



ECDC Management Board

**Minutes of the Twenty-fourth Meeting of the ECDC
Management Board
Stockholm, 28-29 March 2012**

Adopted by the Management Board at its Twenty-fifth meeting, 19-20 June 2012

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Summary of Proceedings – 24th Management Board meeting

The 24th ECDC Management Board (MB) meeting convened in Stockholm, Sweden, on 28-29 March 2012.

Opening and welcome by the Chair (and noting the Representatives)

Introduction from Marc Sprenger, Director, ECDC

Marc Sprenger, Director, ECDC, welcomed the meeting participants and extended his apologies for not being able to attend the reception the evening before due to a meeting at the European Parliament in Brussels on the discharge of the EU Agencies.

Item 1 – Adoption of the draft agenda (and noting the declarations of interest and proxy voting, if any) (*Documents MB24/2 Rev.1, MB24/3 Rev.1*)*

The draft agenda was unanimously adopted without any changes (Documents MB24/2 Rev.1, MB24/3 Rev.1).

Item 2 – Adoption of the draft minutes of the 23rd meeting of the Management Board (Stockholm, 9-10 November 2011) (*Document MB23/4*)*

The draft minutes of the 23rd meeting of the Management Board were unanimously adopted without any changes (Document MB24/4).

Item 5 - Director's briefing on ECDC's main activities since the last meeting of the Management Board

Item 6 – Update regarding the EU Presidencies:

Item 6a – Update from Denmark

Else Smith, Member, Denmark, updated the Board on the activities and most important events of the Danish EU Presidency.¹

Item 6b – Update from Cyprus

Irene Cotter, Alternate, Cyprus, presented an update on the Cypriot EU Presidency.² It was highlighted that this will be the first time for Cyprus take on the role of EU Presidency. It was also noted that the presented agenda is still subject to change.

* Item for decision

* Item for decision

¹ Item 6a - Update Denmark EU presidency (E Smith)

² Item 6b - Update Cyprus EU presidency (I Cotter)

Item 12 – Update from the ECDC Management Board External Evaluation Steering Committee

The Management Board will continue to be kept informed of the status of the process of the second External Evaluation of the Centre.

Item 3 – Summary of discussions held at the 19th meeting of the ECDC Audit Committee (27 March 2012) including its recommendations:

*Item 3a – Provisional Annual Accounts 2011, including Report on Budgetary and Financial Management (Document MB24/5)**

The Management Board unanimously approved the Provisional Annual Accounts 2011, including the Report on Budgetary and Financial Management (Document MB24/5).

*Item 3b – Draft Budget 2013 (Document MB24/6)**

The Management Board unanimously approved the Draft Budget 2013 (Document MB24/6).

Item 4 – Annual Report of the Director:

*Item 4a – Annual Report of the Director on the Centre’s Activities in 2011 (Document MB24/7 Rev.2)**

The Management Board unanimously approved the Annual Report of the Director on the Centre’s Activities in 2011 (Document MB24/7 Rev.2).

*Item 4b – Draft Analysis and Assessment of Authorising Officer’s (Activity) Report in 2011 (Document MB24/8 Rev.2)**

The Management Board unanimously approved the Draft Analysis and Assessment of Authorising Officer’s (Activity) Report in 2011 (Document MB24/8 Rev.2).

Item 8 – Report of Implementation of the Work Programme 2012 in the first three months: ECDC Cross-cutting Priorities 2012:

Following a short introduction from the ECDC Director, the following presentations were made: “Working with EU Enlargement Countries”; “Addressing Issues around Health Inequalities and Migrant Health”; “Advancing Measles Elimination in Europe” and; “Strengthening Microbiology Laboratory Capacity in Europe”.

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Item 7 – Work Programme 2013:

Item 7a - Some long-term prospects

The ECDC Director presented the long-term prospects related to the Work Programme 2013, including consequences and options for the future.³

The Board members appreciated the bold and realistic presentation and it was noted that the timing for focusing on the core business is well selected.

ECDC Director stated that it is vital to discuss this item again and was hopeful that at the next meeting in June, a list of items ECDC should either increase, decrease or even be cancelled, could be presented. He also pointed out that each time the Work Programme priorities' proposals are communicated to the Board, it is always requested to receive feedback on potential activities which ECDC could stop.

Item 7b - ECDC 2013 Work Programme Priorities (Document MB24/9)

The ECDC 2013 Work Programme Priorities will be issued to the Management Board for comments via written procedure (Document MB24/9).

Item 9 – Analysis of the Indicators for the Strategic Multi-annual Work Programme 2007-2013 (Update 2011) (Document MB24/10 Rev.1)

The Chair concluded that ECDC is very interested to receive examples from national levels of existing indicators and secondly, the Board will have time to further discuss how to develop the indicators during the process of developing the next ECDC Strategic Multi-Annual Work Programme. Further information will be provided at the June MB meeting. (Document MB24/10 Rev.1).

Item 14 – Update from ECDC on staff matters:

Item 14a – Evaluation of the reorganisation

The Chair concluded that the decision making in reference to reorganising the Centre clearly lies within the responsibility of the Director. The MB is ready to assist if needed and provide advice. The Board is interested in receiving more information on lessons learnt from the reorganisation. It was proposed to revisit this item in the June meeting in order to obtain general information on the results of the various evaluations and the ideas of the Director on the direction on the development of the structure of ECDC.

Item 14b – ECDC reinforces support to staff related to accommodation search

The Director was pleased to present the new Staff Committee to the Board. He also noted that a liaison between the Staff Committee and the SMT has been appointed. All ECDC Staff Committee members introduced themselves briefly to the Board.⁴

The Chair proposed to write a letter on behalf of the ECDC MB addressed to the Swedish authorities seeking their support in this matter. It is understood that this issue cannot be solved within a short timeframe; however, persistence in taking this up will have a positive effect on the developments.

³ Item 7a - WP2013 Vision for ECDC (M Sprenger)

⁴ All members of the ECDC Staff Committee were present: Sergio Brusin, Irina Dinca, Rodrigo Filipe, Adoracion Navarro Torne, Anna Ridderstolpe, Lars Söderblom, Ingela Söderlund.

The Chair thanked the Staff Committee for their input and presentation and noted that the MB would be very interested to continue receiving updates from the Staff Committee.

Item 10 – ECDC response to the evaluation of the influenza pandemic 2009-2010 (*Document MB24/11*)

Document MB24/11 was presented to the Management Board for information.

Item 11 – ECDC experience with liaison officers in Member States during public health emergencies (*Document MB24/12*)

It was agreed that the above-noted topic will be revisited in June with a revised paper (Document MB24/12) and that the Board will receive a report back on how the mass gathering liaisons worked at the meeting in November.

Item 15 – Update from European Commission:

Item 15a – Substances of Human Origin

An area in which ECDC will be involved will be scientific advice. There are three FTEs who have been appointed from ECDC and discussions on further details have already been taking place.

It was also stated that the Competent Authorities on Substances of Human Origin have agreed to review the work of ECDC and provide their evaluation. The member of the Commission then extended his thanks to ECDC for their support.

Item 15b – Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on serious cross-border threats to health

The Commission suggested revisiting this item with further details in the June meeting.

Item 15c – Update on DG RTD activities

Anna Lönnroth Sjödén, Alternate, European Commission, gave a presentation on key activities of the DG RTD.⁵ She noted that a more elaborate presentation will be available on the MB workspace (extranet). As the presentation had been shortened and presented very briefly due to time constraints, it was suggested that similar presentations be made available in advance of the meeting.

Item 16 – Update on Senior Officials Meeting 2012:

Item 16a – Feedback on collaboration between ECDC and WHO/Europe (*Document MB24/13*)

The framework setting the boundaries in the collaboration between the two organisations was briefly mentioned. It was recalled that the MB had approved the agreement between the ECDC and WHO/Euro about one year ago, signed at last year's Senior Officials Meeting. In order to implement the broad ideas, the Commission, together with WHO/Euro and in close collaboration with ECDC, has developed a roadmap on health security. The priority areas include amongst others AMR, HIV, VPD, etc., and ECDC continues to support the Commission in this work.

The joint work has been ongoing since 2005. During the Joint Coordination Group Meeting (November 2011), it was broadly agreed upon how to collaborate and that the Terms of Reference should be developed for the joint areas of work in order to clarify how the two organisations should work together, which meetings would be arranged by which party, etc. The Terms of Reference

⁵ Item 15c – Update on DG RTD activities (A Lönnroth Sjödén)

should include an evaluation of collaborative work for 2013-2015. Further information can be compiled and discussed again at the June meeting.

Item 16b – Report back from the Ninth Senior Officials Meeting of the European Commission (EC) and the World Health Organization (WHO): Brussels, 6-7 March 2012

John F Ryan, Member, European Commission, updated the Board on the report back from the Ninth Senior Officials meeting of the European Commission and the World Health Organization. He noted that an agreement has been signed between the two parties to better streamline and coordinate collaboration in the field of health. The agreement extends beyond ECDC's mandate as it covers all areas of work. The roadmap on health security was recalled.

The Director of ECDC stressed that both ECDC and WHO are very committed to joint collaboration. He further exemplified such collaboration by citing the many reports that are jointly published and where both Directors are quoted.

The Chair informed the Board that during 2011, discussions were started on the reorganisation of the entire WHO, and it is not yet known what would be the results and how this would affect WHO/Euro and ECDC.

Item 13 – Update on ECDC Working Group Building Project

The Director recalled that ECDC has been committed to leasing the current building(s) until 2018. However, two interested parties have been identified who could potentially be willing to take over the lease, in which case ECDC would be free to rent new facilities for the Agency. The Director hoped to provide the Board with more information at the June meeting.

Item 17 – Update on Transatlantic Task Force on AMR (TATFAR)

Due to scheduling constraints, this item was postponed to the MB25 June meeting.

Item 18 – Any other business

ECDC Director thanked the Board members for their active participation. He noted that flowers will be sent to Daniel Reynders on behalf of the MB, as discussed at the start of the meeting. He also took the opportunity to extend a special thank to those MB members who had been involved of the 360-degree evaluation of the Senior Management Team.

Opening and welcome by the Chair (and noting the Representatives)

1. Hubert Hrabcik, Chair, welcomed all the participants to the Twenty-fourth meeting of the ECDC Management Board. A special welcome was extended to Chris Vander Auwera from Belgium, appointed Alternate, and Katya Ivkova from Bulgaria, newly appointed Alternate. Clara Swinson, appointed Member from the United Kingdom, was welcomed back following maternity leave. Apologies were received from Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein and Luxembourg, and it was noted that the Dutch Member would be arriving later during the first day of the meeting and that the Finnish Board Member would only be able to attend the meeting that day.

Introduction from Marc Sprenger, Director, ECDC

2. Marc Sprenger, Director, ECDC, welcomed the meeting participants and extended his apologies for not being able to attend the reception the evening before due to a meeting at the European Parliament in Brussels on the discharge of the EU Agencies. He provided further details of the meeting and noted that the Agencies in general, including ECDC, had been accused of not doing enough on issues of Conflict of Interest. He informed the Board that Parliament's rapporteur on the discharge of the Agencies' budgets for 2010, Ms Monica Macovei, had insisted, for instance, that as well as publishing Declarations of Interest, all members of the Management Boards of EU Agencies should publish their CVs and highlight any work they have done in the past for private companies that might have an interest in the work of the Agency on whose Board they serve. The Director pointed out that even though he can agree with the importance of transparency and the need for clear procedures for noting any potential conflicts of interest, it is also important to reflect upon data protection issues. The administrative burden imposed by any transparency requirements should also be kept proportionate.

3. Maria Farrar-Hockley, Deputy Head of Resource Management and Coordination Unit and Head of Financial and Procurement Support, briefly introduced herself to the Management Board.

4. The Director thereafter informed that Caroline Aguado, Deputy Head of Public Health Communication and Cooperation Unit and Head of ICT would briefly introduce herself to the Board.

Item 1 – Adoption of the draft agenda (and noting the declarations of interest and proxy voting, if any) (*Documents MB24/2 Rev.1, MB24/3 Rev.1*)*

5. No proxy voting was noted.

6. The following Declarations of Interest were noted: In reference to items 3 (Summary of discussions held at the 19th meeting of the ECDC Audit Committee (27 March 2012), including its recommendations), 7 (Work Programme 2013), 8 (Report of Implementation of the Work Programme 2012 in the first three months: ECDC Cross-cutting Priorities 2012) and item 9 (Analysis of the Indicators for the Strategic Multi-annual Work Programme 2007-2013 (Update 2011)), the Finnish Member noted that she is the NMFP alternate for her country and participates in the work of the Disease Specific Network/Programmes IBD, IPD, C.difficile. The Member from the United Kingdom declared, in relation to agenda items 7 (Work Programme 2013) and 8 (Report of Implementation of the Work Programme 2012 in the first three months: ECDC Cross-cutting Priorities 2012) that the UK Department of Health is a sponsor for the Health Protection Agency. Martin Seychell, Member, European Commission, stated under item 15 (Update from European Commission: a) Substances of Human Origin; b) Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on serious cross-border threats to health; and c) Update on DG RTD activities) that the Commission is responsible for certain aspects of the implementation. John F Ryan, Member, European Commission, declared under all agenda items except for items 1 (Adoption of the draft agenda) and 2 (Adoption of

* Item for decision

the draft minutes of the 23rd meeting of the Management Board), that a) he is the sub-delegated Authorising Officer of DG SANCO budget lines and b) an Acting Director of Public Health in DG SANCO.

The draft agenda was unanimously adopted without any changes (Documents MB24/2 Rev.1, MB24/3 Rev.1).

Item 2 – Adoption of the draft minutes of the 23rd meeting of the Management Board (Stockholm, 9-10 November 2011) (Document MB23/4)*

The draft minutes of the 23rd meeting of the Management Board were unanimously adopted without any changes (Document MB24/4).

Item 5 - Director's briefing on ECDC's main activities since the last meeting of the Management Board

7. The Director presented a few slides from the meeting in Brussels he had attended the previous day.⁶ He then recalled the proposal from the previous MB meeting to submit an eBulletin with the most important highlights from all ECDC Units to the Board in advance and opened the floor for dialogue.⁷

8. One of the Members thanked ECDC for sending the update in advance as this creates an opportunity to obtain more details and to ask questions. He thereafter queried whether there was any initial feedback already available on the workshop on communicable diseases in Europe, noted in the eBulletin, and questioned how the Board is to interpret the Director's tweets, i.e. whether they are personal in nature or submitted as tweets of ECDC Director or Marc Sprenger as a scientist. In response to these queries, Johan Giesecke, Chief Scientist, noted that the burden of disease project has already been running for several years, focusing on Europe, and stated that it is possible to present a substantial amount of results on the project during 2012. As to Twitter, it was noted that the tweets serve as a communication channel for the ECDC Director, with the aim to raise awareness about communicable diseases.

9. A proposal was made by another Member of the Board to allocate some time for a short update on the most important activities prior to delving into detailed discussions. Yet it was noted that the eBulletin containing highlights is a welcome initiative and should be continued for future meetings.

10. A representative from the European Parliament was interested in receiving more feedback on the appreciation and/or reaction of ECDC staff on the CO-DO initiative. The Director of ECDC responded that as the result of the reorganisation, some staff members are less satisfied with the changes as others, thus the Senior Management Team (SMT), together with the Staff Committee, created the CO-DO platform in order to obtain specific input from individual staff members, in confidentiality, on their concerns and suggestions for improvements. He noted that this opportunity was actively used by staff and the management has collected a host of ideas which are to be reviewed with the Staff Committee to see what could be used. As one of the challenges, the Director noted that it is important to find out how many staff is needed in each of the Disease Programmes in order to deliver the results as agreed in the Work Programme.

11. The Chair concluded the discussion and noted that a similar approach with a written statement of main activities submitted to the Board in advance of the meeting should be continued in the future. He added that at the meetings, one or two slides could be presented to facilitate the discussions.

* Item for decision

⁶ Item 5 - Briefing on main ECDC activities since MB23 (M Sprenger)

⁷ Please refer to a tabled eBulletin with the main highlights from ECDC (also available at the ECDC MB Collaborative Workspace [extranet]). The eBulletin was previously emailed to the ECDC Management Board on 19 March 2012.

Item 6 – Update regarding the EU Presidencies:

Item 6a – Update from Denmark

12. Else Smith, Member, Denmark, updated the Board on the activities and most important events of the Danish EU Presidency.⁸

13. Some queries were raised in reference to the upcoming events noted in the presentation, more specifically, it was questioned what kind of discussions would be expected at the Chief Medical Officer's meetings and what is expected of the framework discussions for the medical devices. For the latter, the Danish Board member was unable to note the content of discussions, for the CMO's, however, specific questions have not been fully developed for the meeting, but the aim is to set challenges around the topic and have a discussion.

14. With regards to the expert conference on antimicrobial resistance, it was questioned when the recommendations from this meeting could be expected to be available. In reference to this question, another Member recalled the five-year action plan on antimicrobial resistance developed and published by the Commission, and queried whether the Member States had been asked to align their views with this document. In her reply, Else Smith noted that while the outcome of the meeting has yet to be prepared, the conclusions will be published soon. She also recalled the Commission's action plan, which was presented, however, much of the discussions relate to national plans. It was agreed that the recommendations from the Commission should be taken into account and Denmark was presented as a good example of following a complete approach.

15. The representative from the Commission added that a white paper had been published in the previous year, proposing approaches for AMR, also including animal health, food safety and research. Currently, the Commission is working on an action plan related to this white paper. It was proposed to discuss the twelve-point action plan in closer detail at the June meeting.

Item 6b – Update from Cyprus

16. Irene Cotter, Alternate, Cyprus, presented an update on the Cypriot EU Presidency.⁹ It was highlighted that this will be the first time for Cyprus take on the role of EU Presidency. It was also noted that the presented agenda is still subject to change.

17. In reference to the Expert-Level Conference on Communicable Diseases (organised in collaboration with ECDC), expected to take place on 5 July 2012, it was questioned which kind of experts are solicited for the meeting. In her response, Irene Cotter noted that the presented agenda is a general overview and more details can be forwarded to the Board via email.

18. While noting the meeting of Chief Medical Officers, the Director suggested including healthcare-associated infections in the programme. The representative of Cyprus agreed to relay the message to the organisers of the meeting.

Item 12 – Update from the ECDC Management Board External Evaluation Steering Committee

19. The Chair noted that Daniel Reynders, appointed Chair of the ECDC Management Board External Evaluation Steering Committee, is currently unable to fulfil his duty due to medical reasons and stated that flowers will be arranged by the Director on behalf of the Management Board.

20. Jacques Scheres, Member, European Parliament, as well as the appointed interim Chair of the External Evaluation Steering Committee, updated the Board on the latest developments of the activities surrounding preparations for the second independent external evaluation of ECDC. He informed that the Committee had met twice last year and within its mandate, Terms of Reference (ToR), taking into consideration the guidelines from the Board, have been established. The ToR have been adjusted via written consultation and upon finalisation, have now been incorporated into the

⁸ Item 6a - Update Denmark EU presidency (E Smith)

⁹ Item 6b - Update Cyprus EU presidency (I Cotter)

Call for Tender. The Call for Tender will be published shortly. It is hoped that ECDC will receive satisfactory evaluators to carry out the work of the tender. The period for application is more than two months. Upon closure of applications, a tender evaluation committee will carry out the evaluation of the tenders, using a mutually agreed upon objective checklist, verifying the Conflicts of Interest as well as confidentiality standards. If a selection is made, ECDC will enter into a contractual stage. It was clarified that the full pre-contract stage will last approximately seventy days. If everything goes according to plan, the evaluation should be finalised within ten months.

21. In reference to the inclusion of the Management Board, it was noted that the Board has been asked their opinion on how they wish to proceed once the report is finalised. The evaluation's recommendations and conclusions should be discussed at the MB meeting and then the MB prepares its own recommendations for action. The proposal is for the present Steering Committee to conduct an initial analysis preparing some suggestions and then the full report along with suggestions would thereafter be forwarded to the full Board for discussion. Alternatively, the Board can only receive the final report to be discussed at the plenary. It was agreed that the current Steering Committee should prepare an initial analysis to help the discussions on the report by the full MB.

22. A potential issue of not receiving any suitable tenderers was pointed out. Due to specifications of the ToR, ECDC can potentially expect very few or no tenders. In this case, a negotiated procedure will be used. In the event that even this fails, then some changes to the tender may be proposed to the Steering Committee for their approval and a new call issued.

23. It was clarified that the Board has not received the final tender contract as this might influence the independence of the evaluation. This will be made available very shortly once the call is published.

24. The representative from the Commission requested to circulate to the Board the membership of the Steering Committee and any other related sub-committees.¹⁰

The Management Board will continue to be kept informed of the status of the process of the second External Evaluation of the Centre.

Item 3 – Summary of discussions held at the 19th meeting of the ECDC Audit Committee (27 March 2012), including its recommendations:

25. Iréne Nilsson-Carlsson, Member, Sweden, and Chair of the ECDC Audit Committee, briefed the Board on the main outcomes of the Audit Committee (AC) meeting, which took place the day before.¹¹ She noted that the AC had decided to invite the Internal Audit Service (IAS) to participate at the next meeting of the Committee to present their report. She also highlighted participation issues and noted the proposal to expand the AC with two additional members, representing the Member States, in order to increase participation. The MB was asked to decide on this proposal at the next meeting in June. The Chair of the Board acknowledged this and stated that the MB will get back to this issue. He added that it needs to be confirmed from the legal perspective whether the Board make such a decision.

Item 3a – Provisional Annual Accounts 2011, including Report on Budgetary and Financial Management (Document MB24/5)*

26. Anja Van Brabant, Head of Section, Finance and Accounting, Resource Management and Coordination Unit, presented the Provisional Annual Accounts 2011, including the Report on

¹⁰ Slides indicating the membership was presented to the Board on Day Two of the meeting Item 12 - External Evaluation Steering Committee membership

¹¹ Item 3 - Summary of 19th AC meeting (I Nilsson-Carlsson)

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Budgetary and Financial Management.¹² The Chair of the Audit Committee highlighted the comments and conclusions of the Committee.

27. One of the representatives of the Commission noted the carryover is still relatively high. He also questioned, in reference to the observations from the IAS, whether the two audits to be conducted during the first quarter of 2012 had been carried out. Lastly, it was requested to clarify what the investment actually means in the cash flow statement.

28. In reference to the previous questions, another Board member highlighted the carryovers and questioned what would be a reasonable percentage that carry-overs could be decreased to.

29. Anja Van Brabant sought to clarify the Commission's query and noted that delegations in ECDC have been set up so that the Head of Unit is able to sign orders and invoices. The representative from the Commission stated that the four-eye principle is strongly recommended in this respect and the delegation system seems to be outside the norm. It was clarified by the ECDC that the four-eye principle is in place at the Agency, but delegations have never been questioned, including the Court of Auditors.

30. Stefan Sundbom, Internal Control Coordinator, Resource Management and Coordination Unit, updated the Board on the IAS observations and noted that all but one of the recommendations by the IAS have been implemented and that the last recommendation regarding financial circuits and more detailed check lists is currently being worked on and a draft version is being made. With regards to the implementation of the Internal Control Standards, which were also highlighted by the Audit Committee, a proposed additional comment has already been included in the draft analysis and assessment of the authorising officer's annual (activity) report.

31. In referring to the carryover issue, the Director of ECDC noted that it is not easy to solve this issue as payments often simply cannot be made on time and carryovers are inevitable. He also challenged the Board to provide their solutions in order to remedy the matter. Andrea Ammon, Deputy to the Director and Head of Resource Management and Coordination Unit, added that the carryovers can never be decreased to zero. ECDC understands that there is room for improvement and a strategy is being developed wherein the optimum budget execution is forecasted. It was also highlighted that the Centre has already implemented procedures in order to reduce the carryover. For example, all contracts can only run until next January 2013. ECDC is also carefully monitoring its budget execution.

32. In response to ECDC's feedback, the Commission representative noted that all this should be clearly written down into the document, including explanations relating to situations that are not under ECDC's control.

The Management Board unanimously approved the Provisional Annual Accounts 2011, including the Report on Budgetary and Financial Management (Document MB24/5).

Item 3b – Draft Budget 2013 (Document MB24/6)*

33. Anja Van Brabant, Head of Section, Finance and Accounting, Resource Management and Coordination Unit, presented the Draft Budget 2013.¹³

34. One of the Board members echoed the recommendations of the Audit Committee on looking into finding an acceptable balance between Titles I and II and Title III.

35. The Commission representative sought to clarify that the staff reduction by 1% noted in the presentation is per year, as it is expected 5% per five years. Additionally, discussions are ongoing at the Commission with regards to the allocation of the grant, for the budget and for the staff. Thus, further changes might occur.

¹² Item 3a - Provisional Accounts 2011 (A Van Brabant)

* Item for decision

¹³ Item 3b - Draft Budget 2013 (A Van Brabant)

36. It was pointed out by another Board member that the MB should align with the conclusions of the Audit Committee and noted that in comparison to some Member States, the savings ECDC has to carry out are relatively moderate.

37. The Commission requested further clarification as to which steps ECDC have taken in order to reduce the time for recruitment. ECDC responded that the procedure for recruitment has been revised and the time has been decreased. In reference to the balance between administrative and operational costs, previous meetings were recalled where it was discussed whether ECDC strive towards the full establishment table and it was agreed upon. ECDC fully agrees that it has to be ensured to have sufficient budget for the existing staff. There are activities for which no budget has been allocated, such as surveillance reports, etc. With the Activity Based Budget (ABB), it is possible to allocate costs for such activities in order to see the staff costs.

38. One more member raised the issue of balancing operational and administrative costs, and noted that it is necessary to realise the cuts. However, the increase in administrative costs and decrease in operational costs is only sustainable for a limited period of time. In the long-term, there should be a balance and the priority should lie within maintaining the operational part.

39. The ECDC Director also pointed out that often, the higher positions available are filled by internal staff, leaving their previous positions vacant.

The Management Board unanimously approved the Draft Budget 2013 (Document MB24/6).

Item 4 – Annual Report of the Director:

*Item 4a – Annual Report of the Director on the Centre’s Activities in 2011 (Document MB24/7 Rev.2)**

40. Philippe Harant, Head of Section, Quality Management, gave a brief presentation on the Annual Report of the Director.¹⁴ The Chair of the Audit Committee indicated that the structure of the document, with an annex listing the status of implementation by activity, according to the Work Programme 2011, provides a transparent overview for the MB; she also referred to the suggested changes for the Draft Analysis and Assessment of Authorising Officer’s (Activity) Report proposed by the Audit Committee.

41. The suggestion by the AC was well received by the Board and it was proposed that other examples of ECDC’s EU-level responses to events (other than E.coli) should be illustrated in the Draft Analysis and Assessment of Authorising Officer’s (Activity Report) and in the introduction of the report. A recommendation was made to provide further input in the text on page 13 of the Annual Report to illustrate what ECDC public health functions are.

42. The Commission fully agreed with the comments above and added that the internal management issues, such as ECDC internal reorganisation, are relatively irrelevant to the outside world, with a possible exception of the conflict on interest issue.

43. One of the members noted the result of a disease project of influenza (determining risks groups for influenza immunisation) being delayed due to the responsible person leaving and questioned how sensitive this issue is and why the work was not handed over to another staff member. It was also questioned whether this project was not a priority and whether a change in staff can actually block an activity.

44. One of the representatives of the Parliament recalled the issue of conflict of interest discussed earlier during the meeting and noted that a confirmation should be received from the Parliament and the Commission on whether the current conflict of interest procedure is acceptable or not. Additionally, what would be the best way to cover this matter *vis-à-vis* experts.

45. The Commission representative noted that the conflict of interest issue is not only specific to ECDC. The discharge has been granted to ECDC, thus ECDC is not of concern. DG SANCO has

* Item for decision

¹⁴ Item 4 - Annual Report of the Director 2011 (P Harant)

considered that initiative should be taken to strengthen the Conflict of Interest (CoI) procedures and ensure its correctness. It was noted that when the Commission initiated the investigation of the issue, it was revealed that the files for the CoI were normally simply filed and there was no follow up in place. Attention should be paid to this and more focus should be directed to updating the forms and keeping them updated. DG SANCO endeavours to ensure that similar rules are applied in all the Agencies and that the rules are followed up.

46. The Parliament representative queried who has the responsibility to control the CoI process and what happens in case there is a conflict of interest. The Commission responded that the CoI should be incorporated into the management systems in a preventive mode and not as damage control. The management should have systems in place to not only receive, but also analyse the CoI. It was also pointed out that to the outside world, no agency stands out in this question and it is seen as an overall control system and in case this is not well managed, it will be difficult to maintain trust. The Commission would like to see more details developed on this issue in the coming months and all Agencies should preferably work together.

47. The Director of ECDC stated that in case of ECDC (as well as for other Agencies), the responsibility lies with the Director. In the light of the accusations and comments made at the discharge meeting in Brussels on the previous day, as well as keeping in mind the example of the MB Chair of EFSA, the ECDC Board members should provide information on any shares they might have, whether their family members own any shares, what kind of connection each member has to the industry, etc. The Director underlined that it is a question of data protection as much as it is about any conflicts of interest. In reference to an earlier question regarding a project being stopped due to the departure of responsible staff, the Director expressed his concerns about ECDC capacity for certain issues, "where the ice is not thick enough." He then turned to the Board for advice on how to solve this issue. This demonstrated that we should focus on projects with a sufficient critical mass, rather than fragmented activities.

48. The Chair announced the arrival of Caroline Aguado, who in her turn gave a short personal presentation of her background and areas of responsibilities within ECDC. The discussion on the annual report continued thereafter.

49. One of the members noted that in her country, individuals with conflicts of interest are excluded from work. In other words, any doctor who does research for the industry is not acceptable. Records are also been kept regarding any funds the people might have in industries. It was noted that there is a thin line as to where one will cut-off the information collection, thus it is a very complex issue.

50. Another member agreed to the necessity to publicly declare any conflicts of interest, but questioned the depth of the data.

51. The Board was cautioned by one of the members to refrain from such political issues and focus on the annual report.

52. The representative of the Parliament insisted on the importance of the issue of CoI. It was requested to revisit this issue at the next meeting and also inform the Board of any members who might have a conflict of interest and which actions have been taken in this regard.

53. One of the members noted that the CoI process needs transparency and requirements and not only rules recorded on paper. On the annual report, compliments were extended to ECDC for clarity and detail, however, the only mention of E.coli in the introduction to the report as an example of EU-level response from ECDC in 2011, was pointed out and it was suggested that it would be good to provide other examples of such responses during the year.

54. One of the Commission representatives noted that it has to be fully understood what the issue with regards to the CoI is and that no Agency would be able to fully eliminate this problem. However, strong management procedures need to be in place in order to prevent any further issues. It is also important to see what the implications for the MB are. All Management Board discussions are different, thus the issues might be different as well. Additionally, the role of the MB has to be made clear as well, for example, the MB does not make scientific decisions, etc.

55. A suggestion was made by one of the members to develop an indicator for the selection of the MB members in order to ensure that all members are selected correctly and any potential conflicts

can already be avoided at that stage. In reference to the annual report of the Director, it was proposed to clarify the reasons behind not completing 100% the activities.

56. Another question was raised in reference to the annual report, namely, whether ECDC could provide a short update on the work done and expected time for the report to be published on the issue of pandemic vaccine. Additionally, it was requested to further clarify the background and future of the VAESCO project, which is noted to be stopped in 2013 due to lack of financial support. Johan Giesecke informed that the project on the pandemic vaccine has been finished and the preliminary report has been received, and the final report should be published within about three weeks time. With regards to VAESCO, it has indeed been decided that ECDC cannot continue with the funding. When it comes to the role of ECDC, EMA and Commission, the representative of the Commission noted that in case there are any issues with the actual reaction to the vaccine, the work is done with EMA, but in case there is a potential threat to general public health, there could be a role for ECDC, but not to review any legislative part related to the actual vaccine, which is clearly within the mandate of EMA. The Member of Finland noted that the data on narcolepsy and pandemic vaccine will be published on 29 March 2012.

57. In reference to an earlier query on further clarifications on the reasons for not completing all activities, the Board was referred to one of the annexes of the annual report where the implementation is detailed for each activity approved by the MB in the Work Programme for 2011, with explanations for the 10% of activities not implemented in 2011.

58. The Chair summarised the discussions and announced that the item would be dealt with later in the programme, following the integration of the requested changes into the document.

59. In reference to the draft analysis of the Authorising Officer's (Activity) Report in 2011, the Chair of the Audit Committee noted the suggested changes proposed by the AC, and it was agreed that a further revised version of the document would be provided for the Board on the second day of the meeting.

Item 4b – Draft Analysis and Assessment of Authorising Officer's (Activity) Report in 2011 (Document MB24/8 Rev.2)*

60. This item was discussed jointly with the Annual Report (see above).

Item 8 – Report of Implementation of the Work Programme 2012 in the first three months: ECDC Cross-cutting Priorities 2012:

61. The Director informed on the implementation of the Work Programme for the first three months, where about 50% of the activities are on schedule, and 50% not started, which constitutes a normal pattern at this early stage of the year.

Item 8e – Strengthening Microbiology Laboratory Capacity in Europe

62. Marc Struelens, Chief Microbiologist, Head of Section, Microbiology Coordination, Resource Management and Coordination Unit, gave a presentation on strengthening microbiology laboratory capacity in Europe.¹⁵

Item 8a – Short introduction from ECDC Director

63. ECDC Director provided a short introduction on the implementation of the Work Programme 2012. He recalled that at the last meeting, the Board discussed the four cross-cutting priorities, which have been approved jointly with the Work Programme. Action plans for each of the priorities have been developed.

* Item for decision

¹⁵ Item 8 - Report of Implementation of the WP2012 in first three months

Item 8b – Working with EU Enlargement Countries

64. Alena Petrakova, Head of Section, Country Cooperation, Director's Office, gave an update on working with EU Enlargement Countries.¹⁶

Item 8c – Addressing Issues around Health Inequalities and Migrant Health

65. Johan Giesecke, Chief Scientist, informed the Board about the issues on the health inequalities and migrant health.¹⁷

66. Further information on exactly how ECDC is working with the vulnerable populations was requested. A few examples were shared with the Board. It was also noted that a successful meeting in Vienna on the Roma population took place at the end of 2011.

Item 8d – Advancing Measles Elimination in Europe

67. Pierluigi Lopalco, Head of Disease Programme VPD, Office of the Chief Scientist, briefed the Board on the strategy and action plan on advancing measles elimination in Europe.¹⁸

68. The Alternate from Austria extended her gratitude to ECDC's support in development of a national measles elimination plan.

69. One of the members highlighted the importance of not duplicating any activities which might already be in process/carried out. The part of rubella in the action plan was also questioned.

70. It was questioned when a final plan could be expected.

71. One of the representatives of the Commission noted the advice which will be provided in relation to the upcoming mass gatherings in Europe, the Olympic Games and the football championships. A conference will be arranged in October to discuss measles elimination. Additionally, the issue of vaccine sceptics was highlighted, considering that the sceptics are very often well educated and this complicates this issue even more.

72. In his response, Pierluigi Lopalco stated that ECDC is aware of the many actions approaching the Roma population, etc., but this information has been collected and used in order to avoid any unnecessary duplication. In reference to rubella, ECDC is focusing on measles in 2012 in order to clarify the message, which will hopefully reinforce elimination of rubella as well. An increased focus will be given to rubella next year.

73. The Chair informed the Board of a request from the United Nations in order to look into possibilities to strengthen collaboration between Switzerland and ECDC in the field of communicable diseases. The Chair has been asking the Commission to communicate with DG SANCO to ascertain in which way, while not disturbing ongoing processes, Switzerland could be a part of this work.

74. The Commission noted that Switzerland is in a very particular situation and this sets a limit to any formal mechanisms for collaboration. However, the Commission will try to find a way to communicate with Switzerland while keeping the limitations in mind.

75. One of the members commented that it is important to keep in mind that one unified message might not work on all different social groups. Also, ECDC should remain objective with regards to vaccines and vaccine usefulness.

76. It was highlighted by another member that even though assistance from ECDC is highly appreciated, measles elimination remains a national issue; thus it is vital to know when the Member States could be expected to receive tangible tools to use. ECDC informed that some of the deliverables are expected in the coming months. A documentary on the topic was mentioned. By October, a full package of deliverables will be presented at a conference planned by the Commission.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

In response to the question whether the Member States will also receive this package with information, the Director of ECDC noted that it will be available to all interested parties. He also highlighted the free-thinkers meeting planned under the framework of the measles elimination action plan, which will hopefully give an insight on the issue from the industry/marketing perspective.

77. A comment was made on the fact that the measles elimination is a multi-faced problem and that communication is not the only issue. As an example, it was noted that in the Netherlands, there is a community of people who deliberately infect children with measles in order to build up their immunity as it is thought to be more effective than vaccination.

Item 7 – Work Programme 2013:

Item 7a - Some long-term prospects

78. The ECDC Director presented the long-term prospects related to the Work Programme 2013, including consequences and options for the future.¹⁹

79. The Board members appreciated the bold and realistic presentation and it was noted that the timing for focusing on the core business is well selected.

80. One of the members noted that activities should not be stopped only due to lack of money. Another member reflected that in the era of budget cuts, it must be asked what we are best at, instead of blindly cutting activities. Also, as there are newer and 'popular' areas such as health economics, organisations should work together, as the experts in these areas are few. It has to be made very clear by the Member States where do they see an added value.

81. One member noted the significant improvements in the presentation of the Work Programme. In the context of budgetary constraints, and as stated by the Director, ECDC will have to prioritise between the "nice to have" and "need to have". Given the foreseen demands for the evaluation of the impact of public health measures, of new drugs and vaccines, ECDC will have to clarify in the near future to which extent the Centre can accommodate within its budget both the continuation of observational surveillance activities and the increased part of the Work Programme dedicated to the impact evaluation of public health measures. In other words, will ECDC be able to do both or will it have to remain within its core business, i.e. surveillance? As far as health economics is concerned, ECDC should concentrate its resources on the cost/benefit evaluation of surveillance rather than on the economic evaluation of public health interventions.

82. A proposal was made to pick up the discussions on the priorities also at the June meeting. Additionally, it was brought out that as there are much expertise around Europe, ECDC does not have to focus on getting all the experts to Stockholm or building up a super organisation, but knowing where to find the experts needed.

83. It was pointed out that the Member States put trust into the work ECDC is doing and the importance of the Centre is clearly noticeable, especially in times of crisis. One of the points which was contested, however, was the extent to which ECDC should try to "deliver the same results with fewer people" rather than just do less.

84. In reference to the presentation and the mention of fragmentation, it was stated by one of the Board members that it has to be made clear that the Member States do not wish to fragment ECDC but focus on what is important. Expertise can be acquired externally, if needed. More details were requested on the procedure to deliver risk assessments within 48 hours.

85. It was pointed out that as the process of prioritisation is complicated, each of the areas should be challenged in order to see what really should or could be stopped. Also, in case of something is left undone due to prioritisation, it has to be agreed how to share the risk and consequences. It was noted that it is the role of ECDC to propose things to be stopped, and the role of the MB to challenge and question such proposals. With regards to the internal organisation, ECDC needs a flexible workforce, who would be able to manage their work and switch between crisis situations and everyday tasks. ECDC has to ensure that in case of a crisis, all employees are not already fully occupied with other priorities. This statement was supported by other Board members. It

¹⁹ Item 7a - WP2013 Vision for ECDC (M Sprenger)

should be analysed what ECDC can do better than the countries, and where to invest while considering the desired result. Additionally, it was proposed that ECDC could provide an overview of how the Centre and WHO work together to avoid duplication of effort.

86. ECDC Director stated that it is vital to discuss this item again and was hopeful that at the next meeting in June, a list of items ECDC should either increase, decrease or even be cancelled could be presented. He also pointed out that each time the Work Programme priorities proposals are communicated to the Board, it is always requested to receive feedback on potential activities which ECDC could stop.

87. Denis Coulombier, Head of Surveillance and Response Support Unit, explained further that the risk assessments are indeed agreed to be delivered within 46-48 hours, for so-called "rapid risk assessments." Usually, these rapid risk assessments are delivered within 36 hours.

Item 7b - ECDC 2013 Work Programme Priorities (Document MB24/9)

88. Philippe Harant, Head of Section, Quality Management, gave a presentation on the ECDC Work Programme priorities for 2013.²⁰ He explained that following the recommendations of the Internal Audit Service of the Commission in 2011, the priorities should be discussed by the Management Board earlier this year (in March rather than June). The Work Programme should be adopted in June by the MB for the list of activities and the budget for title 3 (operations), and the staff allocation, which takes more time due to negotiations within the matrix structure of the Centre, should be approved in the November MB meeting, together with the Activity based Budget.

89. Members of the Board were very positive with regards to the process ECDC has initiated and were thankful for the document provided. There were several specific questions noted. It was questioned why the TB meeting of European reference laboratories (ERLN-TB) will be stopped and whether this has been a strategic decision. On the pneumococcal surveillance, the vaccination has been put on the market and thus surveillance is needed. Additionally, it was requested to clarify the activity on efforts to increase compliance of washing hands in healthcare institutions, how will this be surveyed and how ECDC is contemplating to address this issue.

90. Another member had a question related to the geodata. Further suggestions for changes were proposed to the text in the document.

91. In reference to antimicrobial resistance, it was questioned whether guidelines are prepared for better communication between the animal health and public health sectors.

92. Further questions were presented on the effectiveness studies about the flu vaccine, on coordination of work with the WHO, more information was requested on scientific advice working groups.

93. The Director of ECDC proposed to receive further feedback and remarks on the document during the following four weeks via written correspondence. After this deadline, ECDC would present a finalised Work Programme based on all the comments for adoption at the June meeting.

94. It was questioned whether ECDC has also discussed the priorities with the Advisory Forum beforehand, and if affirmative, what was their opinion.

95. Following a question from one of the members, the Chair confirmed that the MB is supposed to adopt the Work Programme 2013 in June. The Director of ECDC proposed to get back to MB with answers to the specific questions raised during the plenary session on Day Two of the meeting.

96. During the start of the second day of the meeting, the Chair reopened the item on the Work Programme 2013 priorities. PowerPoint slides with the questions raised on the previous day were presented to the Board.²¹ The ECDC staff thereafter responded to all the queries accordingly.

97. Denis Coulombier, Head of Surveillance and Response Support Unit, noted that, in reference to the question on TESSy for evaluation of preventive measures, the preventive strategies could indeed be getting input from TESSy. With regards to health economics, it was confirmed that ECDC intends to address this and bring more of the health economics into the Work Programme. It was

²⁰ Item 7b - ECDC WP priorities 2013 (P Harant)

²¹ Item 7b - WP2013 priorities - Questions raised by the MB members

agreed to replace 'Response' with 'Response support'. In reference to geocoding, it was noted that it is generic rather than disease specific and even though it is understood that geocoding is important for all diseases, it is considered more important for some diseases, i.e. ECDC considers geocoding for all diseases on different levels.

98. Johan Giesecke, Chief Scientist, responded to questions related to Scientific Advice (slide 2). Firstly, the Board was informed that ECDC works very closely with EFSA and co-publishes a report every year. No specific guidelines are produced for collaboration between the health and animal sectors. Secondly, it was confirmed that the ERLN-TB meeting, which was mentioned by several Board members will not disappear but be merged with the overall TB network meeting. In reference to the query as to why less money will be allocated to pneumococcal surveillance next year, it was clarified that ECDC is starting up this year and thus the process will be more expensive than in 2013. With regards to the surveillance on hand-washing, it was noted that this activity is looked at internally within ECDC. It was also confirmed that the risk assessment on tissues and cells is within ECDC's remit and ECDC has already been receiving requests for scientific opinions from the Commission on this. The call for proposal can be shared with the Board, if requested. In reference to the question on scientific advice working groups, it was noted that there are specific groups which are nominated by the Member States as well as groups of selected persons from countries based on the need of ECDC. It was noted that ECDC will provide technical support on preparedness and will be supportive of preparedness activities in the Member States; all activities in this field will be developed with the Competent Bodies. In reference to the question on ECDC's role in the newly proposed cross-border health threat legislation, the Board was informed that ECDC is about to establish a Working Group to ascertain the potential role for ECDC.

99. In reference to general issues raised by the Board members, ECDC Director noted that the item on collaboration with WHO is on the agenda for the meeting. The Board was also informed that the Work Programme 2013 was also discussed with the Advisory Forum in general and not based on the detailed document received by the Board. One of the members noted that it would be useful to receive the report from the Advisory Forum meetings in order to follow their opinions. The Chair concluded that this should be placed into the agenda for the next Board meeting in June, as there will be an Advisory Forum meeting in May.

The ECDC 2013 Work Programme Priorities will be issued to the Management Board for comments via written procedure (Document MB24/9).

Item 4a – Annual Report of the Director on the Centre's Activities in 2011 (Document MB24/7 Rev.2)* (Continued)

100. The revised version of Document MB24/7 Rev.2 was tabled. There were no further comments from the Board.

The Management Board unanimously approved the Annual Report of the Director on the Centre's Activities in 2011 (Document MB24/7 Rev.2).

Item 4b – Draft Analysis and Assessment of Authorising Officer's (Activity) Report in 2011 (Document MB24/8 Rev.2)* (Continued)

101. The revised version of Document MB24/8 Rev.2 was tabled, including the latest updates arising from discussions on the first revision presented the day before.

The Management Board unanimously approved the Draft Analysis and Assessment of Authorising Officer's (Activity) Report in 2011 (Document MB24/8 Rev.2).

* Item for decision

* Item for decision

Item 9 – Analysis of the Indicators for the Strategic Multi-annual Work Programme 2007-2013 (Update 2011) (Document MB24/10 Rev.1)

102. Philippe Harant, Head of Section, Quality Management, gave an update on the analysis of the indicators for the Strategic Multi-annual Work Programme 2007-2013.²² It should be noted that the indicators were more relevant to show the progress in the building up phase of ECDC. Now that ECDC has reached the maturity stage, some of the indicators should probably be reviewed. The discussion on the next ECDC Strategic Multi-Annual Work Programme 2014-2020 should provide this opportunity to discuss the indicators at the same time.

103. It was highlighted by one of the Board members that as Member States are facing similar issues while developing indicators for their organisations, a common methodology should be discussed.

104. The Chair recommended providing the Board with the opportunity to submit further comments. The Director called the Member States to share their experience and provide examples on the challenges as well as the success stories of similar documents in place at a national level.

105. It was questioned to which extent ECDC has tied the budget to the indicators, i.e. ECDC should be able to show that the budget has been usefully utilised, thus how do the indicators two-tail with the budget.

The Chair concluded that ECDC is very interested to receive examples from national levels of existing indicators and secondly, the Board will have time to further discuss how to develop the indicators during the process of developing the next ECDC Strategic Multi-Annual work programme. Further information will be provided at the June meeting. (Document MB24/10 Rev.1).

Item 14 – Update from ECDC on staff matters:

Item 14a – Evaluation of the reorganisation

106. Andrea Ammon, Deputy to the Director and the Head of Resource Management and Coordination Unit, informed the Board that a Working Group, composed of HR staff, members of the Staff Committee and other staff members, was established in order to look into how the staff survey and evaluation on the reorganisation could potentially be combined. It was decided that it is useful to separate the two issues. The staff survey has been carried out and the evaluation on the reorganisation will be arranged later during the year.

107. In mid-February, two workshops were arranged for all managers on change management. The second event was a first round of ECDC's common assessment framework (CAF), the quality management system that ECDC has now started; items relating to the reorganisation were discussed inclusively. The two groups were composed of staff members from different nationalities and posts. In mid-April, a reflection session will be arranged in order to digest the results.

108. In reference to CO-DO, the SMT held approximately 75-80 bilateral (open office) discussions. It was noted that the number of discussions does not reflect the actual number of staff taking part in this initiative as some staff members opted to convene confidential discussions with several members of the SMT. The Board was informed that the SMT will have a meeting later in the afternoon of 29 March in order to summarise the results of the initiative and to ascertain the outcomes.

109. The staff survey was finalised on 23 March 2012. The Working Group noted above had made suggestions for adding a few questions relating to the reorganisation and how it has affected the staff. 76% of staff participated in the survey. On 27 April, a presentation will be submitted to ECDC staff on the results of the survey.

²² Item 9 - Analysis of the Indicators 2011 (P Harant)

110. The Board was also informed of the 360-degree feedback mechanism, which was developed last year. All SMT members participated in this form of evaluation in December 2011.

111. Regarding the evaluation of the reorganisation, it was noted that ECDC will continue with the Working Group in order to prepare for areas that were not covered by the staff members during the above-noted mechanisms for providing their feedback. The Board will be updated of the developments accordingly. The Chair concluded that it would be useful to continue the discussions at the June meeting.

112. One of the members recalled the document sent to the Board on CO-DO. It was noted that the internal organisation is clearly within the mandate of the Director and decisions taken in this area shall be fully respected. Reference was made again to the CO-DO document where the Director had noted a number of challenges, such as critical mass for expertise, etc. It was questioned whether there are any written reports about the results of the reorganisation which led to initiatives such as CO-DO and whether these are available. It was questioned whether it is the correct approach to focus on qualitative issues and state that ECDC has delivered all work within its remit, rather than the quality of working conditions and the staff member's wellbeing. Now the staff and Staff Committee have been asked to make a contribution towards the structure of the organisation. The key message is that the correct measure is listening. The assessment of performance on the basis of what is done at ECDC should be within the remit of the MB. Thus, the Board needs to be aware of any challenges at the same time it should not get out of proportion. It is positive to have a process in place for internal consultation and the Board should support the Director and ECDC. It was questioned whether the Board should give their opinion on this matter at the June meeting.

113. One of the representatives of the European Parliament inquired whether there is a connection between the reorganisation and the Work Programme 2013, i.e. whether the contents of the Work Programme for the coming year are also in line with the ideas and evaluation of staff members.

114. It was questioned whether it would be possible for ECDC to share some general impressions regarding the personal discussions which took place in the framework of CO-DO. The Chair noted that it might be premature to discuss the results of the discussions now and proposed to address this at the June meeting instead.

115. In reference to the question regarding the link between these evaluations and the Work Programme for 2013, the discussion of the work carried out by ECDC is one issue while the continuation of the activities has to be kept in mind. The prioritisation which has been put forward has repercussions and it has to be realised how ECDC re-distributes the staff in order to deliver. The European Parliament representative referred to her earlier question and added that ECDC needs to ensure it is clear whether the staff is satisfied with the work and priorities for the coming years. ECDC has the best quality of experts and there should be a connection between how units are organised and how the Work Programme is planned. It was queried whether staff can contribute to this process. In her reply, Andrea Ammon clarified that while the priorities were established by management, the activities included under priorities were suggested by the staff; thus ECDC has widely applied a bottom-up approach.

116. In general, it was noted that during the CO-DO initiative, the staff expressed their experience working in the matrix, and what needed to be further improved. The SMT will discuss and set priorities based on these suggestions that were put forward.

117. The Director added that ECDC has chosen a matrix organisation which results in some of the staff being less satisfied than others and it is vital to understand the reasons behind that. The Senior Management Team (SMT) has invested much time into listening. In general, there seems to be an issue between the long- and short-term work, which coincides with the Work Programme. As a result, and as an example, a group of people working with AMR have to suddenly respond to a threat in a Member State and stop all other work in order to achieve this. And such situations cause tensions. The Director expressed his concern that the staff of ECDC are over-committing themselves and are not able to really deliver everything which has been promised. Based on this example, the Board was informed that the SMT has decided to increase the capacity in the ARHAI group. It was also brought to the attention of the MB that ECDC have staff from many different cultures and backgrounds, which poses challenges. Denis Coulombier added that picking up threats is tricky and it is difficult to find the balance between doing all that is needed and doing too much.

118. The European Commission expressed their appreciation for the CO-DO document and noted that much has been invested in the smooth operation of ECDC. It was agreed that there is surely tension caused by the long- versus short-term work. As noted earlier by ECDC, in case the Agency does not respond to a request for rapid risk assessment, consequences will follow. On the other hand, if ECDC would not have surveillance figures going back many years, it would not be possible to see various disease trends, etc. In this regard, ECDC should have flexible staff in order to be able to alter between different activities, based on priority. The question is, how to ensure that staff is aware of that. In reference to the extent of MB involvement in this question, it was felt that the ECDC Director should have the sole mandate to make necessary changes and continue providing such information to the Board.

119. The idea of staff flexibility was supported by Board members. It was added that satisfactory leadership can be identified if staff believe they are responsible for their work and related tasks.

120. The Chair concluded that the decision making in reference to reorganising the Centre clearly lies within the responsibility of the Director. The MB is ready to assist if needed and provide advice. The Board is interested in receiving more information on lessons learnt from the reorganisation. It was proposed to revisit this item in the June meeting in order to obtain general information on the results of the various evaluations and the ideas of the Director on the direction on the development of the structure of ECDC.

Item 14b – ECDC reinforces support to staff related to accommodation search

121. The Director was pleased to present the new Staff Committee to the Board. He also noted that a liaison between the Staff Committee and the SMT has been appointed. All ECDC Staff Committee members introduced themselves briefly to the Board.²³

122. Ingela Söderlund, Member of the ECDC Staff Committee, stated that she was very pleased to be invited to the MB in order to discuss the issue of accommodation, and gave a brief presentation on the situation.²⁴ It was noted that the accommodation issue has already been raised and discussed at previous MB meetings. The survey showed that accommodation is one of the most important issues for staff members, especially new staff.

123. The Swedish Board Member thanked the Staff Committee for the presentation and noted the positive improvements carried out internally by ECDC. It is understood that the rental market situation is not easy. The Ministry in Sweden is fully aware of the challenges and many discussions have been taking place in order to ascertain what can be done to improve the situation. Still, the Board and ECDC staff have to be aware that there will be no quick fix to this problem. Also, the issues are related mainly to the rental market and not to buying property.

124. The Chair proposed to write a letter on behalf of the ECDC MB addressed to the Swedish authorities seeking their support in this matter. It is understood that this issue cannot be solved within a short timeframe; however, persistence in taking this up will have a positive effect on the developments.

125. The Representative of Parliament asked whether it would be possible to obtain a short comment from the Staff Committee on career development. The Staff Committee noted that career development in the EU Agency is not an easy matter; there is reclassification, but it is usually a lengthy process. The ECDC Staff Committee expressly requests that attention is paid to this matter and solutions be found in order to improve the situation. It was suggested to follow this up at another point in time. With regards to the letter from the Chair of MB, the Staff Committee welcomed the initiative.

126. The Chair thanked the Staff Committee for their input and presentation and noted that the MB would be very interested to continue receiving updates from the Staff Committee.

²³ All members of the ECDC Staff Committee were present: Sergio Brusin, Irina Dinca, Rodrigo Filipe, Adoracion Navarro Torne, Anna Ridderstolpe, Lars Söderblom, Ingela Söderlund.

²⁴ Item 14b - ECDC Staff Committee

Item 16 – Update on Senior Officials Meeting 2012:

Item 16a – Feedback on collaboration between ECDC and WHO/Europe (Document MB24/13)

127. Maarit Kokki, Senior Advisor to the Director, recalled that the MB already raised the issue of collaboration between ECDC and WHO/Europe on Day One of the meeting, as well as on several occasions during past Board meetings. The framework setting the boundaries in the collaboration between the two organisations was briefly mentioned. It was recalled that the MB had approved the agreement between the ECDC and WHO/Europe about one year ago, signed at last year's Senior Officials Meeting. In order to implement the broad ideas, the Commission, together with WHO/Europe and in close collaboration with ECDC, has developed a roadmap on health security. The priority areas include, amongst others, AMR, HIV, VPD, etc., and ECDC continues to support the Commission in this work.

128. With regards to collaboration between ECDC and WHO/Europe, the joint work has been ongoing since 2005. Joint surveillance is carried out in some areas, as the Board is aware. It was noted that the two Directors and technical leads from both parties met for the first time last November in the Joint Coordination Group meeting and broadly agreed upon how to collaborate. It was also pointed out at this meeting that Terms of Reference should be developed for the joint areas of work in order to clarify how the two organisations should work together, which meetings would be arranged by which party, etc. This planning took place in February this year and the technical roadmap will be sent to the technical committee and be discussed at a meeting arranged in ECDC on 16 April. The Terms of Reference should include an evaluation of collaborative work for 2013-2015. Lastly, it was stated that further information can be compiled and discussed again at the June meeting.

Item 16b – Report back from the Ninth Senior Officials Meeting of the European Commission (EC) and the World Health Organization (WHO): Brussels, 6-7 March 2012

129. John F Ryan, Member, European Commission, updated the Board on the report back from the Ninth Senior Officials meeting of the European Commission and the World Health Organization. He noted that an agreement has been signed between the two parties to better streamline and coordinate collaboration in the field of health. The agreement extends beyond ECDC's mandate as it covers all areas of work. The roadmap on health security was recalled. With regards to the framework, in case alerts are received from the Member States, a sharing of information should be carried out via EWRS. When preparedness planning is developed, it should also be linked to the work of WHO, as well as for example Dublin Declaration, etc. As there have been previous discussions during the meeting on AMR and measles, the Commission noted that it is vital to maintain a common approach between the two organisations. ECDC has been actively involved in discussions relating to further improving such collaborative initiatives.

130. The Director of ECDC stressed that both ECDC and WHO are very committed to joint collaboration. He further exemplified such collaboration by citing the many reports that are jointly published and where both Directors are quoted.

131. One of the members welcomed improvements in the collaboration and stated that it should not be a hot issue for ECDC anymore.

132. It was questioned whether ECDC has been asked to have any input on the Health 2020 programme. Additionally, it was queried whether the Commission has any ideas about a special programme for the EU countries. As there is a wide difference of issues in the WHO region of Europe, the Commission has perhaps prepared something in this respect.

133. ECDC Director stated that there should be a split between discussions on political versus technical levels and ECDC is reluctant to make comments on the former level. The Commission representative confirmed that there are contacts between the Commission and WHO on how to integrate the agenda for Health 2020. Additionally, it might be useful for the wider European region,

but it might not be necessarily good for the European Union. It is important that the activities of EC, and not only ECDC, would be integrated in case they might contribute to the WHO-wide objectives.

134. The members of the Board were hoping to receive further information in the future on the synergies which can be achieved in this collaboration and which duplications could and should be avoided. All information related to the Health 2020 agenda is helpful for the national arena of the Member States.

135. The Chair informed the Board that during 2011, discussions were started on the reorganisation of the entire WHO, and it is not yet known what would be the results and how this would affect WHO/Europe and ECDC.

Item 10 – ECDC response to the evaluation of the influenza pandemic 2009-2010 (Document MB24/11)

136. Denis Coulombier, Head of the Surveillance and Response Support Unit, noted that it was requested at the last Board meeting to further elaborate on this issue and presented the eight recommendations and information on how ECDC has implemented them.²⁵

137. In reply to a question related to the copyrights and translation of the Public Health Event (PHE) Handbook, it was noted that majority of the document refers to internal procedures and was submitted to the MB as reference material.²⁶

Item 11 – ECDC experience with liaison officers in Member States during public health emergencies (Document MB24/12)

138. Denis Coulombier also informed the Board on the experience of ECDC with liaison officers in the Member States during public health emergencies.²⁷ He added that in relation to UEFA and Olympic Games, agreements have been reached with Poland and United Kingdom to arrange for liaison officers to be in place during these mass gathering events. The evaluation of this collaboration can be further reported to the Board at a later stage.

139. The Member from Germany noted the positive experience with the liaison officers related to the EHEC outbreak. However, it was noted that in case there are Terms of Reference developed on this matter, these should be communicated to the Member States. Additionally, there might be events in which case more than just one country is involved. He then proposed the following division: liaison officers, observers and surge capacity staff.

140. It was questioned at which level the liaison officer is situated in the Member State and whether there is prioritisation. ECDC Director stated that the procedure should be developed further, especially considering the different possible scenarios. A suggestion was made to revisit this issue at the next meeting to elaborate further.

141. With regards to the questions from the Board members, it was noted that the Terms of Reference will be relatively crisis-specific. The mechanisms to provide technical support to Member States has already been discussed and further information can be circulated at the next meeting. The Board was also informed that in the United Kingdom, the liaison officer will be placed at the HPA and in Poland in the Common Centre, as most suitable for both events.

142. The Chair agreed to a proposal to revisit the above-noted matter in the June meeting and also to receive a report back on how the mass gathering liaisons worked at the meeting in November.

It was agreed that the above-noted topic will be revisited in June with a revised paper (Document MB24/12) and that the Board will receive a report back on how the mass gathering liaisons worked at the meeting in November.

²⁵ Item 10 and 11 - ECDC response to influenza pandemic and experience with liaison officers (D Coulombier)

²⁶ Please refer to ECDC MB Collaborative Workspace (extranet) for the mentioned document, along with ECDC Public Health Emergency Operation Plan as well as ECDC Business Continuity Plan.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

Item 13 – Update on ECDC Working Group Building Project

143. The Director recalled that ECDC has been committed to leasing the current building(s) until 2018. However, two interested parties have been identified who could potentially be willing to take over the lease, in which case ECDC would be free to rent new facilities for the Agency. ECDC is acquiring a financial overview of the current situation and identifying the needs for the future. The Staff Committee has been involved in this process. The Director also informed the Board of the study visits to The Hague and Lisbon that will take place in mid-April. ECDC has started to screen the local real-estate market in order to find a suitable building. In case ECDC would be able to move, the physical move would take place at the earliest in spring 2014. The Director hoped to provide the Board with more information at the June meeting.

Item 15 – Update from European Commission:

Item 15a – Substances of Human Origin

144. Martin Seychell, Member, European Commission, recalled the many discussions on this matter during past meetings and noted that overall, it is clear that despite willingness from all sides, some reservations exist, and as a result, DG SANCO is exploring alternative options. The Board was informed that IT support is needed for the rapid exchange of information, the needs for this have been assessed and the IT team in DG SANCO has mapped the work. A prototype has been developed and user comments have been received. A pilot is expected at the end of 2012. With regards to databases, the Commission has hired a consultant and the formats of the databases have been discussed. It is expected to start data collection after summer.

145. An area in which ECDC will be involved will be scientific advice. There are three FTEs who have been appointed from ECDC and discussions on further details have already been taking place.

146. It was also stated that the Competent Authorities on Substances of Human Origin have agreed to review the work of ECDC and provide their evaluation. The member of the Commission then extended his thanks to ECDC for their support.

Item 15b – Proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on serious cross-border threats to health

147. John F Ryan, Member, European Commission, stated that the Commission has made a legal proposal to the Council which was adopted in December. It is currently being discussed at the Council and the European Parliament. The aims of the proposal are: 1) to codify the legislation on health, i.e. updating the current legislation; 2) to extend the existing system on surveillance and response to other threats apart from communicable diseases (supported by the International Health Regulations); 3) preparedness and response – it is proposed that all individual 27 plans should be compared; 4) mechanisms of coordination in the EWRS Committee will be joined up with the Health Security Committee. There has also been a proposal for the possibility to establish linkages with countries outside of Europe.

148. The Chair stated that it should be noted which implications all this will have for ECDC. The Commission was requested to provide a further update on this at a later stage. The Commission clarified that they are not asking ECDC to implement the decision before the Council and the European Parliament have adopted the proposal. It is only asked to look into the possibilities to extend the EWRS.

149. It was questioned whether this decision would affect the mandate of ECDC, extending it to diseases which are not communicable and how this feeds into EWRS. The Commission's representative noted that it is not their proposal to extend ECDC's mandate from a legal point of view. Changes in the future are not precluded; however, this is nothing that is proposed at this stage. The Commission suggested revisiting this item with further details in the June meeting.

Item 15c – Update on DG RTD activities

150. Anna Lönnroth Sjödén, Alternate, European Commission, gave a presentation on key activities of the DG RTD.²⁸ She noted that a more elaborate presentation will be available on the MB workspace (extranet).

151. As the presentation had been shortened and presented very briefly due to time constraints, it was suggested that similar presentations be made available in advance of the meeting.

Item 17 – Update on Transatlantic Task Force on AMR (TATFAR)

152. Due to scheduling constraints, this item was postponed to the MB25 June meeting.

Item 18 – Any other business

153. ECDC Director thanked the Board members for their active participation. He noted that flowers will be sent to Daniel Reynders on behalf of the MB, as discussed at the start of the meeting. He also took the opportunity to extend a special thank to those MB members who had been involved of the 360-degree evaluation of the Senior Management Team. Corinne Skarstedt, Head of Section, Corporate Governance, Director's Office, was praised for ensuring the success of the meeting with her very small team. The Director also extended his thanks to Philippe Harant, the SMT, including the Heads of Disease Programmes, for having provided their excellent contributions to the ECDC 2013 Work Programme Priorities.

154. In closing, the Chair thanked the interpreters for their exceptional work. He also thanked the staff of ECDC who contributed to the meeting. He also express thanks to the members of the Board for their interesting and fruitful discussions. He then wished everyone a Happy Easter break and all the best until the next meeting. He also took the opportunity to inform the Board that the next meeting (19-20 June 2012) will be his last full meeting in his capacity as the Chair of the Management Board.

²⁸ Item 15c – Update on DG RTD activities (A Lönnroth Sjödén)