

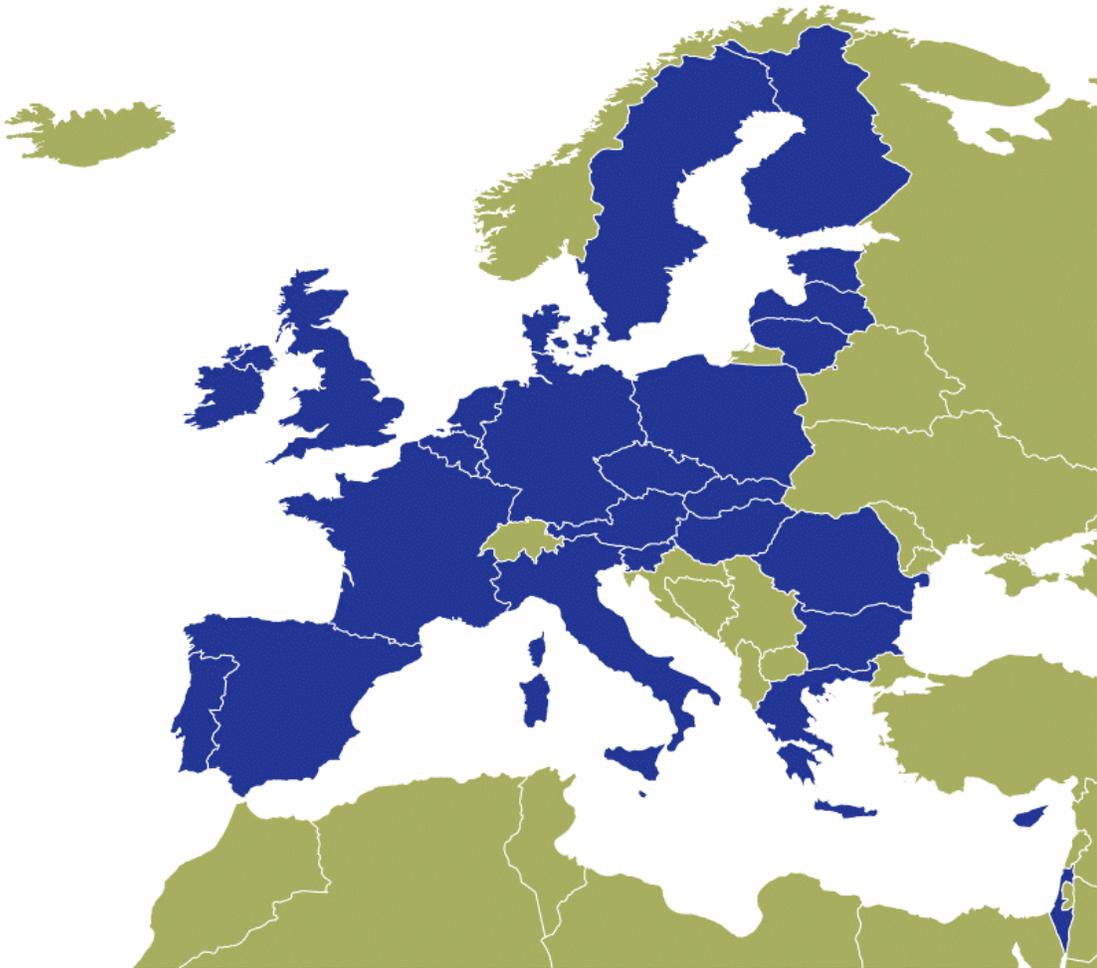


eurohep.net

surveillance of vaccine preventable hepatitis



Short Final Report EUROHEP.NET



PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

<p>Contract number: QLK2-CT-2002-01579 <i>(include reference to complementary contracts–e.g. fellowships, INCO)</i></p>
<p>Title of the project: Surveillance of vaccine preventable hepatitis <i>(as in the contract)</i></p>
<p>Acronym of the project: hepnet (EUROHEP.NET) <i>(as in the contract)</i></p>
<p>Type of contract: Concerted Action (Pluripartenaire) <i>(e.g. thematic network or concerted action...)</i></p>
<p>QoL action line: The project belongs to key action 2: control of infectious diseases. The work done in this project has an impact on the aspects of public health and care delivery systems (QOL-2001-2-3), more specifically risk assessment, transmission and surveillance (QOL-2001-2.3.1). This project also contributes to the epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases in the Community (EP and Council decision 2119/98/EC) <i>(state to which key action, generic activity etc this contract belongs)</i></p>
<p>Commencement date: 01/09/02 <i>(DD/MM/YY: normally the first day of the month following the day of the signature of the last contracting party, unless otherwise stated in the contract)</i></p>
<p>Duration: 36 Months <i>(in months)</i></p>
<p>Total project costs: 599569 € <i>(in Euro)</i></p>
<p>EU contribution: 599569 € <i>(in Euro)</i></p>
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<p>Keywords: viral hepatitis, vaccine preventable, surveillance, feasibility, European network <i>(list up to five keywords that best describe the project)</i></p>
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SCHEMATIC DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Overall objectives of the project:

To day, control of communicable diseases is performed at national or even regional level. In response to the need for a viral hepatitis surveillance and prevention network at the level of the European Union (EU), EUROHEP.NET was set up as a feasibility study for such a future European network.

The objectives of EUROHEP.NET were:

- 1) to contribute to a better understanding of the diversity of the current surveillance and prevention strategies,
- 2) to identify potential hurdles towards harmonisation, and
- 3) to facilitate the establishment of a European network for surveillance and prevention of viral hepatitis A and B.

Achievements and results:

At the start of the EUROHEP.NET project a specific web site, <http://www.eurohep.net>, was created and online surveys were designed to gather information regarding national surveillance and prevention through vaccination of hepatitis A and B. The responses, assembled into the EUROHEP.NET book, very well illustrated the existing diversity of surveillance methods and vaccination programmes in Europe. Based on the gathered information, guidelines for harmonisation were drafted.

All national surveillance institutes / authorities as well as other stakeholders were asked for the feasibility of implementing these guidelines in their region.

At the resuming meeting held in Malta in April 2005, representatives from the national institutes of the participating countries, from EU related projects, and from the WHO Regional Office for Europe further discussed these draft guidelines. Possibilities and hurdles for harmonisation were identified. After the meeting a final version of the guidelines was created. In total 26 countries contributed to the establishment of these guidelines.

It is clear that it will be a very challenging task to harmonise the surveillance systems. Three major discrepancies regarding the basic surveillance tools are diversity in reporting age categories, case definitions used and outbreak definitions used. The rationale behind surveillance at EU level should be made more clear to motivate collaboration and enhance support at regional and sub regional level. Setting up this network may have a major impact on the way countries/regions currently work.

Most of the 55 participants at the resuming meeting agreed on the need for a network for surveillance and prevention of vaccine-preventable hepatitis. The national institutes very much supported the suggestion to report to only one European body.

The final version of the amended guidelines and hurdles will be communicated to the European Commission, the ECDC and the WHO Regional Office for Europe.

EUROHEP.NET has created an informal network that could further evolve in a disease specific surveillance network.

The most relevant publications emanating from the project (maximum five):

- EUROHEP.NET Data on surveillance and prevention of hepatitis A and B in 22 countries 1990s - 2001. **EUROHEP.NET Book 2004; 58 pages**
- Leuridan E, Vorsters A, Van Herck K, Van Damme P. Hepatitis A and B surveillance and immunization programmes in Europe: EUROHEP.NET project? **Archives of Public Health** In press
- Leuridan E et al. Surveillance and prevention of hepatitis A and B in Europe: lessons learnt and considerations for the future. **Eur J Public Health** 2004; 14(4): S18-19.
- Vorsters A, Emiroglu N Meeting on surveillance and prevention of vaccine-preventable hepatitis in Europe. **CD NEWS** 2005; No 38: p8
- Leuridan E. et al. Surveillance and prevention of hepatitis A and B in Europe: lessons learnt and considerations for the future. **In: Urbanisation and health, Tellnes G ed. Oslo Academic Press 2005 Chapter 18**