10 – Update from ECDC on the main activities since the last meeting of the Management Board (20-21 March 2013) ( <i>Document MB28/Info Note 1</i> ).....	4
Item 6 – Report on Implementation of the Work Programme 2013 up until present ( <i>Document MB28/7 Rev.1</i> ).....	5
Item 7 – ECDC Strategic Multi-annual Programme (2014-2020) ( <i>Document MB28/8</i> ).....	5
Item 8 – Summary of discussions held at the 23 <sup>rd</sup> meeting of the ECDC Audit Committee (18 June 2013) including its recommendations.....	7
Item 8a – IAS Strategic Audit Plan (2014-2016) ( <i>Document MB28/9</i> ).....	7
Item 8b – Final Annual Accounts 2012, including the Report on Budget and Financial Management ( <i>Document MB28/10, MB28/14</i> ).....	8
Item 8c – First Supplementary and Amending Budget 2013 ( <i>Document MB28/11</i> ).....	8
Item 8d – Update on Framework Financial Regulation.....	8
Item 9 – Roundtable Discussion: Proposal for the future of EPIET, based on the recent EPIET Consultation ( <i>Document MB28/12 Rev.1</i> ).....	8
Item 11 – Roundtable discussion on ECDC staff matters.....	12
Item 11a – Evaluation of reorganisation.....	12
Item 11b – Reinforcement of support to staff related to accommodation search.....	12
Item 11c – Career development in ECDC.....	12
Item 11d – Questions and discussion.....	14
Item 12 – ECDC assessment toolbox to evaluate the capacity of EU enlargement countries in communicable disease prevention and control ( <i>Document MB28/13 Rev.1</i> ).....	16
ECDC Management Board Working Group on New Business Models and Financing on Large-scale EU Level Activities.....	16
Item 5 – ECDC Management Board meeting dates for 2014 and 2015 ( <i>Document MB28/6</i> ).....	17
Item 14 – Update from the European Commission:.....	18
Item 14a – Update on the roadmap on the inter-institutional Common Approach for decentralised agencies.....	18
Item 15 – Update from the EU Presidencies.....	18
Item 15a – Update from Ireland.....	18
Item 15b – Update from Lithuania.....	18
Item 13a – Avian influenza H7N9.....	19

Item 13b – Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV).....	19
Item 13c – Hepatitis A .....	19
Item 16 – Any other business .....	19



## Summary of Proceedings – ECDC Management Board Meeting

The Twenty-eighth meeting of the ECDC Management Board (MB) convened in Stockholm, Sweden, on 19-20 June 2013. During the meeting, the Management Board:

- adopted the draft agenda;
- adopted the draft minutes of the Twenty-seventh Management Board meeting under the condition that agenda items 14b, 14c and 14d will be submitted to the Board via electronic communication;
- unanimously appointed Else Smith, Member, Denmark, and John F Ryan, Member, European Commission, as the reporting officers for the appraisal of the ECDC Director;
- rejected the proposal for all future Management Board meetings to convene exclusively in Sweden and stated that the existent Rules of Procedure regulate the issue sufficiently. The proposal was withdrawn by the Director;
- took note of the update from the ECDC on the main activities since the last meeting of the Management Board, including the update on the second independent external evaluation;
- approved the report on implementation of the Work Programme 2013 up until present;
- unanimously agreed to approve the general orientation of the revisable Strategic Multi-annual Programme (2014-2020), (SMAP) subject to the amendments as discussed, and agreed that the final version of SMAP, including the budget and indicators, will be submitted for adoption during the next Board meeting in November 2013;
- agreed to postpone the adoption of the IAS Strategic Audit Plan 2014-2016 until the 29<sup>th</sup> Management Board Meeting in November 2013, based on the recommendations of the ECDC Audit Committee;
- adopted the Final Annual Accounts 2012, including the Report on Budget and Financial Management, as well as approved the text of the Draft Opinion of the Management Board on the Final Accounts 2012;
- took note of the First Supplementary and Amending Budget 2013;
- took note of the update on Framework Financial Regulation; a draft Framework Financial Regulation will be presented to the Board at its next meeting in November 2013;
- agreed that a clear draft proposal on the future of EPIET should be sent to the Management Board in time for the next meeting in November 2013; agreed with the proposed principles of governance as presented by the ECDC, with a caveat that further clarity should be ensured on the roles of all stakeholders at different levels; supported the principle of rotation; rejected the suggestion to create a group of 'wise men and women';
- took note of the results of the various surveys undertaken by ECDC, including the Staff Committee; requested the Director to present a written report after the June 2013 Management Board meeting on the conclusions of the results of the surveys (reorganisation, staff surveys, etc.) and the measures taken or planned to improve and strengthen the structures giving the Centre a long-term stability in its working environment in order to prepare the discussions of the next MB;
- took note of the ECDC assessment toolbox on the evaluation of the capacity of EU enlargement countries in communicable disease prevention and control;
- agreed to the initial composition of the Working Group on New Business Models and Financing on Large-scale EU Level Activities (Germany, Finland, France, the Netherlands and Spain); the European Commission will look into the most efficient way to support the Working Group and whether it can revise its decision to participate therein in an appropriate manner;
- unanimously approved the meeting dates for Management Board meetings for 2014 and took note of the provisional meeting dates for 2015;
- took note of the update on the roadmap on the follow up of the inter-institutional Common Approach for decentralised agencies;
- took note of the updates on the Irish and Lithuanian EU Presidencies;
- took note of the updates on recent threats in the EU and abroad and on the Long-term Surveillance Strategy (2014-2020).

## Opening and welcome from the Chair (and noting the Representatives)

1. Françoise Weber, Chair of the ECDC Management Board (MB), welcomed all the participants to the Twenty-eighth meeting. Special thanks of appreciation were extended to Sweden for the reception and dinner at the Rosenbad on the previous day where a strategic co-operation agreement between the ECDC and the Swedish Government was signed.<sup>1</sup>

2. The Chair welcomed Dzintars Mozgis, newly appointed Alternate, Latvia, and Cornelius Schmaltz, newly appointed Alternate, European Commission. Apologies had been received from the Czech Republic (proxy was given to Germany), Greece, Liechtenstein, Malta, Slovenia, and Jacques Scheres, Member representing the European Parliament (proxy was given to Meni Malliori, Member representing the European Parliament). Paula Vasconcelos, Alternate, Portugal, informed of a last-minute change in the Portuguese participation. It was also noted that Françoise Weber, Member, France, and Chair, as well as Helen Shirley-Quirk, Member, United Kingdom, would be unable to attend the meeting on Day 2. In reference to this, it was informed that the Deputy Chair, Tiiu Aro, would chair the meeting on the second day.

## Welcome from the Director, ECDC

3. Marc Sprenger, Director, ECDC, welcomed delegates on his behalf and noted that he was looking forward to fruitful discussions during the meeting.

## Item 1 – Adoption of the draft agenda (and noting the declarations of interest and proxy voting, if any) (*Documents MB28/2 Rev.3; MB28/3 Rev.2*)\*

4. The Chair asked the Board whether anyone has any conflicts of interests to declare in reference to the latest draft agenda. There were none.

5. There were no objections made by the Board in reference to live streaming of the sessions on EPIET and SMAP to ECDC staff.

6. In reference to the latest draft agenda, it was questioned why the Long-term Surveillance Strategy (LTSS) 2014-2020 had not been included. The Chair recalled the discussions on SMAP during the previous meeting and noted that it was agreed that the LTSS could be discussed in depth by the ECDC Advisory Forum. In reference to this matter, it was requested to submit the decisions taken by the Board shortly following each meeting. It was confirmed that the follow up to decisions from previous meetings are already included into the presentation of the ECDC Director on the update on the main activities.<sup>2</sup>

7. To leave more room for discussions, it was proposed to delete agenda items 14b to 14c.

The draft agenda was adopted under the condition that agenda items 14b, 14c and 14d will be submitted to the Board via electronic communication.

## Item 2 – Adoption of the draft minutes of the 27<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Management Board (Stockholm, 20-21 March 2013) (*Document MB24/4*)\*

The draft minutes of the Twenty-seventh Management Board meeting (20-21 March 2013) were adopted.

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the document submitted to the Board on 12 June 2013.

\* Item for decision.

<sup>2</sup> Item 10 - Updates on ECDC main activities.

\* Item for decision.

### Item 3 – Election: Appointment of reporting officers for the appraisal of the Director\*

8. The Chair recalled the written procedure and the results of same on this matter.<sup>3</sup> No additional expressions of interest were made.

The Management Board unanimously appointed Else Smith, Member, Denmark, and John F Ryan, Member, European Commission, as the reporting officers for the appraisal of the ECDC Director.

### Item 4 – Proposal for future Management Board Meetings to convene in Sweden (*Document MB28/5*)\*

9. The proposal for future Management Board meetings was recalled. It was clarified that the proposal has been drafted in order to alleviate the logistical arrangements as well as to avoid any additional costs.

10. The Board discussed this matter extensively. The added value of hosting meetings in other Member States was highlighted and it was thus proposed to leave the door open for the future, notwithstanding the current financial situation in Europe. Some members challenged the need to convene three meetings a year. It was also proposed to receive an illustration of costs for each meeting.

11. The real need for deciding on the presented proposal was questioned in the light of the Rules of Procedure, which already states that the Board should meet at least twice a year. It was reinforced that the Board should have flexibility to arrange meetings outside of Sweden. It was also noted that in some cases, it might perhaps be more cost effective to hold meetings in Sweden, recalling the comment made earlier on reducing costs.

12. The representative from the European Commission pointed out that it is vital to maintain certainty in the scheduling of Board meetings for planning purposes. In reference to the location of meetings, the added value of visiting Member States was further echoed. It was also commented that the Centre should not permanently retreat to Stockholm, based on the essence of the work carried out where contact between countries and ECDC is most vital and should not be affected.

13. In defence of the proposal, it was recalled that the Board meetings of the sister agencies, such as EFSA, EMA and ECHA, are carried out at their headquarters for justified reasons. Arranging meetings abroad is usually more expensive, notwithstanding complex logistics and human resources needs. It was thereby suggested to make the decision for a two-year period and thereafter re-evaluate the decision in 2015. The Chair was amenable to the proposal with a caveat that the decision should not exclude possibilities for Member States to indicate their interest to arrange the meeting in the future.

14. It was questioned whether deciding for the next two years would rule out any possibilities in holding a meeting abroad during this time. It was suggested to revise the wording of the decision in order to clarify that the meetings will be held in Sweden by default, however, should a Member State indicate their willingness to arrange a meeting in their respective country, it should be possible to do so, provided the ECDC Director is informed in sufficient time.

15. In reference to allowing possibilities for arranging the meetings abroad in relation to an EU Presidency, for example, it was added that it would not specifically need to be a Management Board meeting, but any other meeting where the Board members could be invited.

16. With regards to ECDC's sister agencies and their Board meetings, it was pointed out that it should not be compared as to the work of EMA, for example, which significantly differs from the work of ECDC, which is much more closely tied to Member States and the communication and relations between the Centre and the countries. It was also recommended not to tie Board meetings held abroad only to EU Presidencies as there may be other reasons to arrange meetings outside Sweden.

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\* Item for decision.

<sup>3</sup> For details, please refer to written procedure correspondence (DIR-13-0904-MSgipa and DIR-13-1075-MSsima) sent to the Management Board via email on 24 May and 14 June 2013, respectively.

\* Item for decision.

The latter was argued by the representative from the Commission who noted that as there is a lack of general awareness about EU Agencies amongst European citizens; the link to EU Presidencies could help to raise awareness.

17. Reference was made once more to the Rules of Procedure and it was added that as ECDC has not yet received any expressions of interest in arranging a meeting abroad between 2013 and 2015, the matter in question is already 'decided' by the Rules of Procedure.

18. The Chair concluded the discussions and proposed to make a decision for the next two years, while leaving the door open for EU Presidencies. Enabling flexibility was recalled and it was added that expressions of interest to host the Management Board meetings abroad should be submitted to the ECDC Director at least one year in advance.

The Management Board rejected the proposal for all future Board meetings to convene exclusively in Sweden and stated that the existent Rules of Procedure regulate the issue sufficiently. The proposal was withdrawn by the Director.

### **Item 5 – ECDC Management Board meeting dates for 2014 and 2015 (Document MB28/6)\***

19. The meeting dates for 2014 and 2015 were presented to the Board.<sup>4</sup> The representative of the Commission noted that the Health Security Committee meeting in 2014 is scheduled to convene on 20-21 November and it is thus recommended to review the Board meeting dates. It was agreed to present the revised meeting dates later during the meeting.

### **Item 10 – Update from ECDC on the main activities since the last meeting of the Management Board (20-21 March 2013) (Document MB28/Info Note 1)**

20. The ECDC Director presented a brief update on the main activities since the last meeting, including the follow up to the Management Board decisions and actions, as well as an update on the external evaluation.<sup>5</sup>

21. In reference to the presentation, it was questioned whether the ECDC Management Board Working Group on New Business Models and Financing on Large-scale EU Level Activities<sup>6</sup> would be discussed during the meeting. It was agreed to cover this matter at a later stage.

22. More information was requested on the country visits undertaken by the Director, such as the criteria and objectives. It was pointed out by ECDC that such visits always take place upon invitation from the country and that objectives may vary depending on the needs and priorities of the country being visited. Nonetheless, a common aim of such visits is to review the collaboration between the country and the Centre, identify opportunities to further improve collaboration as well as any challenges to be addressed. The visits can include confidential meetings with the local authorities as well as press briefings; however, the programme for each visit is also up to each country to decide. Members from Austria and Spain were invited to share their experience of the Director's recent visits to their countries and give their views on the utility of the visits based on their experience. Both countries noted that the visits were stimulating and useful by increasing the mutual knowledge and bringing ECDC closer to the "field".

23. In reference to the visit to ECDC in May from a delegation from the European Parliament's ENVI committee, one member asked whether there were any points of concern raised by the delegation that the Board should be aware of. It was clarified that a delegation is drawing up a short report on the visit and that this may be presented at a forthcoming meeting of the ENVI Committee. Both ECDC and the Commission confirmed that the ENVI delegation did not raise any points of concern during their visit.

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\* Item for decision.

<sup>4</sup> Item 5 - ECDC MB meeting dates 2014 and 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Item 10 - Updates on ECDC main activities.

<sup>6</sup> Please refer to the written procedure correspondence (DIR-13-0891-MSgipa and DIR-13-1076-MSsima) submitted to the Management Board on 24 May and 13 June 2013, respectively.



24. The Board was requested to provide their views on whether more information should be provided to them on the country visits and other similar items. It was noted that the results of the country visits might include relevant information to the Board. Some members also thought that increased information flow between the Board and the ENVI Committee could be useful. A proposal was made that the member of ENVI designated as ECDC's contact person could be invited to a future Board meeting for an exchange of views.

25. Daniel Reynders, Member, Belgium, and Chair of the Management Board External Evaluation Steering Committee (MEES), updated the Board on the second external evaluation of ECDC.<sup>7</sup> In particular he reported that MEES is in the process of using a Framework Contract recently concluded by DG SANCO in order to engage an evaluator. The MB Chair extended her sincere thanks to the Steering Committee for all their efforts. In the light of previously failed efforts to find a suitable contractor, it was questioned as to which steps have been taken in order to avoid similar situations. It was clarified by the Chair of MEES that the Steering Committee, instead of the Technical Committee, will deal with the contractor directly. The qualifications of the contractors have also been amended in the Terms of Reference. Additionally, less but more concrete documentation will be selected and transmitted to the contractor.

26. In reference to the process for engaging an external evaluator using DG SANCO's Framework Contract, further details were requested on the timeline and the progress achieved so far. Additionally, the need for the evaluation was questioned, given that ECDC is likely to have finalised its Strategic Multi-annual Programme for 2014-2020 months before the results of the evaluation are available. It was clarified that the results of the external evaluation would be taken into consideration in reference to Work Programmes for the coming years. After request of one member of the Management Board, Andrew Amato, Deputy Head of Surveillance and Response Support Unit, ECDC, provided further details on the timeline. ECDC is awaiting final signature by SANCO and its contractors of the new Framework Contract on evaluation. Once this happens, ECDC can launch a request for offers to SANCO's contractors. It was pointed out that even though the entire process has been delayed significantly, it should speed up shortly. The Director of ECDC agreed to inform the Board when the call for offers is sent out.

27. The Board received a short update on the health and current condition of Angus Nicoll. The Chair proposed to convey a message on behalf of the ECDC Management Board wishing him a full recovery.<sup>8</sup>

The Management Board took note of the update from the ECDC on the main activities since the last Board meeting.

## **Item 6 – Report on Implementation of the Work Programme 2013 up until present** (*Document MB28/7 Rev.1*)\*

28. Philippe Harant, Head of Section, Quality Management, Resource Management and Coordination Unit, ECDC, updated the Board on the implementation of the Work Programme 2013 up until present. It was noted that the implementation process is monitored regularly, e.g. via monthly dashboard reviews as well as quarterly reviews on the progress.

The Management Board agreed with the report on implementation of the Work Programme 2013.

## **Item 7 – ECDC Strategic Multi-annual Programme (2014-2020)** (*Document MB28/8*)\*

29. The Chair recalled that the session is live streamed for all ECDC staff. In reference to the past meetings, it was proposed to examine the comments made by the Board previously and look at the implementation of same into the Strategic Multi-annual Programme, as well as to further discuss any remaining controversies.

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<sup>7</sup> Item 10 - Updates on ECDC main activities.

<sup>8</sup> A card circulated during the meeting will be forwarded to Angus Nicoll and his family.

\* Item for decision.

\* Item for decision.

30. The ECDC Director provided a brief update to the Board on the status quo since the last Board meeting in March 2013 and how the comments received from the Board have been incorporated into the latest version of the SMAP.<sup>9</sup> He paid tribute to Jan Mos, Senior Adviser, Director's Office, the ECDC Senior Management Team and all other ECDC staff who have been involved in developing this document. In summary, ECDC is striving to decrease the burden of infectious diseases as well as decrease the burden on the Member States.

31. The expectations from the Board on this matter were questioned, i.e. whether the MB is expected to endorse the SMAP until the next meeting or whether the Centre is seeking formal adoption. It was clarified by the ECDC Director that the Centre is seeking approval of the first part of the SMAP and thereafter, the corresponding indicators will be presented during the November Board meeting. It was noted that the Board should consider the ensuing staff reductions, even though in general it is expected that ECDC can still deliver the Programme, with the reductions in mind.

32. Overall, the Board members expressed their appreciation for the hard work of ECDC staff in developing the presented SMAP document. It was also largely agreed to come to an agreement with the current SMAP, with a caveat that further discussions are required on the budget and financial aspects. Some specific comments and questions were also raised in reference to the text of the document and amendments were proposed. The lack of consistency throughout the document, such as mentioning the existing networks and their tasks, was brought out.

33. In reference to the discussions during the Board meeting in March 2013, it was recalled that the Centre is not responsible for communication with the public. With regards to the planned staff cuts, it is unnecessary to repeat this matter under every chapter. Further to the cuts, it was remarked that there is seemingly no strategic element in the document in case ECDC has to make cuts to its resources. It was stated that the Board should receive a SMAP that presents clear proposals on the way forward, pending approval of the budget. A comment was made that there was no clear consensus from the last Board meeting on which activities ECDC should indeed cut, should this become necessary. The relevance of priority setting was highlighted.

34. In reference to the values of ECDC and the expectations of others, it was highlighted that the current SMAP illustrates the varied interests of the Member States; however, it does not provide a strategic direction to take over the next years. A common perspective is needed for the future in which all Member States undertake their responsibilities and ECDC consistently provides added value.

35. With regards to decreasing the burden on Member States, the collaboration and continuous challenges in working with the WHO, such as double reporting, in particular, with regards to surveillance data, were mentioned. It was underlined that sufficient time is required to solve this matter once and for all. On behalf of ECDC, it was informed that several steps have already been taken in order to alleviate the situation and the example of the recent coronavirus was provided in which the Member States have been asked to report to EWRS after which ECDC is forwarding the data to WHO.

36. On the issue of vaccine preventable diseases, the one single calendar of vaccinations was questioned and it was added that the focus should be on achieving good vaccine coverage. In reference to this item, there was also a suggestion made to amend the somewhat strong language of the text.

37. The representative of the European Commission stated the Commission is in no position to officially approve the current SMAP. Yet, there is an agreement on the general direction. Formal approval can only be provided once the budget and indicators are set and final details have been cleared. Content wise, it was noted that there should be a more precise indication about the priorities in order to better adjust the Programme in the light of possible budget cuts. There should also be a clearer link between activities and resources.

38. Based on several comments on the required decision of the Board on SMAP, reference was made to the *Founding Regulation*, which states that the MB is required to adopt a revisable Strategic Multi-annual Programme for 2014-2020 at its June 2013 meeting. Thus, it was proposed to proceed accordingly while including a clarification on the remaining reservations, such as budget, indicators, etc. ECDC is thereby required to present a revised document at the next MB meeting in November 2013. The Chair agreed to include a review clause in the Board's decision.

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<sup>9</sup> Item 7 - Strategic Multi-Annual Plan 2014-2020.

39. The ECDC Director acknowledged the various proposals made by the Board and assured that the majority of these, such as corrections in text, etc., can easily be incorporated into the final version of the SMAP. In reference to the issue of communication, the two different types of communication – external communication and health communication – were pointed out, and it was concluded that the Centre should look into the reduction of 'communication' very carefully. As regards to communication with the public, for example, it was pointed out that ECDC develops communication toolkits, such as for the European Antibiotic Awareness Day, rather than organising public communication campaigns itself. The Director replied that he considers health communication as integral part of the Centre's mandate. On the issue of potential budget cuts, the Board was reminded of previous discussions<sup>10</sup> on this matter, which had not yet led to any concrete results. It was agreed that further information on the staff reductions, as well as on the cross border health threats decision, as highlighted by one of the members, would be presented during the next meeting in November. The revised SMAP will be submitted to the Board in September.

40. The Chair concluded the discussions and summarised the Board's comments: i) avoiding duplications (such as data requests); ii) revising the text on vaccination due to differences between Member States in vaccine preventable diseases epidemiology, organisational and logistical constraints for delivery of vaccinations and different funding capacities per se; iii) communication (the Board has expressed their views on this on several occasions and noted some reservations in terms of the extent to which ECDC should develop communication toolkits); iv) collaboration/cooperation with other agencies. The abstention of the European Commission on the adoption of SMAP was duly noted. It was proposed to agree with the general direction of SMAP, subject to further revisions, while also considering the comments made during the current meeting. The MB would like to examine how the strategy could evolve in the light of changes to the budget, etc.

41. Clarification was provided on the relation between the SMAP and the budget, and it was stated that the current SMAP is considered possible to deliver while also including possible cuts. Further details on budget and division of resources are described in the Work Programme and Activity Based Budget. It was further clarified by the Commission that once the Board approves the final SMAP, there will still be flexibility as to when the activities are carried out during the timeframe as established in the SMAP; there should indeed be a link between the SMAP and the budget.

The Management Board unanimously agreed to approve the general orientation of the revisable Strategic Multi-annual Programme (2014-2020), subject to the amendments as discussed, and agreed that the final version of SMAP, including the budget and indicators, will be submitted for adoption during the next Board meeting in November 2013.

## **Item 8 – Summary of discussions held at the 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the ECDC Audit Committee (18 June 2013) including its recommendations**

42. Johan Carlson, Member, Sweden, and the Chair of the ECDC Audit Committee (AC), provided the Board with a short update on the discussions held on the previous day during the Twenty-third Audit Committee meeting.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Item 8a – IAS Strategic Audit Plan (2014-2016) (Document MB28/9)\****

43. Stefan Sundbom, Internal Control Coordinator, Resource Management and Coordination Unit, ECDC, gave a presentation on the IAS Strategic Audit Plan (2014-2016).<sup>12</sup> The Chair of the AC provided the Board with the recommendations of the AC on this matter, which sought clarifications from the IAS in respect to the proposed scopes of the prospective audit topics for the November meeting, to which the IAS should also be invited. It was therefore proposed to postpone the endorsement of the IAS Strategic Audit Plan until the next meeting.

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<sup>10</sup> Parallel discussions have taken place in the ECDC Advisory Forum meetings.

<sup>11</sup> Item 8 - Summary of 23rd Audit Committee meeting.

\* Item for decision.

<sup>12</sup> Item 8a - IAS Strategic Audit Plan (2014-2016).

44. The Chair concluded that the Board can follow the recommendation of the AC and postpone this matter until the next meeting in November.

The Management Board agreed to postpone the endorsement of the IAS Strategic Audit Plan (2014-2016) until the next meeting in November 2013.

### ***Item 8b – Final Annual Accounts 2012, including the Report on Budget and Financial Management (Document MB28/10, MB28/14)\****

45. Anja Van Brabant, Head of Section, Finance and Accounting, Resource Management and Coordination Unit, ECDC, gave a presentation on the Final Annual Accounts 2012, including the Report on Budget and Financial Management. The Chair of the AC provided the recommendation of the AC.<sup>13</sup> It was proposed to adopt the Final Annual Accounts for 2012, as well as the proposed text of the Draft Opinion of the Board on the Annual Accounts.<sup>14</sup>

46. The Chair proposed to the Board to adopt the Final Accounts 2012 as per recommendation of the AC.

The Management Board adopted the Final Annual Accounts 2012, including the Report on Budget and Financial Management, as well as approved the text of the Draft Opinion of the Management Board on the Final Accounts 2012.

### ***Item 8c – First Supplementary and Amending Budget 2013 (Document MB28/11)***

47. Anja Van Brabant briefed the Board on the First Supplementary and Amending Budget 2013. The Chair of the AC concluded that the Committee had no comments or objections on this matter.<sup>15</sup>

The Management Board took note of the First Supplementary and Amending Budget 2013.

### ***Item 8d – Update on Framework Financial Regulation***

48. Anja Van Brabant provided the Board with an update on the new Financial Framework Regulation, including the timeframe.<sup>16</sup> It was noted that a draft framework will be presented to the Board during its next meeting in November 2013. The Chair of the AC added that the timeline for this process is very challenging, however, it is hoped that it will proceed as planned.

49. The Chair pointed out that this item is also linked with the SMAP and thus the Board should follow up on the process.

The Management Board took note of the update on the Framework Financial Regulation. A draft Framework Financial Regulation will be presented to the Board at its next meeting in November.

### ***Item 9 – Roundtable Discussion: Proposal for the future of EPIET, based on the recent EPIET Consultation (Document MB28/12 Rev.1)\****

50. The Chair recalled previous discussions on this matter and highlighted the importance and added value of the EPIET. The Board was also reminded that the following session was live streamed to all ECDC staff.

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\* Item for decision.

<sup>13</sup> Item 8b - Final Annual Accounts 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Please refer to document MB28/14 Draft Opinion of the Management Board on the Final Accounts 2012.

<sup>15</sup> Item 8c - First Supplementary and Amending Budget 2013.

<sup>16</sup> Item 8d - Update on Framework Financial Regulation.

\* Item for decision.

51. Karl Ekdahl, Head of Public Health Capacity and Communication Unit, ECDC, gave a presentation including the background on the developments surrounding the EPIET and the questions for the Board.<sup>17</sup>
52. The Chair concluded that the Board should adopt the governance principles and provide views on the placement of fellows, the main objective for the programme as well as the level of engagement. The roundtable discussion was opened.
53. The representative of the European Parliament asked whether it is possible to address more questions, such as salaries, etc. In reference to the EPIET trainees not returning to their country of origin, it was pointed out that it is far more critical in case the fellows retreat to the private sector.
54. The Alternate from Austria noted that it should be further clarified who does what on which level, referring to the presented governance principles. Based on the fact that the speaker has herself followed through the EPIET training, it was commented that the individual training can have a valuable effect; however, it also depends on where the fellows return to. It was questioned how ECDC can support the host site in the countries. In reference to the question on engagement, it was stated that the regional needs should be prioritised.
55. Belgium agreed with the governance principles, with a caveat that internal roles could be further clarified. The need to investigate what happens with fellows after the training was emphasised. In reference to the placement, it should be based on the needs. Individual training must be an opportunity. The Member agreed to the establishment of the group of wise men and women.
56. The Alternate from Bulgaria agreed with the governing principles, also in the light of the previous comments. Establishment of the wise men and women group was also supported, with a caveat that clear roles are established.
57. The Alternate from Cyprus highlighted the importance of the programme in building capacities. It was recommended to try and reduce gaps between countries. Rotation would be a fair principle. The main objective should be to build capacity at the EU level. It is important that the training programmes are also tailored to the needs of small countries; however, it could be complex to promote one's own country.
58. The Danish Member noted the importance of acknowledging the various structures within Member States, which are linked to their individual needs. It is very interesting to have information on where the fellows go in the EU context after their training is finalised, based on the investment that is made. Equal rotation is preferred. The concept of wise men and women is appealing; however, it should be clarified who these people should be.
59. Estonia is unfortunately one of the countries that has not yet been able to benefit from the training. However, the importance of the programme is nevertheless highly appreciated. The only fellow who was sent to the training did not return to his country. It would be important to also meet the needs of countries without EPIET sites.
60. Finland has benefitted from the programme and both EPIET and EUPHEM are seen as very important. As to fellows not returning to the country of origin, it was noted that this does not necessarily need to be looked at negatively, especially when these fellows carry out important work in the area of public health. In reference to the group of wise men and women – it is questionable where there would be wiser men and women than in the Board or Advisory Forum, i.e. the bodies which already exist.
61. The Alternate from France noted similar experiences as in Finland, also in reference to incoming and outgoing fellows. With regards to the proposal presented to the Board, it is understood that the wise men and women group should bring a new perspective to the EPIET programme and thereby enable challenges to be seen in a different light.
62. The added value of both EPIET and EUPHEM was agreed upon by Germany. The fact that certain fellows do not return to their country of origin was also echoed as not being an issue. The wise men and women group was opposed. ECDC already has highly competent bodies in dealing with this matter and there is no gain in continuously creating new groups. The placement of fellows should be needs based and fellows should be trained at both national and regional level. The subnational level should remain under the remit of the Member State.

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<sup>17</sup> Item 9 - Proposal for the future of EPIET, based on the recent EPIET consultation.

63. The Member from Hungary agreed to the governance principles. An equal rotation is supported, even if in practise, this might not work out as well as in theory. Support to supervisors in the countries is therefore essential. Considering capacity building, it is hoped that support can be offered for the countries that need it. The wise men and women group was not opposed, however, should the group be realised, the Board should be well informed about the composition and role of the group.

64. Iceland also agreed to the governance principles. Equal rotation is preferred. In reference to the wise men and women, it was noted that it is difficult to find such people who have no national preference.

65. The Member from Ireland recalled the long history of training in her country. Many medical and public health graduates are lost to other countries. Thus, some level of care should be placed into making this programme attractive to potential fellows. It would be important to look at the training needs in the single countries.

66. The Italian Alternate agreed with the principles of governance. An equal rotation would be the best option. The level of engagement should be at the EU level. The wise men and women group does not seem effective and the creation of many groups should be avoided, if possible.

67. Latvia has 'lost' all of the EPIET fellows up until now. The principles of governance are acceptable. With regards to placement, Latvia prefers an equal rotation, and the training should focus on the EU level needs. If created, the wise men and women group should include a clause for rotating the members.

68. From Lithuania's perspective, the governing principles are acceptable. An equal rotation is preferable. The main objectives should entail an appropriate balance between individuals and capacity within Member States. Engagement at the EU level is appropriate. The wise men and women group is supported.

69. The Member from Luxembourg stated that epidemiologists will always be needed. He fully agreed with the governance principles, with the caveat of clarified roles. It is a pity that the Advisory Forum Working Group on EPIET was unable to reach a consensus on the placement. An equal rotation is preferred. The wise men and women group is not supported; the challenges of the programme should be solved by the existing bodies.

70. The Member of the Netherlands expressed that there is seemingly a lack of objectives and the principles of governance are not well thought through. The roles for all the bodies and groups have not been clarified; thus it would be advisable to clarify the objectives of the programme before moving forward. The wise men and women group would be appreciated, especially considering that the existing bodies have not yet been able to resolve these questions. Yet it also needs to be clarified what is expected of this group. With regards to the placement of fellows, there are many more options than the ones presented by ECDC. The Netherlands also 'loses' trained fellows to other countries, albeit the programme is strengthening capacity in the EU and also the world. The engagement of fellows should be at the EU level.

71. Norway has experience from both the EU as well as from the MS-track and it has also provided the training site. The fellows provide much support for the programme, at the same time, many resources are required. On the questions presented by ECDC, Norway prefers an equal rotation, strengthening capacity. There is no clear answer on the level of engagement. In reference to the wise men and women group, in order to solve the remaining challenges of EPIET, it would be most useful to select people with concrete EPIET experience rather than independent experts.

72. Poland agrees with the principles of governance and an equal rotation. Engagement at the EU level is appropriate.

73. Portugal also agrees with the principles of governance, equal rotation, and building capacity in the Member States at national and EU levels. On the level of engagement, none of the proposed options is preferred since they are equally important. Another group of wise men and women is not deemed necessary, based on the existing groups and bodies. As an alternative solution, wise men and women from each level of the governing bodies could be chosen to solve some specific aspects of EPIET coordination.

74. The Alternate from Romania echoed some of the previous speakers in reference to 'losing' fellows to other countries. This is one of the main reasons for supporting the development of the MS-track. The governance principles are supported as well as equal rotation. Capacity building in the

Member States is necessary. No firm position was taken on the wise men and women group, however, the proposal of Portugal could be considered as an alternative solution.

75. Slovak Republic reinforced the importance of the EPIET and EUPHEM programmes. Governance principles and equal rotation were supported. The main objective should be building capacity in the Member States. EU level on the engagement. As to wise men and women, the ECDC Advisory Forum should be allocated this task.

76. Spain agreed that the objective in this matter should be clarified. It is also considered important to follow up on where the trained fellows are working to understand the actual output of the programme. The principles of governance are acceptable; however, considering the many levels, the roles of each of the levels need to be clarified. An equal rotation is favourable. The objective should be to strengthening capacities. On the level of engagement, it is not understood where the people who would not be affected by any of the Member States could be found. In general, Spain does not agree with establishing the group of wise men and women; however, should this issue remain open, it might be that such a group might be vital in order to progress further.

77. Sweden also concurs that the wise men and women group is not very useful. It is not possible to request the EPIET fellows to have the same objectives as the institutions. An equal rotation was supported, as by many other members before. Focus should be on providing good training as a basis for capacity building. The level of engagement is left without an answer as the question is not fully understood. The governance principles are accepted.

78. The Member from United Kingdom agreed with needing to know what the objectives are, prior to moving forward. The key aim should be to build competencies and capacity based on high quality, whatever the country. The MS-track is considered very important and equally the quality of the training, again, whichever the country. Level of engagement – building capacities --- should rest with the Member States. With regards to wise men and women group, the United Kingdom strongly disagrees, as across all the existing bodies there should be enough capacity to tackle this matter.

79. The representative from the European Commission remarked that it might be useful to conduct an external evaluation on EPIET as there are still pivotal discussions. It is essential to ensure an appropriate balance between the MS and EU tracks. As regards to the wise men and women, in order to manage this group, 'wiser' individuals should be found. In response to the Commission's initial remark, Karl Ekdahl explained that an external evaluation of EPIET was already conducted in 2010.

80. The ECDC Director thanked the Board for their valuable input. It is good to look into where the fellows go after they have finalised their training. Should it be evident that 'brain drain' occurs and the majority of fellows seek work outside the remit of public health, the whole essence of the programme should be examined. The input of the Board members will be taken into account and it is hoped that a clear proposal can be drafted in time for the November Board meeting. Given the feedback from the Management Board, the suggestion to create a wise men and women group will not be pursued further.

81. The Chair summarised the roundtable discussion and noted that it should be clarified who takes the decision on governance in the end and how these various groups work. Additionally, it should be looked at what the objectives are for the EU, Member States and individuals. Fellows leaving their country of origin are not necessarily considered in a negative light, as mentioned by various Board members.

82. Some further information was provided to the Board on what has happened with the fellows after the training, based on searches on the internet. From the data collected, it can be stated that a clear majority of all fellows remain in the public sector.

83. A general comment was made noting that since EPIET has already been running successfully for the past 15 years, it should be left alone. A more concrete question was asked on the plans for EPIET in 2014 to which ECDC responded that the next year's activities on EPIET will be included into the Work Programme in consultation with the Board. Following the proposal and the decision made in November, it can be clarified what will happen with the programme in the coming years.

The Management Board agreed that a clear draft proposal on the future of EPIET should be sent to the MB in time for the next meeting in November 2013. The Management Board agreed with the proposed principles of governance as presented by the ECDC, with a caveat that further clarity should be ensured on the roles of all stakeholders at different levels. The MB supported the principle of rotation and rejected the suggestion to create a group of 'wise men and women'.

## **Item 11 – Roundtable discussion on ECDC staff matters<sup>18</sup>**

### ***Item 11a – Evaluation of reorganisation***

84. Andrea Ammon, Head of Resource Management and Coordination Unit, ECDC, gave a presentation on the evaluation of reorganisation, including the results and actions taken or underway.<sup>19</sup>

### ***Item 11b – Reinforcement of support to staff related to accommodation search***

85. Jessica Mannheim, Head of Section, Human Resources, Resource Management and Coordination Unit, ECDC, informed the Board that a new contract has been sealed with an organisation which is assisting the ECDC staff in their search to find accommodation.

### ***Item 11c – Career development in ECDC***

86. Sergio Brusin, Senior Expert, General Surveillance, Surveillance and Response Support Unit and Member of ECDC Staff Committee, briefed the Board on the results of the Working Group on career development.<sup>20</sup>

87. Jessica Mannheim, Head of Section, Human Resources, Resource Management and Coordination Unit, ECDC, conveyed a brief update including the statistics as well as which steps have been taken on this matter from the point of view of the Human Resources Section.<sup>21</sup>

88. The Deputy Chair subsequently convened a roundtable session.

89. The representative of the European Commission inquired when ECDC plans on conveying the next survey to the Management Board.

90. Sweden had no specific comments.

91. The Member from Spain recalled the discussions during the previous meeting on similar matters and noted that the Board had requested documents to be presented beforehand, in order to prepare better. When it comes to organisation, the Board could at least receive some documents afterwards. The results of the evaluation are not good, thus the Board is interested. Is there a list of measures developed in order to improve the situation? When is the next evaluation needed? What are the reasons for the negative results? Is it specific to only ECDC?

92. Slovak Republic had no further comments on the matter.

93. The Romanian Member acknowledged the presentations and the action plan, however, it was noted that more time is needed to see whether these actions solve any of the challenges. The results of the next evaluation are anticipated with great interest.

94. The Alternate from Portugal was interested in the rationale behind the low response rate, also in comparison with previous surveys. It was suggested that it might not be helpful to have reorganisations carried out continuously. New changes should be avoided until it is understood what these changes bring to the organisation. The need for receipt of pertinent documentation in this respect was also requested.

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<sup>18</sup> Members of the ECDC Staff Committee participated in this roundtable discussion.

<sup>19</sup> Item 11a - Evaluation of Reorganisation.

<sup>20</sup> Item 11c - Update from the Working Group Career Development.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*



95. Poland noted that the matrix is very challenging for the staff and there should be an understanding of the structure and how it works.
96. The Norwegian Member noted the importance of receiving an overall impression of the internal challenges.
97. The Netherlands noted that ECDC staff members appear to have high expectations on remaining in the Centre for a longer period of time and thus are apprehensive about their time limited contracts. It is important of course to guarantee some levels of continuity within an organisation; however, rotation is also perceived as a positive factor. It was suggested to clarify during the next MB meeting how many staff ECDC expects to retain and how many should be rotated.
98. Luxembourg asked how the direction of ECDC reflects on the negative evaluation results. It is understood that every reorganisation is difficult and it might be that the results of the next evaluation will have much more positive results. There were no further comments due to a possible conflict of interest.
99. Lithuania complimented the Centre for the transparent manner in discussing these internal matters.
100. The Alternate of Latvia noted the inherent challenges of the matrix structure.
101. The Italian Alternate expressed her appreciation towards the ECDC Senior Management Team in striving to increase satisfaction among staff. One year is considered too short to proceed with the next evaluation. A rotation of staff is not opposed, but the new model should be implemented in order to ensure satisfaction.
102. Ireland had no comments.
103. Iceland had no comments.
104. The Member from Hungary admitted to being lost in the data and echoed the comments made by some of the previous speakers on the need to receive documentation beforehand. In reference to the next survey, it was requested to include this into the agenda of the next meeting in November. It would also be appreciated and helpful to receive comparisons between previous surveys.
105. The ECDC staff issues are very important to Germany. The responsibility of the Board is to ensure that the Centre carries out its mission and this links to whether the organisation works and staff is satisfied. The presentations made by ECDC reflect that the organisation is constantly changing, which might be a complicating factor. Further details on the turnover rate and the amount of sick leaves were requested. As the results of the evaluation are poor, it should be investigated whether the reasons lie in the actual reorganisation or in something else. It is understood that the structure prior to the reorganisation was not workable and therefore a reorganisation was needed, also based on the growth of the Centre. It is also clear that the richness and quality of the Agency lies in its human resources and thus it is hoped that the situation will improve. In general reference to this agenda item, it was requested to submit more detailed documentation to the Board in advance of the next meeting in November. The Board was also informed that Germany would be presenting a short proposal on this matter in the morning of day 2.
106. In reference to the presentation from the ECDC Staff Committee, the Alternate from France questioned why the appraisal levels are dropping. In general, the question should be the extent to which the dissatisfaction of the staff as presented in the survey may or may not jeopardise the capacity of ECDC to deliver what is expected from the Centre. With regards to the low participation rate of the survey, one may wonder if staff may be exhibiting signs of fatigue due to responding to many surveys.
107. The Finnish Member highlighted that the most prized possession of the 'Centre of excellence' is ECDC staff. It was wondered whether making the matrix work is the only way to go or whether there are other alternatives and/or possibilities. In reference to the Staff Committee presentation, it was questioned whether it is really realistic to provide infinite job security to ECDC staff.
108. Estonia had no further comments. ECDC Director was encouraged to follow up on this matter and find the real reason for the current situation.
109. The Member from Denmark echoed that reorganisation takes time, in any organisation. The response rate is considered to be exceedingly low and the reasons why should be found. With regards to staff and their jobs, rotation and EU mobility augur well in the long-term.

110. The Member from Cyprus noted that the results presented to the Board seem to reflect on the feelings of staff, indicating that the morale of the staff is low. Perhaps the evaluation survey included narrow questions, leading to this result.

111. Bulgaria had no comments on this matter.

112. The Member from Belgium recalled that written documentation, received in advance, would have made it easier to have a meaningful discussion on this delicate and important issue. In general, it was pointed out that the staff view on reorganisation is not an evaluation on the reorganisation and therefore the two should not be mixed up. The Board is responsible to ensure that the organisation works and thus it would be beneficial to ascertain whether the reorganisation actually improved the work.

113. The Alternate from Austria agreed that there might be many variables at play in respect to staff satisfaction, such as the Swedish climate, being away from one's home country, lack of certainty about the future, etc. In reference to the evaluation, it was remarked that it may have augured well to conduct it externally.

114. The representative of the European Parliament requested to receive the presentations made on this matter to be made accessible to the Board directly after the roundtable session.<sup>22</sup> From the human perspective, the situation is very worrying. The general atmosphere is not positive and there might be various reasons for this, such as not finding a home, not receiving a proper personal identification number, etc. Some concrete information on the measures needed to be taken should be provided to the Board as soon as possible. It is not clear whether the results of the evaluation are related to the reorganisation or something else. In the light of future evaluations, the questions of the survey could be more open.

### ***Item 11d – Questions and discussion***

*The discussion on staff matters was continued in the morning of Day 2.*

115. ECDC Director recalled the background of the reorganisation<sup>23</sup> and what has been achieved to date. He noted that the expectations of staff were high. He also referred to the time-limited contracts and that staff cannot expect all the contracts to be prolonged. However, the wellbeing of staff is of course important for the Senior Management Team of the Centre. The relationship with the ECDC Staff Committee is well established. The Director informed the Board that the Financial and Procurement Sections, as well as the Legal Section, will be reorganised, effective 1 January 2014. In conclusion, the Board was asked to provide feedback on whether it still agrees with the matrix structure and also if they agree with the Director's priorities.

116. Andrea Ammon, Head of Resource Management and Coordination Unit, ECDC, responded to a few queries, which were raised during the previous meeting day, such as turnover and sick leaves. With regards to turnover, this was 4.68% last year and 4% this year. In reference to sick leaves, less than 1% of staff were on sick leave for more than four weeks. It was clarified that the response rate on the staff survey was 69% in 2009, 83% in 2011 and 76% after the reorganisation. The percentages of responses on the specific evaluation, which was carried out on the reorganisation, were also noted. In order to ensure clarity, it was informed that 17% response rate was received on the career development questionnaire which was conducted by the ECDC Staff Committee. Starting in 2013, a contract regarding staff survey, with sister agencies is in place, enabling comparison of the situation between agencies. In reference to the matrix 'challenge', it was noted that the Centre has filled a post, 'guardian of the matrix', in order to manage this.

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<sup>22</sup> As requested, the presentations on the staff matters were uploaded onto the ECDC Management Board extranet directly following this plenary session.

<sup>23</sup> During the First External Evaluation of the Centre, the Management Board recommended that the Director continue to keep ECDC's structure under review and further improve efficiency by establishing more coordination and interaction between the functional units and horizontal disease specific programmes, based on a more cohesive approach. The matrix structure would continue to evolve: as time passes and disease-specific work comes more to the foreground, ECDC will have to continuously review and adapt its organisational structure to discharge its functions in the best possible manner. See "Conclusion and Recommendation of the MB based on the External Evaluation of ECDC", Document MB Extraordinary 1/5 adopted by the ECDC Management Board at its First Extraordinary Meeting in Stockholm, 23 September 2008, including amendments made at that meeting.

117. Following the above noted factual clarifications, all members of the ECDC Senior Management Team provided their professional as well as personal perceptions of the Centre's organisation and its evolution. It was echoed that the reorganisation was necessary in order to provide a more mature and structured organisation to support the growth of the agency. A matrix structure entails some levels of added complexity, however, it was considered necessary. Additionally, only about one-third of ECDC staff is actually affected by the matrix structure. It was highlighted that the Senior Management Team has been working relentlessly in order to solve all challenges surrounding the aftermath of the reorganisation. In reference to ECDC staff, it was pointed out that many of the staff members do not have any previous EU bureaucracy background. People are well aware of the time limitations of their work contracts and of course, in the light of the potential cuts, the psychology and reaction of staff are well understood. It is also challenging for many expatriates to settle in Sweden, for various reasons.

118. Some Board members expressed surprise, and some confusion, as to why the internal staff matters were discussed in the Board in such detail. The goal of the MB is to ensure ECDC fulfils its work plans, etc., and staff issues are not within the Board's remit, unless there are such severe problems that they mean ECDC is in a crisis.

119. In reference to the role of the Board, it was proposed to discuss whether the matrix organisation is actually working. It was requested to receive a written report on what has been done and what is planned on this matter, to be discussed during the next MB meeting in November.

120. It was questioned whether ECDC has developed any projections and/or procedures in reference to the turnover rate and based on the five-year contracts and their expirations.

121. With regards to previous surveys conducted in the past, it was inquired whether there were any similar questions which would enable to compare the situation.

122. The representative of the European Commission noted that the situation in ECDC should be assessed based on what is happening in the EU. The Commission asks nothing of its agencies which it does not implement itself first. There are contracts with no possibilities for renewal which is tough, but rules are to be followed. The issues raised in the evaluation results should be distinguished, but there should be no reference to an overall negative reflection of the organisation. With regards to the ECDC staff, how many have an expatriation background? There has been no evidence that the situation of the ECDC staff, whatever that might be, has somehow decreased the quality of the outputs of the Centre. The matrix structure is more complex; however, it also provides flexibility. It was supported that the Board could continue discussions on this matter at the next meeting. In order to assist, the Commission could increase the communication between itself and the Centre since ECDC is important.

123. In order to simplify the process, it was suggested to receive a report analysed by an independent evaluator, i.e. professional analysis on all the surveys in question. This should decrease subjectivity and guarantee further transparency. This idea was supported by some of the members.

124. With reference to the discussions, the role of middle management was questioned and more information was requested. Also, matrix organisations might be overrated as the expectations were higher than what ECDC's structure can provide in reality.

125. The representative of the European Parliament pointed out that the task of the MB should not only be to ensure that the mission of the Centre is carried out, but to also examine under which circumstances this is done. She inquired whether any weight is placed on issues such as living and working in Sweden, etc., as the conditions are remarkably better than in many other Member States. It was proposed to find out whether any of the other agencies have any similar issues or whether this matter is specific only to ECDC.

126. The ECDC Director summarised the discussions and highlighted his commitment to ensure that his staff is satisfied. The situation in other agencies would be very interesting to have. It was thereafter requested from the Board whether it agrees with the main priorities, in the following order: 1) ensuring that the requested work is carried out, 2) applying all relevant rules and regulations, and 3) ensuring the well-being of staff. There was agreement from the Board.

127. The Board reviewed the written proposal made by Germany.<sup>24</sup> Amendments to the text were advised. These amendments were accepted by the German Board Member. However, it was specifically noted that Germany is concerned about the situation in ECDC.

128. The final text of the written proposal was agreed as follows:

*It is in the duty of the Management Board to ensure that the Centre carries out its mission and performs the tasks assigned to it under the conditions laid down in the Founding Regulation (see Art. 14 para 3 (b)).*

*The Management Board took notice of the oral presentations concerning the evaluation of reorganisation and staff matters.*

*The Management Board asks the Director to present a written report after this Management Board meeting on the conclusions of the results of the surveys (reorganisation, staff surveys, etc.) and the already taken or planned measures to improve and strengthen the structures giving the Centre a long-term stability in its working environment in order to prepare the discussions of the next MB.*

The Management Board took note of the results of the various surveys undertaken by ECDC, including the Staff Committee. The Management Board requested the Director to present a written report after this Management Board meeting on the conclusions of the results of the surveys (reorganisation, staff surveys, etc.) and the measures taken or planned to improve and strengthen the structures giving the Centre a long-term stability in its working environment in order to prepare the discussions of the next MB in November 2013.

## **Item 12 – ECDC assessment toolbox to evaluate the capacity of EU enlargement countries in communicable disease prevention and control (Document MB28/13 Rev.1)**

129. Maarit Kokki, Senior Advisor to the Director, Director's Office, ECDC, provided a short presentation on the ECDC assessment toolbox to evaluate the capacity of EU enlargement countries in communicable disease prevention and control.<sup>25</sup>

130. Some technical comments were made on the content of the document which was duly noted by the ECDC representatives.

131. It was questioned why the request, which also covers health governance, was received from the European Commission, based on the fact that this is out of ECDC's scope.

132. An insurance of all costs occurred in relation to toolbox being covered by the enlargement budget was requested. It was confirmed that part of the costs are covered by the DG Enlargement and the remainder from the ECDC core budget. In reference to the results of the evaluation, it was questioned how these would be taken into consideration and/or implemented. It was clarified that post-evaluation phase is being planned and the countries in question will themselves decide which recommendations they wish to apply.

133. ECDC Director concluded that there are some concerns in reference to the resources required for this toolbox and noted that external experts will be involved.

The Management Board took note of the ECDC assessment toolbox on the evaluation of the capacity of EU enlargement countries in communicable disease prevention and control.

## **ECDC Management Board Working Group on New Business Models and Financing on Large-scale EU Level Activities**

134. In reference to an earlier request to conclude the discussions on this matter, the ECDC Director listed the countries that had expressed their interest in participating in the Working Group in question: France and Germany. The other countries that expressed their interest were Finland, the Netherlands and Spain. It was confirmed by the ECDC that the first meeting of the Working Group

<sup>24</sup> The written proposal of Germany was tabled to all MB members in the morning of Day 2.

<sup>25</sup> Item 12 - ECDC assessment toolbox to evaluate the capacity of EU enlargement countries.

would take place via audio and/or videoconference and in case an agreement is reached, the following meeting could convene back-to-back with the MB meeting in November.

135. The Member from Germany confirmed the interests of his country to participate; however, it was clarified that the member would emanate from the Coordinating Competent Body, as this was deemed more suitable. In reference to this, it was suggested not to limit the composition of the Working Group to the MB.

136. With regards to the written abstention made by the European Commission from participating in the Working Group, it was requested by the Board to revise this decision, based on the vital role of the Commission in this matter. The European Commission agreed to look into this and find appropriate ways to support the Working Group.

The Management Board agreed to the initial composition of the Working Group (Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain). The European Commission will look into the most efficient way to support the Working Group and whether it can revise its decision to participate therein in an appropriate manner.

### **Item 7 – ECDC Strategic Multi-annual Programme (2014-2020)** *(Marc Sprenger, Director, ECDC) (Document MB28/8)\**

137. ECDC Director presented a proposed decision on the ECDC Strategic Multi-annual Programme (2014-2020) discussed during the previous day for the approval of the Board. It was proposed that the Management Board approves the general orientation of the revisable Strategic Multi-annual Programme (2014-2020), subject to the amendments as discussed in this Twenty-eighth Management Board meeting. Additionally, the Board is looking forward to adopting the final version of the SMAP document at its next meeting in November 2013.

138. The Board agreed to this proposal.

The Management Board unanimously agreed to approve the general orientation of the revisable Strategic Multi-annual Programme (2014-2020), subject to the amendments as discussed, and agreed that the final version of SMAP, including the budget and indicators, will be submitted for adoption during the next Board meeting in November 2013.

### **Item 5 – ECDC Management Board meeting dates for 2014 and 2015** *(Document MB28/6)\**

139. Based on the comments made during the first meeting day, the Management Board was presented with the revised dates for meetings in 2014 and 2015 as follows:

Meeting dates in 2014	Meeting dates in 2015
27-28 March (Stockholm)	24-25 March (Stockholm)
17-18 June (Stockholm)	16-17 June (Stockholm)
18-19 November (Stockholm)	25-26 November (Stockholm)

The Management Board unanimously approved the meeting dates for 2014 and took note of the preliminary dates for 2015.

\* Item for decision.

\* Item for decision.

## Item 14 – Update from the European Commission

140. Due to scheduling constraints, it was agreed to only provide an oral presentation on the Commission roadmap (agenda item 14a). The remaining items according to the agenda will be submitted to the Board via electronic communication.<sup>26</sup>

### ***Item 14a – Update on the roadmap on the inter-institutional Common Approach for decentralised agencies***

141. Martin Seychell, Member, European Commission, presented the roadmap on the follow up on the Common Approach Outcome of the Inter-Institutional Approach Decentralised Agencies.<sup>27</sup>

142. Some of the members pointed out that it would be helpful to receive written documentation on this matter in advance in order to be better prepared.

143. In reference to the communication matter mentioned in the presentation, it was clarified by the Commission that the goal is not to harmonise or control the websites of agencies. The objective is to ensure consistency in all messages, e.g. the same messages should be conveyed via all various EU bodies, including the agencies, also considering that the general public might not be specifically targeting their questions to the most suitable institution.

144. In reference to the attempt to harmonise the agencies, it was noted that there seems to be no harmony in the staff of the agencies and their situation, such as salary policies. Thus, in case the goal is to harmonise, this should also include staff policies. The Commission's representative responded that the aim is not to ensure complete harmonisation, due to the technicalities of each agency. Additionally, each agency should remain competitive on the market. Thus, the objective is to reach broader alignment, such as harmonising the rules on staff classification, etc.

145. In reference to ensuring that the mandate of the Centre is respected, it was commented that the Member States could have a role on this as well, next to the Commission.

146. From ECDC's side, it was queried how the Commission is assessing whether the Centre is already complying with some of the new rules. In its response, the European Commission noted that the ECDC is considered to be amongst the more advanced agencies.

The Management Board took note of the update on the roadmap of the inter-institutional Common Approach for decentralised agencies.

## Item 15 – Update from the EU Presidencies

### ***Item 15a – Update from Ireland***

147. Colette Bonner, Member, Ireland, presented an update on the Irish EU Presidency.<sup>28</sup>

The Management Board took note of the update on the Irish EU Presidency.

### ***Item 15b – Update from Lithuania***

148. Audrius Ščeponavičius, Member, Lithuania, presented an update on the Lithuanian EU Presidency.<sup>29</sup>

The Management Board took note of the update on the Lithuanian EU Presidency.

## Item 13 – Epidemic intelligence: update on recent threats in the EU and abroad

<sup>26</sup> Please refer to ECDC Management Board Extranet ([link](#)) where the presentations are uploaded.

<sup>27</sup> Item 14a - Commission Roadmap on follow up to Common Approach.

<sup>28</sup> Item 15a - Update from Ireland (uploaded onto the extranet only upon Ireland's agreement).

<sup>29</sup> Item 15b - Update from Lithuania.

**Item 13a – Avian influenza H7N9**

149. Denis Coulombier, Head of the Surveillance and the Response Support Unit, ECDC, provided a brief update on the situation of avian influenza H7N9.<sup>30</sup>

**Item 13b – Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV)**

150. Denis Coulombier provided an update on the Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV).<sup>31</sup>

**Item 13c – Hepatitis A**

151. Denis Coulombier gave a presentation on the Hepatitis A.<sup>32</sup>

152. Following an earlier request, an update was provided on the Long-term Surveillance Strategy.<sup>33</sup>

The Management Board took note of the updates on recent threats in the EU and abroad and on the Long-term Surveillance Strategy (2014-2020).

**Item 16 – Any other business**

153. It was requested by one of the members to improve the time management of the agenda, in reference to the late discussions during Day 1 of the meeting. ECDC Director noted that substantial efforts are being put into developing the agenda and programme in order to make it sustainable. However, based on the need for lengthier discussions, it might be sometimes necessary to deviate from the programme.

154. The Deputy Chair, Tiiu Aro, thanked all the participants for their valuable input. She also thanked the ECDC staff for their professionalism in ensuring that all the necessary arrangements were carried out for the success of the meeting. Special thanks of appreciation were extended to the interpreters for their exceptional work and efforts.

155. The Director of ECDC thanked Tiiu Aro for having chaired some of the plenary sessions. He also thanked the Management Board for their active participation and fruitful discussions. He also extended his appreciation to the Senior Management Team (SMT) and also to Corinne Skarstedt, Head of Section, Corporate Governance, and her team, Silja Marma, Skaidra Kurapkiene, Giorgos Pavlou and Indu Kadlac, for having smoothly prepared and organised this meeting.

156. The next meeting of the ECDC Management Board will convene in Stockholm on 13-14 November 2013.

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<sup>30</sup> Item 13a - Update on H7N9 Avian Influenza Outbreak.

<sup>31</sup> Item 13b - Update on Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV).

<sup>32</sup> Item 13c - Update on Hepatitis A.

<sup>33</sup> Item 13d – Long-term Surveillance Strategy.