ECDC Management Board

Minutes of the Twenty-seventh Meeting of the ECDC Management Board

Stockholm, 20-21 March 2013

Adopted by the Management Board at its Twenty-eighth meeting, 19-20 June 2013

Contents

Summary of Proceedings – ECDC Management Board Meeting

The Twenty-seventh meeting of the ECDC Management Board (MB) convened in Stockholm, Sweden, on 20-21 March 2013. During the meeting, the Management Board:

- agreed that the MB Rules of Procedure be amended accordingly and sent to Members for review and subsequent adoption at the next Board meeting;
- adopted the Draft Programme, with one request from the German Board Member;
- adopted the draft minutes of the Twenty-sixth Management Board meeting (14-15 November);
- took note of the update on ECDC's activities and agreed that documents for future MB meetings contain two levels of information, namely, a four- to five-page summary of key information that all members need to be aware of, and an extended version, which includes more in-depth coverage for interested members;
- welcomed the Swedish Minister of Health and Social Affairs, Göran Hägglund;
- unanimously approved the Annual Report of the Director on the Centre's Activities in 2012 with some suggestions and also proposed that ECDC considers developing a summary version of the Annual Report, including a full-length version;
- approved Draft Analysis and Assessment of Authorising Officer's (Activity) Report in 2012, with the inclusion of an additional paragraph, as proposed by the Audit Committee;
- took note of the work carried out on the Analysis of the Indicators for the Strategic Multi-annual Programme 2007-2013 (Update 2012) and agreed that the work on the indicators should continue as part of the Strategic Multi-annual Programme (2014-2020);
- participated in the extended *tour de table* session to provide ECDC with the views of Member States and EU Institutions on the draft Strategic Multi-annual Programme (2014-2020) and conducted an electronic voting session to provide guidance to the Director on which areas should be prioritised if ECDC had to implement further spending cuts; the Board was asked to provide any further comments to the ECDC Secretariat by 5 April 2013;
- took note of the Update on implementation of the Position statement of the Commission and ECDC on human pathogen laboratories: a joint vision and strategy for the future; the Commission promised to provide further information to the Management Board on these proposals in due course;
- took note of the ECDC 2014 Work Programme Priorities; an electronic consultation will take place in April 2014 in order to receive feedback from the Management Board;
- adopted the Provisional Annual Accounts 2012, including the Report on Budgetary and Financial Management;
- took note of the Third Supplementary and Amending Budget 2012;
- took note of the Update on implementation of Independence policy and implementing rules on Declarations of Interests;
- approved ECDC's participation in the ADVANCE project as leader of the Work Package (WP) and will discuss the revised Terms of Reference of the MB Working Group in the June 2013 Board meeting;
- took note of the update from the ECDC Management Board External Evaluation Steering Committee on the recent developments of the second independent external evaluation of the Centre;
- approved the Draft Budget 2014 with one abstention from the European Commission;
- took note of information presented in a roundtable discussion on ECDC staff matters and decided to schedule a further discussion on staff issues for MB28 in June and to invite the Staff Committee to present the results of its study on career development at that meeting. ECDC should also present results from the further analysis of the survey on evaluation of the reorganisation at MB28.

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

1. Françoise Weber, Chair, ECDC Management Board, announced the newly appointed members and alternates, comprised of the following: Cvetan Stoevski, Alternate, Bulgaria; Mariella Borg Buontempo, Alternate, Malta; Jon-Olav Aspås, Member, Norway; Helen Shirley-Quirk, Member, United Kingdom; Line Matthiessen-Guyader, Member, European Commission, Martin Seychell, Member, European Commission. The Chair also welcomed Frank Van Loock, European Commission, who was participating as an observer.

2. It was recalled that Mr Göran Hägglund, Minister of Health and Social Affairs, Sweden, accompanied with his Press Secretary, Ms Hannah Ekeroos, would be joining the meeting at 10:00 a.m. in order to discuss ECDC cooperation with the host country.

3. It was informed that representatives from Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, the European Parliament and the European Commission were unable to attend the meeting. Due to scheduling constraints, the Finnish Member was expected to join the meeting later in the day. Daniel Reynders, Member, Belgium, would participate on the second day. Frédéric Denauw from Belgium would participate as an adviser for both days of the meeting. Marianne Donker, Netherlands, Line Matthiessen-Guyader, European Commission, and Audrius Ščeponavičius, Lithuania, would be unable to take part on the second day of the meeting.

4. An issue relating to voting rights as defined in the MB Rules of Procedure was introduced by the Senior Legal Counsel particularly in reference to the role of the French Chair who is also Member of the Board. It was unanimously agreed that the French Alternate can represent France for the duration of the meeting in order to allow the French Member to fulfil her role as Chair. However, in accordance with the current Rules of Procedure, it was noted that the French Alternate can only exercise the right to vote if the French Member is unavailable. The situation is similar for the Deputy Chair and the Estonian Alternate. Bearing the foregoing in mind, and another practical issue which had arisen, the Senior Legal Counsel suggested that the Board may wish to mandate a review and revision of the Rules of Procedure to formalise specific procedures for practical situations which had arisen. It was agreed that the MB Rules of Procedure be amended accordingly and sent to Members for review and subsequent adoption at the next Board meeting.

Welcome from the Director, ECDC

5. Marc Sprenger, Director, ECDC, welcomed delegates and informed that he was looking forward to fruitful discussions during the meeting.

Item 1 – Adoption of the draft programme, including its agenda items (and noting the oral declarations of interest and proxy voting, if any) *(Documents MB27/2 Rev.3; MB27/Info Note 3 Rev.1)*[*]

6. Prior to the adoption of the draft programme, the Chair requested that each member, based on the draft programme, declare whether or not s/he wishes to add any interest(s) to the Annual Declaration of Interest (DoI) previously submitted. Roman Prymula, Member, Czech Republic, and Maria de Graça Gregorio de Freitas, Member, Portugal, requested to be absent from the Board Room during discussions in respect to Agenda item 11b.[1]

7. The following proxies were submitted to the Secretariat: Daniel Reynders, Member, Belgium (proxy given to Robert Goerens, Member, Luxembourg); Audrius Ščeponavičius, Member, Lithuania (proxy given to Tiiu Aro, Member, Estonia); Marianne Donker, Member, Netherlands (proxy given to Daniel Reynders, Member, Belgium); Minerva-Melpomeni Malliori, Member, European Parliament (proxy given to Jacques Scheres, Member, European Parliament); John F Ryan, Member, European Commission (proxy given to Martin Seychell, Member, European Commission).

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[*] Item for decision

1 ECDC Management Board Working Group on new business models and financing on large-scale EU level actions for which ECDC budget is insufficient; ECDC and WP7 in a full project proposal to develop a Blueprint for EU level monitoring of vaccine benefit/risk (ADVANCE/IMI 7th call).

8. In reference to the draft programme, the German Member requested that the ECDC building project be discussed prior to the session with the Swedish Minister. This change was agreed by the Chair.

The draft agenda was adopted with one request from the German MB Member.

Item 2 – Adoption of the draft minutes of the 26th meeting of the Management Board (Stockholm, 14-15 November 2012) *(Document MB27/3)**

9. The Chair thanked the ECDC Secretariat for the timely submission of the draft minutes of the previous meeting and asked the MB if there were any further amendments.[2]

The draft minutes of the Twenty-sixth Management Board meeting (14-15 November) were adopted without any changes.

Item 5 – Update on ECDC's main activities since the last meeting of the Management Board (14-15 November 2012) *(Document MB27/Info Note 1)**

10. The Director highlighted a number of items mentioned in the written report on ECDC's activities circulated to members ahead of the meeting.[3] At the specific request of the German Member, the Director informed the Board about the state of play regarding ECDC's premises in Sweden.

11. The Director then informed that the European Parliament's Budgetary Control Committee (CONT) had voted on 19 March 2013 to grant ECDC a discharge for the financial year 2011. The CONT's recommendation is expected to be backed by the full Parliament at its plenary in April. The Director also reported on his country visit to Spain, which both he and his Spanish hosts had found very useful. An improved understanding of the needs of individual Member States, including finding practical ways to reduce the burden ECDC places on them, are top priorities for the Director.

12. He then introduced Aiga Berke, Corporate Affairs Officer, ECDC, who has been appointed to coordinate ECDC requests to the countries. He also introduced Kathryn Edwards, Advisor to the Director, ECDC, who is responsible for coordinating the Director's country visits. The MB members were invited to contact Aiga Berke if they had examples of requests from ECDC that placed an undue burden on their country, and to contact Kathryn Edwards if they would like the ECDC Director to visit their country in the coming years.

13. In his oral report on the situation regarding ECDC's premises, the Director recalled the leases on the Centre's current premises at Tomteboda, which expires early in 2018. This is an iron-clad lease and cannot be broken by ECDC without the payment of a substantial penalty. Over the past year or so, ECDC has entered into preliminary negotiations with a number of parties to ascertain whether they would be prepared to assume the lease to facilitate an early move, albeit to no avail. Based upon the recommendations of the Internal Buildings Working Group, it has therefore been decided to remain at the current premises until 2018. This decision has been made bearing in mind the Internal Working Group's recommendations on the time necessary to effectively facilitate a move without disruption to ongoing operations. The focus of ECDC's premises policy in the short- to medium-term is therefore to make the best use of the space in the buildings at Tomteboda and to plan an effective move in 2018. Since the beginning of 2013, the SMT has been reviewing the allocation of offices in

* Item for decision.

[2] The Spanish Board Member requested to include the name of the newly appointed Alternate from Spain in the list of apologies and new nominations announced by the Chair at the start of the meeting. It was later clarified with the Spanish Board Member that only the participants who physically attend the meeting are listed in the minutes; this request was thereby rescinded.

* Item for information.

[3] Item 5 - Update on ECDC Activities

order to make it better reflect the new structure of ECDC, and to ensure better proximity and interaction between experts who regularly need to work together. This reallocation of office space should be concluded and implemented during April 2013. In the longer term, the Swedish Government has agreed to appoint a senior official who advises on the housing of Swedish ministries to a internal working group that will search for a new building that ECDC will move to after 2018.

14. The MB expressed satisfaction that developments on ECDC's premises are "on the right track", that there is cooperation between ECDC and its host country via the working group on securing a new building. The MB also noted positively that the Commission's building office (OIB) has been contacted and is involved.

15. The Management Board expressed their support of the Director's efforts to reduce the burden ECDC places on Member States. The Spanish Member stated that her Government had been very pleased with the ECDC Director's visit, and moreover that ECDC, understanding how Member States work "on the ground" is key to reducing the burden. Support, too, was also noted for the Director's 2013 priority to make better use of the EU level surveillance data that ECDC gathers from Member States.

16. There was a discussion regarding the quantity of documentation sent to the Board, which one member had calculated as totalling more than 600 pages. The Director pointed out that achieving the right balance between transparency and limiting the number of pages can be challenging. For example, the MB had previously requested that all Audit Committee papers be made fully available to all members via the Extranet. While ECDC is pleased to accommodate the Board, such a request places an increased burden on Board members. Similarly, only a few pages in the Innovative Medicines Initiative document are actually relevant to ECDC. Still, ECDC does not want to be perceived as withholding information from the MB by sending exclusively selected extracts. The Chair proposed that the best approach would be to have a four- to five-page summary of each document. The summaries would be the information that all MB members need to read, and would be circulated via the Extranet along with the full meeting documents. The MB also requested to make ECDC's Calls for Tender more accessible to them so they can relay the information to their respective counterparts. It was thereafter informed that the Centre's Calls for Tender are already published in the Procurement and Grants section of the ECDC website and are thereby easily accessible to the public.

17. One member noted that the written update contains a list of requests received from the European Commission. The member inquired if ECDC also received requests from the Member States, to which Johan Giesecke and Denis Coulombier replied affirmatively.

The Management Board took note of the update on ECDC's activities.

It was agreed that that documents for future MB meetings contain two levels of information, namely, a four- to five-page summary of key information that all members need to be aware of, and an extended version, which includes more in-depth coverage for interested members.

Item 6 – ECDC cooperation with the host country: Address by Göran Hägglund, Minister of Health and Social Affairs, Sweden*[4]

18. The Chair welcomed the Minister of Health and Social Affairs of Sweden, Göran Hägglund responsible for Health and Medical Care, including communicable diseases. It was further informed by the Chair that although it is not the first visit of the Minister to ECDC, it is the first time he is attending the MB meeting. The Chair also highlighted the fact that Sweden is very active within the field of AMR, and is in the forefront when it comes to keeping down resistance to antibiotics. She continued by noting that ECDC and the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs have had several joint meetings in regards to strengthening their cooperation, which is crucial for ECDC, ECDC's MB and the host country. The Chair concluded by remarking upon the significance of the Minister's presence at the MB meeting, and in particular, as a sign of fruitful cooperation between ECDC and its host country.

19. The Minister informed that he was proud that ECDC is based in Sweden, an EU agency which adds further value to Sweden and to Europe. He went on to inform about their close cooperation,

* Item for information.
[4] Sergio Brusin and Lars Söderblom, Members, ECDC Staff Committee, participated in this session.

which is especially vital in situations of serious cross-border health crises. One of the main priorities for Sweden within the area of communicable diseases is the issue of antibiotic resistance. The Minister stressed that antimicrobial resistance is one of the most serious global health threats and the effects of AMR for individuals and for health systems are significant, not to mention the cost for health systems, which will continue to increase. The Minister expressed that antimicrobial resistance is a complex challenge driven by many cofactors; single interventions have little impact, therefore EU- and international cooperation is crucial. The Minister further noted an empty pipeline in the development of new antibiotics, which was a priority issue during the Swedish EU presidency in 2009. However, the Minister also said that even though there is a need to develop a new generation of antibiotics, he is already concerned about the need to limit the consumption of these new antibiotics, once they are on the market. We need to ensure that the next generation of antibiotics are used prudently, the Minister concluded.

20. The Minister further spoke about the situation for ECDC staff in Sweden and acknowledged that living conditions have been challenging, and hopefully the conditions have improved with acquisition of a 'personal number' (*personnummer*), and subsequent registration in the Swedish population register.

21. The Minister further informed about the meeting which took place in 2012 between the ECDC Director and his State Secretary, Karin Johansson, which was to enhance their collaboration. A joint paper is currently being drafted and will be presented to the MB in a future meeting.

22. The Minister informed that he is aware of the on-going discussions about setting up a joint technical group to discuss upcoming issues regarding the future premises for ECDC. He promised to increase ECDC's visibility in Sweden and concluded by stating the importance of the Centre in Europe and to European citizens.

23. The MB members thanked the Minister for Sweden's commitment to antimicrobial resistance and also assured their respective countries commitment to the same. The European Commission representative mentioned the AMR Action Plan of 2011 and informed they intend to review implementation of this Action Plan by the end of 2013.

24. The MB members thanked the Minister for his support to ECDC staff, for the ECDC building issues and for increasing the visibility of ECDC in Sweden. The representative of the European Parliament (EP) thanked the Minister for the work of Sweden as ECDC's host country and for finally ensuring acceptable living conditions for ECDC staff members.

25. Lars Söderblom, Staff Committee representative, ECDC, thanked the Minister on behalf of all staff for the work carried out to date and informed that following the introduction of the *personnummer*, there has been substantial improvement in living conditions and access to the excellent health care is also easier now. He further informed that some steps still remain for staff to feel 'at home' in Sweden and that this matter will be addressed on the following day of the MB meeting.

26. The Minister concluded the session by highlighting that ECDC's major resource is its staff, who thereby require satisfactory living conditions in Sweden. He promised to do his utmost in resolving any further issues that may arise within the remit of the Ministry.

Item 5 – Update on ECDC's main activities since the last meeting of the Management Board (14-15 November 2012) (Continued) *(Document MB27/Info Note 1)*[*]

27. There were no further comments from the Management Board in respect to the above-noted item.

[*] Item for information.

Item 3 – Annual Report of the Director

*Item 3a – Annual Report of the Director on the Centre's Activities in 2012 (Document MB27/4)**

28. Philippe Harant, Head of Section, Quality Management, Resource Management and Coordination Unit, presented the Annual Report of the Director on the Centre's Activities for 2012,[5] and he recalled the legal obligation to adopt the document by 30 March. In 2012, the budget was stable, and although the number of posts was reduced, the number of staff increased due to a more efficient recruitment policy with few posts left vacant. He presented the highlights for 2012, including the role of ECDC as Chair of the EU agencies network, the support to EU Member States in the measles elimination effort, the strengthening of collaboration between public health laboratories in Member States and the development of tools for candidate countries to assess their readiness to join the EU in the field of communicable diseases, and the organisation of the first "Joint Strategy Meeting (JSM)", bringing together the Centre's key technical partners. An annex to the document outlines in detail how 90% of the Work Programme for 2012 was implemented. He further explained how, for the first time, the document includes the result of the indicators set in the Work Programme 2012; the MB can verify the results compared to the targets initially set. The document also includes a presentation of ECDC's main achievements and their level of implementation.

29. Johan Carlson, Chair of the Audit Committee, informed the Audit Committee welcomed ECDC's achievements in 2012. The inclusion of the results of the indicators and the table on the implementation of the Work Programme were noted. Nevertheless, the Audit Committee suggested that ECDC considers developing an additional summary version of the Annual Report that could be distributed to ECDC stakeholders and the general public. This shorter version could be printed as a brochure whereas the full version of the report could be available on ECDC website.

30. The MB members expressed their satisfaction on the well written Annual Report, and agreed with the suggestion of the Chair of the Audit Committee. It was proposed to replace on page 49 of the document the term "endorse", which is considered too strong, by another more neutral wording. The MB members questioned the partial implementation of the SoHo Project mentioned on page 65 of the document. The Chair and Philippe Harant both affirmed that partial implementation was due to the reduction of ECDC's initial role in the project.

31. The MB members further praised the work of TESSy and the impact factor of *Eurosurveillance* (6.15). They also lauded the inclusion of the results of the indicators and the details of the implementation of the Work Programme 2012. The MB members then sought clarity in respect to the support to countries for mass gathering events such as Poland and the UK in 2012 and whether it was based on an offer from ECDC or upon request from a Member State.

32. The EP representative thanked ECDC for a well written document and informed it was more reader friendly than previous versions. He then explained that there was a dual expectation from the MB, namely, being fully informed of ECDC activities and monitoring the Work Programme approved by the MB, and on the other side, providing a shorter overview for the general public. While a list of the highlights of the MB is indicated in the Annual Report, there is no such list indicated for the Advisory Forum, which would increase visibility for the work of the AF and also further enrich dialogue.

33. The aforementioned suggestions were agreed to and it was proposed to regroup the two tables (MB and AF) as a new annex in order to avoid elongating the document.

The MB unanimously approved the Annual Report of the Director on the Centre's Activities in 2012 with some suggestions and proposed that ECDC considers developing a summary version of the Annual Report, including a full-length version.

* Item for decision.

[5] Item 3 - Annual Report of Director on Centres Activities 2012 (P Harant)

*Item 3b – Draft Analysis and Assessment of Authorising Officer's (Activity) Report in 2012 (Document MB27/5)**

The MB approved the Draft Analysis and Assessment of Authorising Officer's (Activity) Report in 2012, with the inclusion of an additional paragraph, as proposed by the Audit Committee.

Item 7 – Analysis of the Indicators for the Strategic Multi-annual Programme 2007-2013 (Update 2012) *(Document MB27/9)**

34. Philippe Harant explained that each year, ECDC provides an analysis of the indicators of the Multi-annual Strategic Programme (2007-2013).[6] The list of 31 indicators of a quantitative and qualitative nature aid in assessing whether ECDC is on the right track in implementing its Multi-annual Strategic Programme. The final evaluation should take place at the end of 2013 and demonstrate whether ECDC has fully implemented its Multi-annual Strategic Programme. Currently at the end of the cycle, many of these indicators, which were initially aimed at assessing ECDC's achievement in its building phase, might be less relevant to assess ECDC in its consolidation phase. The indicators are important for building the new SMAP 2014-2020 since they will be used to attain lessons learnt. The number of indicators should remain limited; they should be based on quantitative information, even to measure qualitative information that otherwise might be biased only by self-assessment; regular input from the Member States should contribute to the indicators (e.g. to show how ECDC's products, such as scientific advice or training, are used by Member States, and if they are useful and relevant). This will be incorporated in the SMAP 2014-2020.

35. The MB members expressed their appreciation for the well written document. The MB indicated that some indicators (3.2; 4.1) may need some input from Member States in the future. They further added that it would be useful in building up the new indicators as part of the SMAP 2014-2020 and having some indicators to show ECDC's impact would be useful in the future. The MB questioned the *ad hoc* surveys and whom they were sent to. Philippe Harant explained that the mention of the surveys to be organised is simply taken from the initial document as the originally foreseen methods to collect information, but that in many cases, the information emanated from other sources, to avoid overburdening the Member States. However, as part of the SMAP, a discussion should take place on the best way to collect regular feedback from the Member States. Regular consolidated stakeholder surveys (instead of a multitude of questionnaires), as practised in other agencies, could improve the situation, while reducing the burden on Member States.

36. The European Commission congratulated ECDC for an excellent and comprehensive document. Thinking ahead, it would be indeed very useful to measure the impact of ECDC's work. It is increasingly important to contextualise, and show how the work of ECDC complements the work done in the Member States or other organisations, such as WHO. The EC agreed with the MB on the importance of getting feedback from the Member States and on the utility of ECDC outputs and the influence of ECDC's work in the countries. The concept of 'added value' is vital to show why one option was preferred to another one. The EC recalled that DG SANCO produced a guidance document on Activity Based Management which might be useful. Philippe Harant noted that the network of EU agencies created in 2012 a sub-network on Performance Development and a working group is currently gathering indicators from all agencies in order to better align their work. DG SANCO's input will also contribute to this effort. The results are expected during 2013 and will aid ECDC in further refining and streamlining its own indicators. While the Director agreed on the importance of measuring the indicators, he cautioned that it should not divert from the Centre's core missions, which is the prevention and control of communicable diseases.

37. The EP representative thanked ECDC for an excellent document and related it also to the external evaluation of the Centre, which was postponed. This internal document should contribute to feed the work of the forthcoming second external evaluation of the Centre.

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* Item for decision.
* Item for guidance.
[6] Item 7 - Analysis of the Indicators SMAP 2007-2013 (P Harant)

The Management Board took note of the work carried out on the Analysis of the Indicators for the Strategic Multi-annual Programme 2007-2013 (Update 2012).

It was agreed that the work on the indicators should continue as part of the Strategic Multi-annual Programme (2014-2020).

Item 8 – Roundtable discussion: Working together to reduce the burden

38. The Chair informed the MB that apologies have been received by the Italian Member who was unable to attend this session. She further recalled that this agenda item is being live streamed for the benefit of ECDC staff. The debate would be split into two parts, namely, a general discussion on the SMAP (*tour de table*) and subsequently the provision of guidance to the Director on what areas of the work should be prioritised in the event that resources need to be cut.[7]

*Item 8a – ECDC Strategic Multi-annual Programme (2014-2020) (Marc Sprenger, Director, ECDC) (Documents MB27/10; MB27/Info Note 2)**

39. The Director confirmed that the first part of the discussion was to obtain views from the MB on the draft Strategic Multi-annual Programme (2014-2020) that ECDC had circulated to them in February 2013. The Director recalled that at the previous MB meeting in November, the Board had agreed to consult on this document with relevant colleagues in their Member States or institutions, and to subsequently present their consolidated national or institutional views in MB27. He then presented the background and process for the development of the document.[8] The limitations to take into account include the second external evaluation of ECDC, which has not yet been completed, and the budget that will be available to ECDC during the period 2014-2020. ECDC's budget for the next period will be determined within the context of the EU's Multi-annual Financial Framework for 2014-2020. The details of this package are still being negotiated between Member States, the European Parliament and the Commission.

40. The Chair approved the process and was pleased that the SMAP discussion was shared widely with ECDC staff and the Advisory Forum. The MB expressed their appreciation of the well written document.

41. The Chair then proposed to proceed with a *tour de table*:

42. European Parliament: The EP representatives had discussed the draft SMAP previously with MEP Marina Yannakoudakis, who is the EP ENVI Committee's contact person for ECDC. The EP representative thanked and complimented the authors of the document due to its comprehensive, readable and transparent structure. In general, the EP representatives support the lines and priorities chosen in the SMAP. They also highlighted that the budget for the core functions and Disease Programmes should not be cut.

43. In reference to surveillance, there is a need to develop efficient ICT systems with better synchronisation of data between the Member States and ECDC to increase their efficiency and effectiveness. Moreover, efficient development of the IT systems will increase the possibility of identifying savings. It can also reduce the burden on the Member States of providing surveillance data to the EU.

44. ECDC training, such as the EPIET and EUPHEM programmes, are highly appreciated and represent a cornerstone of capacity building in the EU and abroad. Thanks to the Founding Regulation, ECDC's role is to maintain training, and as such, it would be worthwhile to reanalyse the burdens and benefits of training. Is it mainly EU level disease control (ECDC and the Commission), national public health institutes, or the individual trainees who benefit from the training? If it is the individual trainee, does s/he nonetheless pass on some of the benefit to Member States or ECDC?

[7] Item 8a - SMAP – electronic voting and results
* Item for guidance.
[8] Item 8a - ECDC Strategic Multi annual Programme 2014-2020 (M Sprenger)

How the costs of training are shared should be looked at in this context. ECDC should specifically assess whether Member States are bearing an appropriate share of the costs given that most EPIET and EUPHEM fellows work in national public health institutes. It was then requested to explore the possibility of training courses subcontracted to universities, which might offer similar courses, with an analysis of costs, in order to identify potential savings. Another priority area for finding savings should be communication. Some of what ECDC currently does on communication would be better left to Member States.

45. In reference to conflicts of interest, the EP representative further proposed to set up a robust system of verification to evaluate viability and transparency. The new system, which is currently being put into place by ECDC, poses a heavy administrative burden without any tangible guarantee of delivery. The European Parliament needs to establish guidelines for the European Agencies, and this will be brought up by Marina Yannakoudakis at the ENVI Committee.

46. The EP representative then expressed his concern over the turnover of staff, and subsequently requested i) thorough statistics on the turnover rate; ii) length of service; iii), reasons for leaving; iv) sick leave records and; v) the future employers of staff members who leave ECDC.

47. Similarly with the Member States, cooperation with the other organisations mentioned in SMAP should be analysed and evaluated. The relationship between ECDC and such other organisations should be aligned with other EU agencies working in the same field. Such cooperation (and its advantages) should be more transparent. ECDC should examine, and make public, whether there is equal and proportionate investment in such relationships.

48. Austria: The Austrian MB member expressed her satisfaction with the development of the SMAP paper, which in turn provides an opportunity to perform structural changes to concentrate on the core tasks and use possible synergies between departments. Her main concern rests with the unclear Financial Framework and on-going negotiations with the EU Budget in general, which makes it challenging to plan ahead.

49. Another concern raised is the development on the Serious Cross Border Health Threats Initiative of the EC, which might considerably influence the activities of ECDC and negotiation on this legislative framework is not yet finished. In general, it is vital to cooperate with other international organisations such as WHO and other EU agencies in a comprehensive manner to use synergies and avoid duplication. She also remarked that regular external evaluations of ECDC are necessary.

50. She further informed that the Rapid Risk Assessments (RRAs) produced by ECDC are very helpful and should be further developed. ECDC should continue with training and education in the field of public health; albeit the current EPIET/EUPHEM concept only partly covers the needs of the Member States, and consequently only a limited number of participants is able to enrol in two-year training sessions. Short intensive training is thereby requested.

51. The Austrian Member took the opportunity to thank ECDC for supporting the development of the Austrian NAP-AMR, NAP-MR and the update of Austria's influenza pandemic planning. The Austrian MoH regards this as a very useful activity that boosts important discussions and activities in the Member States in the field of public health.

52. Belgium: The Belgian Member proposed to focus on the core business of Surveillance and Disease Programmes. He recognised the importance of the visibility of ECDC. Nonetheless, Belgium did not support the section in the draft SMAP on 'European Neighbourhood Policy Countries and other non EU countries' (which would be supported by the EC and the EP). The key principle is that ECDC's activities should provide added value to the Member States. In the context of the current restrictions on public health budgets across the EU, ECDC's priorities should focus on EU Member States and not neighbouring countries. The Belgian Member also suggested that ECDC should do more to promote e-learning for EPIET instead of onsite training.

53. Bulgaria: The Bulgarian Alternate requested to submit his comment after the meeting.

54. Cyprus: The Cypriot Alternate complimented the well thought out SMAP document and reflected on the vision of ECDC and its partners. She stated that ECDC is portrayed as a proactive Centre of scientific excellence adhering to the framework of its Founding Regulation, its mission of prevention and control of communicable diseases and of outbreaks of illnesses of unknown origin. The document is aligned with the Financial Framework as well as ECDC core values.

55. The future opportunities and threats reflect current austerity measures in Europe, and freezing of EU budgets. It is thus understandable that the work has to be prioritised and based on the

core activities of surveillance, epidemic intelligence, health communication, disease specific programmes, training and support. ECDC needs to reflect upon the emerging socio-political demographic and climatic conditions. It also needs to address cross border threats, increased migration, bioterrorism and the devastating effects of poverty on health.

56. One of the greatest challenges of the future is to shape the ECDC as an organisation that can respond readily to unforeseen challenges and outbreaks in an era of scarce resources. To do this, ECDC needs to be anticipatory, flexible, mobilise its source of expertise, gain the trust of Europeans and develop further its partnerships with Member States and international organisations to build capacity and avoid duplication.

57. ECDC should be perceived as the conscience of Europe --- targeting vulnerable groups, timely communication, interfacing between human and animal origin and attempting to fill the gaps of inequalities --- which should all form part of its future vision. ECDC should also identify and address its health needs country-by-country. Values such as solidarity, synergy, social justice, sustainability are intrinsic to ensure ECDC is increasingly seen (and respected) as a social justice orientated independent European Agency supported by the European Parliament. The promotion of increased online learning programmes and further close collaboration with WHO in formulating future work plans is requisite in order to sharing and/or consolidating activities. In-house activities ensure a core of motivated, secure and content staff members in an enabling environment. Building partnerships with neighbours will provide further support in the future.

58. Special emphasis needs to be placed upon core issues such as health communication in promoting trust, healthy choices and behavioural change as regards to risky health behaviour. Improving the alignment of all institutions requires close collaboration and dialogue including a unified 'one Europe' approach.

59. ECDC needs to continue to address cross-cutting issues like emerging epidemics and measles eradication. Disease Specific Programmes should continue to play a pivotal role in infection control. AMR and HAI need to continue to be high-priority areas for ECDC given the alarming increase in resistant organisms and the lack of novel antimicrobials on the horizon, concerted efforts at raising awareness of good hand washing techniques and prudent antibiotic use and Antibiotic Awareness Day remain top priorities. TB, Malaria, HIV and Influenza continue to pose a threat to the health of Europeans. Building the laboratory capacity, increasing safe and effective vaccination programmes and continued surveillance of resistant cases are all vital in the fight against communicable diseases. Close cooperation is recommended between ECDC and WHO for the TB Framework Action Plan.

60. Secure Information Technology remains an important, secure foundation for all activities of ECDC.

61. ECDC can be a state-of-the-art scientific agency promoting health as the key driver of growth, delivering its commodities with value for money and building maximum capacity and impact. Monitoring and evaluation of programmes ensure that continuous improvement is effectuated. It can also be a driver of change in Europe by learning from past mistakes (and best practices).

62. Czech Republic: The Czech Republic Member remarked that the strategy is too ambitious and will incur resource implications for the Member States. If the burden on the Member States is too high, it could jeopardise the future of ECDC. While training is vital, EPIET needs to change so that the Member States do not absorb costs for training fellows and then relinquish them to other countries. Surveillance should be made profitable for everyone concerned. The documents on the website should be more user-friendly. The second independent external evaluation is an important exercise which should continue on a regular basis.

63. Denmark: The Danish Alternate proposed that ECDC should concentrate on the core tasks in its mandate and not to expand into broader public health issues. The core business is training, surveillance and AMR. Coordination with WHO is important. The second independent external evaluation should continue to be carried out regularly and in a transparent manner.

64. Estonia: The Estonian Alternate expressed her deepest gratitude for a comprehensive and well prepared draft document. On the one hand, countries are faced with austerity measures and on the other hand, the expectations of EU citizens to public health authorities (including ECDC) are very high and constantly growing. Considering the latter point, there is a clear need for ECDC to focus on its core functions and deliverables. This is viable only by reviewing in detail and very critically all the core activities of ECDC, reorganising and prioritising its needs. Consequently, there is a need to assess the added value ECDC is providing to EU citizens through its activities.

65. In terms of prioritisation, the following core activities should be highlighted and further strengthened: integration of molecular typing in communicable disease surveillance, epidemic preparedness, antimicrobial resistance, risk assessment, epidemic intelligence, scientific advice and health communication. Yet role of the ECDC is unclear regarding health communication. ECDC should consider focusing on communicating to the health professionals and doing it in the way that the ECDC is visible and considered among the health professionals everywhere across the EU.

66. ECDC needs to assess the administrative and financial burden of delivering its services and possibilities to reduce the organisation of travel for participants, including training and meetings and other administrative issues. It further needs to assess organising the services in a cost effective way while simultaneously ensuring the quality of services, e.g. short training courses/modules/meetings, e-training.

67. ECDC should collaborate with WHO to reduce the burden of EU Member States and avoid duplications.

68. Finland: The Finnish Member proposed that ECDC focus on professional coordination and communication between the Member States and the EC within its mandate, in particular, risk assessments on cross-border threats from communicable diseases. Surveillance should focus on the diseases with the most epidemic potential.

69. France: The French Alternate remarked that the SMAP document gives an ideal picture of the possible future achievements of ECDC, albeit the crucial question is what ECDC believes it can achieve in real terms with the new organisation and changing technologies given its budgetary constraints. While savings in time is mentioned in certain systems, what does this mean in practical terms for ECDC and the Member States? She also questioned how ECDC endeavours to align its priorities with the Member States; this should be better explained taking into consideration the previous discussion at the Joint Strategy Meeting in September 2012 and the revised ECDC-MS architecture. She further sought clarification regarding what will be achieved by ECDC on new projects such as molecular surveillance. She also asked where ECDC is headed on matters pertaining to communication and training, in particular, regarding EPIET. The issue is how and where to come up with the right compromise between serving Member States' specific needs and EU added value, in particular, for communication and training. For training, it is important to clarify what will be the strategy of ECDC and the future of EPIET. For communication, it is an area where savings could be made.

70. She stressed the need to clarify both the role and activities of ECDC and to streamline the collaboration with WHO, in the context of the new cross-border health decision and its impact on ECDC for surveillance and alert (avoid duplication, efficient and uniform surveillance and alert system as mentioned in the proposed SMAP), taking into consideration the possible extension of EWRS to all threats.

71. Germany: The German Member echoed the remarks of Finland, i.e. that the Advisory Forum comments were highly useful. What is missing from the strategy is a clear prioritisation, which needs to be addressed in June. It is essential not to roll back training, while health communication is fundamentally in the remit of the Member States. Surveillance is a priority activity. There is no need to extend risk assessments as they must be limited to the current personnel capacity. He queried when the revision of the indicators will be completed? If the strategy is to remain relevant for seven years, there needs to be some prioritisation and then adjustment of the plan as required over time. He had difficulty with the term 'deliverables' and suggested omitting it from the document.

72. The SMAP focuses strongly on communication. ECDC should work for an expert audience and leave communication with the general public to the Member States In the cross-cutting themes, it is difficult to identify any strategic aims and how this ties in with the Disease Programmes. For instance, it is stipulated that the TB Programme will work with non-EU countries, but how does this tie in with WHO?

73. Greece: The Greek Member welcomed cooperation with non-EU Member States, which should be broadened. ECDC should minimise bureaucracy, support centres in the Member States, and delineate collaboration with WHO. It augurs well that SMAP emphasises emerging and vector-borne diseases and AMR.

74. Hungary: The Hungarian Member lauded the endeavour to reduce the burden of surveillance work, but she found it difficult to realise how this can be achieved. The core activities are essential, as is work on AMR. Some priorities should be made among the 50+ diseases under notification. If cuts are to be made, they should be to health communication and microbiology training. ECDC should

identify where the greatest value can be added. There are certain gaps between the Member States and these may well increase. Activities such as molecular surveillance are costly, and this is not addressed in the document. ECDC should identify critical points that create bottlenecks and monitor against indicators.

75. Iceland: The Icelandic Member agreed with earlier comments that training and communication should be carried out at the local level. He could not identify any obvious parts of the strategy that should be skipped as all of them were crucial. From the core function, the most useful is surveillance, risk assessments and scientific advice. In reference to collaboration, sufficient time is required to synchronise it and there are plenty of other actors in the field, like Eurostat.

76. Lithuania: The Lithuanian Member acknowledged that the biggest challenge for the Member States would be the change in the concept of surveillance and sought a reduction of the data collected including the amount of time it would require for implementation thereof. Given the minimal resources of the smaller Member States, Lithuania was appreciative of the text acknowledging mitigation inequalities. The country visits were supported. In regards to communication, institutes are exposed to a lot of media and public pressure, and ECDC's support is appreciated in areas of risk assessment. The training and e-learning are useful tools and best practices are highly supported.

77. Luxembourg: The Luxembourgian Member congratulated the Director and the staff of ECDC on producing a precise, well-structured, reader-friendly document. He noted the importance of the SMAP in respecting the core business of ECDC: surveillance, preparedness and response. In order to improve the functioning of this core business, ECDC should develop better standards in data transfer between the Member States and/or ECDC. The data transfer must also be reduced to a minimum requirement.

78. In respect to preparedness and response to a disease, ECDC is not working exclusively in this field and consequently should improve coordination not only with the European Commission, but also with WHO. Scientific advice for the Member States is still needed in the future and must be part of the core business of ECDC. It was further noted that the smaller Member States are in need of future scientific advice, and ECDC should not lower its efforts in this domain.

79. In relation to information technology, several public European Institutions are working in this field and are carrying out an excellent job. ECDC should create further partnerships with institutions that are known for their independence. Also, e-learning technology should be developed further.

80. ECDC should also strive to develop a better communication strategy, not only for the health professionals and stakeholders, but also for the general public who continues to be unaware of the existence and purpose of the Centre. Consequently, it is much easier for health professionals who acknowledge the advice of ECDC to inform their patients about the existence of ECDC.

81. The continued high level of independence of ECDC is vital for the future, including external audits and communication of their results. The seven proposed Disease Programmes in the SMAP were fully endorsed; however, ECDC should not forget to integrate the social determinants of health.

82. Malta: The Maltese Alternate relies on ECDC to continue to provide core functions, especially timely rapid risk assessments related to emerging and new threats, and also the ability to provide scientific advice when requested, along with epidemic intelligence. As a small country with limited human and financial resources, Malta would like ECDC to help set up an effective EU public health laboratory network system whereby countries unable to provide certain tests required for detection and characterisation of emerging or rare pathogens are able to send these tests to specialised reference laboratories in the EU for timely verification at a reasonable cost and a commitment to carry out testing of the epidemic situation.

83. In regards to EPIET training, for Malta, the best way to benefit from such training is to have an EPIET trainer fly to the country and provide training to permanent staff at IDCU. The training will be targeted to the required needs of staff that are unable to enrol in a two-year EPIET training programme.

84. Netherlands: The Dutch Member stated that the core business of ECDC is surveillance, epidemic intelligence, threat analysis, risk assessment on infectious diseases. ECDC's tasks in the light of the aim (and guiding principle) of 'Working together to reduce the burden" would be thoroughly analysed. For each task, the answer to the following questions should be clearer than it is now. (1) Is it the responsibility of Member States, ECDC, the Commission or WHO/Europe? (2) Is this a task that needs a European perspective, i.e. something that Member States cannot or should not do alone? What is the added value of collaboration on a European level? If so, is ECDC or WHO/Europe in the

lead? (3) Should ECDC build its own capacity on specific issues and concentrate experts in Stockholm, or should ECDC ensure the expertise of Member States is accessible to others? Are ECDC staff senior experts or well informed network managers? (4) Is this task relevant for all the Member States or for some (and should ECDC in such cases enhance bilateral collaboration between the Member States)? (5) Is this a temporary effort, or a permanent infrastructure? The answers to these questions will be different for different tasks.

85. In the light of these questions, the Dutch Member expressed doubts about tasks such as 'support to the Member States through outbreak teams' and 'assistance at mass gatherings', which are primarily the responsibility of the Member State; one Member State could help the other in times of need, ECDC might even act as a broker between the Member States; yet these tasks seemingly do not represent the core business of ECDC.

86. ECDC communication to the general public in the Member States is not within the remit of ECDC. ECDC should communicate behind the scenes with the Member State's government, professional community and the European Commission.

87. She agreed with other colleagues that the MB should support the principles expressed in the draft SMAP of taking a "One Health" approach in relation to food safety, AMR and collaboration with EFSA. She foresees biosecurity as an important issue in the coming years. ECDC also needs to have a clear role in threat analysis, risk assessment, laboratory safety and security, and collaboration at the European level is vital.

88. Norway: The Norwegian Member expressed the significance of the role of the surveillance. Detecting and reacting to new threats is also essential. The importance of risk assessments was illustrated recently by the coronavirus situation. The Disease Programmes should continue, though perhaps they could stress more systematically how they work; the burden of disease concept could be used for prioritisation. As well, collaboration with WHO needs to be more systematic. On health communication, he agreed with remarks made by the Dutch Member.

89. Poland: The Polish MB Member agreed that the areas for target-setting were well selected. He noted that WHO's Health 2020 Programme, currently under preparation, has only one infectious disease target. He wondered whether ECDC had been involved and whether there was still an opportunity to influence that Programme.

90. Portugal: The Portuguese Member proposed that ECDC should i) prioritise and focus; ii) improve risk assessments and communication; iii) improve health surveillance systems; iv) improve AMR and HAI programmes and; v) provide risk/benefit studies on vaccination at European level.

91. Romania: The Romanian Member expressed the difficulty related to prioritising between core functions. The external evaluation is crucial. If ECDC works at developing capacity in the Member States, it may then reduce the pressure on its own resources. He supported the point made by the Dutch member and would advocate that ECDC administers networks.

92. Slovak Republic: The Slovakian Member remarked positively on the comprehensive document. He then recalled financial constraints and limited human resources during fiscally challenging times, especially in smaller EU countries, which may experience challenges in fulfilling the activities and programmes covered in the SMAP. Moreover, it is not easy to predict which problems European countries will face in the future. While all of the programmes covered in the SMAP are of high significance, the most important are Surveillance (epidemiological and laboratory), Training (mainly MS-Track EPIET), Preparedness and early Response to possible threats.

93. Spain: The Spanish Member proposed that ECDC should focus on the core activities and that surveillance in particular is important to Spain. She also agreed with the EP that synergies could be found within training programmes.

94. In reference to communication, it is vital that ECDC provides the Member States with the tools to get the message across; however, most communication should be done by Member States. Collaboration is needed with the Member States and between the Member States. During prioritisation, a shortage of experience by the Member States needs to be factored in. A sustainable system must be devised for everyone; rather than reducing the number of programmes. ECDC should reduce what is nonessential within programmes. Further scrutiny is required in all areas. The molecular surveillance and laboratories projects are important, but they require substantial investment of time and money by Member States.

95. Sweden: The Swedish Member noted that in order to prioritise appropriately, ECDC should reflect on the core values of ECDC and what its added value is to Europe. Each activity should be scrutinised against those values. Each activity can be audited. He agreed with the Dutch Member regarding management of networks versus building self expertise. ECDC should seek a balance between cost-effectiveness and added value. Sweden is less interested in health communication, on-the-spot response and laboratory support.

96. United Kingdom: The Member from the United Kingdom agreed largely with the remarks from Sweden. ECDC needs to prioritise even within the core functions. It should focus on areas where it can provide the highest value relative to the Member States, other Agencies, WHO, etc. Its greatest role is in cross-border threats, e.g. AMR, emerging infections, influenza and *E. coli* 104. The surveillance data should be provided for action and information. To ensure efficiency, activities should be audited and evaluated more regularly. The workplan must be fully aligned and better integrated.

97. European Commission: The EC member noted the frequency of the use of the terms "global" or "international" context in the SMAP document. This is sometimes mentioned correctly (e.g. p. 30) and sometimes it could be incorrectly interpreted or illustrating actions incompatible with the ECDC mandate, or it could read as an attempt to stretch the role of ECDC and position it as a major global Centre for surveillance, scientific advice, training, and response to threats, existing or emerging, posed by communicable diseases or not exclusively (e.g. pp. 11, 15, 16, 17, 25, 29). References to a "global" or "international" context were thereafter removed, as requested by the EC.

98. Adequate reference should be made to the policy context, in particular, where ECDC's mission for the future is to be embedded, like the Europe 2020 Strategy http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm or the Third Health Programme http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/public_health/european_health_strategy/sp0017_en.htm or the Health Security Initiative http://ec.europa.eu/health/preparedness_response/policy/hsi/index_en.htm or the research programmes. The EU political context is only briefly referred to on page 15 (Outlines of EU political context and public health), without mentioning the serious cross border threats initiative, together with WHO/Europe.

99. On Substances of Human Origin (SoHO), SANCO would like to see stronger reference towards the following: (1) prioritisation, content and planning for risk assessments of SoHO relevant diseases (chapter 10.3 preparedness deliverable); (2) epidemiological mapping of prevalence of SoHO relevant diseases for users in blood and tissue establishments (chapter 10.1 surveillance deliverable); (3) input on usefulness of deferral criteria for vCJD for SoHO donations (10.4 scientific advice); (4) and follow up on *ad hoc* alerts and need for advice on SoHO related alerts (10.2 epidemiologic intelligence and response).

100. On ECDC-EFSA Joint Risk Assessment, the Commission is collaborating with ECDC and EFSA in order to produce Standard Operational Procedures for joint risk assessments in outbreaks of communicable diseases that are potentially linked to food sources. This inter-sectorial approach will enhance the level of scientific thoroughness and add more value to the outcomes of the assessment. Thus risk management will be facilitated and become more effective, in particular, in mitigating the economic impact of adopted public health measures.

101. In reference to the text on international matters, three important aspects are still missing from Chapter 8: (1) ELARG, mention work to progressively include candidate and potential candidate countries currently covered by WHO/Europe, in the ECDC surveillance networks and Disease Programmes; (2) ENP, prioritise work on the MediPIET field epidemiology training programme for southern ENPs and reflect it in the text; (3) develop an international outbreak response strategy with its implementation modalities (ECDC support to international outbreaks should in the first instance, where possible and appropriate be channelled through EU response mechanisms, e.g. ECHO/MIC).

102. Some rewriting of the document should be considered, avoiding sentences that are confusing and subject to misinterpretation. Some parts are more journalistic or political in tone rather than being a strategic document. In many parts, it would be more appropriate for ECDC to refer to existing EU documents.

103. The Director expressed his appreciation for the fruitful roundtable discussion and encouraged the Management Board to provide any further comments to the ECDC Secretariat by 5 April 2013.

The Management Board participated in the extended *tour de table* session to provide ECDC with the views of Member States and EU Institutions on the draft Strategic Multi-annual Programme (2014-2020) circulated by ECDC in February 2013. The Management Board conducted an electronic voting session to provide guidance to the Director on which areas should be prioritised if ECDC had to implement further spending cuts.

The ECDC Director asked the Management Board to provide any further comments to the ECDC Secretariat by 5 April 2013.

*Item 8b – Progress with the Long-term Surveillance Strategy 2014-2020 (Documents MB27/11; MB27/Info Note 2)**

104. This item was not discussed due to scheduling constraints.[9]

Item 9 – Update on implementation of the Position statement of the Commission and ECDC on human pathogen laboratories: a joint vision and strategy for the future *(Document MB27/12)**

105. Martin Seychell, Deputy Director General, European Commission, recalled legislation that obliges Member States to apply EU case definitions to report communicable diseases under Decision 2119/98/EC. Case definitions include laboratory criteria for the identification of communicable diseases to be reported at EU level. Regarding laboratory issues related to alert and response to events of EU relevance caused by communicable diseases, the Commission and the Member States coordinate their actions to have the best added value in terms of networking of laboratories to respond to the threats due to communicable diseases in case of need. The public health authorities responsible for public health measures, with the Commission, are responsible for coordination the measures to be taken during such events, including the activities implemented by the laboratories involved in the events. A number of projects have been co-funded to allow this capacity and to reinforce the response to these threats. Recently, a Joint Action has been funded to network the EU P3 and P4 laboratories to cover these needs, namely, the dangerous pathogens unanimously recognised a priority in the area of the health threats due to communicable diseases. Very recently, the leaders of this Joint Action and the project run by ECDC to cover some areas that can be at risk of overlapping of activities have signed a "letter of intent" sent to the EC and the ECDC to agree a *modus operandi* that will avoid, or minimise, such duplications and overlapping. The EC is doing a great job in maintaining transparency and mutual information in its support to initiatives which involve the laboratory sector, and it is desirable that the same effort is also carried out by ECDC.

106. Martin Seychell indicated that the EC recognises ECDC's mandate in its field of competency in the laboratory sector; however, underlines the EC role and the added value in coordinating, with the Member States, activities of risk management to reach the best and the most efficient use of the EU resources in terms of laboratory support, either in the field of surveillance and in the field of response to health threats of cross border relevance due to communicable diseases. He further mentioned that over the last two years, a number of initiatives have been developed and implemented in this perspective (Table top exercises; projects, including the European System of Reference Laboratories for Pathogens of Humans (EURLOP); general consultations; web-based information on specific activities, etc.), and that the Management Board has been fully informed in a timely manner. The EC now intends to launch a targeted stakeholder consultation to acquire additional elements of knowledge on how to ascertain the future, on the basis of the elements available so far. The EC intends to launch this process in 2013 with a view to have preliminary results for the end of this year. To follow up specific initiatives in this field, the coordination mechanisms between the EC and the ECDC are working well. Also, in the future, the EC counts on collaboration with ECDC to continue along the same track, involving WHO and other international partners, like the GHSI, as appropriate.

* Item for information.

[9] Documents MB27/11 and MB27/Info Note 2 were submitted to the Management Board for information only.

* Item for information.

107. In reference to Document MB27/12, Marc Struelens, Chief Microbiologist, ECDC, highlighted the Centre's contribution of support to the Member States and also to the EC in a number of technical risk assessment areas, including the operation of 13 consortia of national reference laboratories covering more than 50 human pathogens that form an integral part of EU epidemiological and microbiological disease surveillance networks. The ECDC laboratory supported networks deliver a number of EU coordinated activities, including training, quality assurance, epidemic intelligence and event response support, technology assessment and microbiological surveillance to consolidate the capacity of the Member States and EU public health microbiology system for surveillance of infectious diseases and for epidemic preparedness. An average of 100 technical outputs have been delivered annually in 2011-2012, covering external quality assessment programmes, microbiology training courses, strain collection and reference material provision, facilitation of supranational reference services, molecular typing development, laboratory technical guidance, laboratory capability/capacity assessment, laboratory support to outbreak preparedness and harmonisation of antimicrobial resistance monitoring. The majority of these outsourced activities are being piloted or managed as part of the Disease Programmes. In addition, cross-disease coordination and strategic planning is provided by the Microbiology Coordination Section in the areas of laboratory capability appraisal, molecular surveillance and integration of antimicrobial resistance monitoring across animal and human health sectors in close collaboration with EFSA. An example of successful activation of laboratory networks was the recent diagnostic capacity assessment performed to appraise needs for and coordinate network support to monitor the emergence of novel coronavirus disease across Member States.

108. The German Member welcomed the efforts of transparency and coordination as reported. He supported the plans for a follow-up of the EURLOP study findings towards developing options for an EU reference laboratory system, which would make sense at least for rare pathogens. He underlined the delays for the Commission to share with the Member States the EURLOP report, which had been available since December 2011. He stated that the future options proposal in their opinion was now an urgent matter to discuss with the Member States. He also recalled another key issue which is to be solved by the Member States, namely, the primary diagnostic testing for infectious diseases that no future EU Reference Laboratory system can solve, and he asked how this issue will be considered. In his opinion, the Commission, together with ECDC, develop this EU Reference Laboratory system. He maintained that the technical expertise to coordinate the operation of such a system lies with ECDC and not with the European Commission. Finally, he inquired what concrete outputs were obtained from two recent coordination meetings between the EC and ECDC on laboratory network activation in response to threats.

109. In responding to the query on consideration of the importance of primary diagnostic testing, Marc Struelens informed that ECDC is working together with Member States on a project developed in consultation with the Advisory Forum and National Microbiology Focal Points to define and monitor across the EU the essential capabilities for pathogen detection and characterisation at primary and reference testing levels as required for effective communicable disease surveillance and control. With regard to coordination, he informed that ECDC has actively worked with the Commission to ensure transparency of its microbiology activities through meetings and teleconferences organised in 2012, as documented in the implementation document submitted to the Board. He indicated that the recent meeting in January 2013 between the Commission and ECDC on laboratory network activation in response to cross-border health threats has led to a draft proposal for improved coordination, which is currently under consideration by the Commission and expected to be adopted shortly.

110. Martin Seychell and Frank Van look, European Commission, jointly indicated that the stakeholder consultation on needs and possible elements of reflection for the future EU reference laboratory options will be realised during 2013.

The MB took note of the Update on implementation of the Position statement of the Commission and ECDC on human pathogen laboratories: a joint vision and strategy for the future.

The Commission promised to provide further information to the Management Board on these proposals in due course.

Item 10 – ECDC 2014 Work Programme Priorities *(Document MB27/13)**

111. The Director presented the ECDC 2014 Work Programme Priorities and the proposed process for its adoption.[10] The budget is similar to 2013 and the reduction of staff is integrated therein, as requested by the EC (i.e. a reduction of one percent per year over five years and one additional percent for 2014 (four posts).

112. As in previous years, ECDC needs to present the priorities of its Work Programme 2014 in March for initial discussion. The Work Programme 2014 will be the first annual work programme under the new Strategic Multi-Annual Programme (2014-2020) (SMAP); thus it should reflect the long-term priorities. As the SMAP is anticipated to be approved in the June 2013 MB meeting, it does not augur well to adopt the Work Programme 2014 at the same time. It was therefore proposed that ECDC initiates work on its Work Programme 2014, but such document should only be adopted by the Board following the adoption of the SMAP in June 2014. Therefore the Annual Work Programme 2014 will be discussed for adoption in the November MB meeting. This will allow the Work Programme 2014 to be aligned succinctly with the SMAP. As in previous years, an initial electronic consultation with the MB will take place during April 2013 to obtain feedback from the Member States. A preliminary version of the final Work Programme will be sent to the MB in September 2013 in order to acquire their feedback before the final document is discussed (and adopted) at the November MB meeting.

The MB took note of the ECDC 2014 Work Programme Priorities. An electronic consultation will take place in April 2014 in order to receive feedback from the Management Board.

Item 4 – Summary of discussions held at the 22nd meeting of the Audit Committee (Stockholm, 19 March 2013) including its recommendations

113. Johan Carlson, Chair of the Audit Committee, updated the Management Board on audit activities and observations as discussed the previous day.[11]

*Item 4a – Provisional Annual Accounts 2012, including the Report on Budgetary and Financial Management (Document MB27/6)**

114. Anja Van Brabant, Head of Section, Finance and Accounting, ECDC, presented the Provisional Annual Accounts 2012, including the Report on Budgetary and Financial Management to the MB.[12]

115. The Chair of the Audit Committee pointed out that clarification was provided on the decrease in operational expenditure in the accounts. He also noted that the budget remained unused due to the non-execution of the yearly salary adjustments. It was recommended to approve the Provisional Annual Accounts 2012. The EC representative requested a correction in the footnote on page 19 of the Annual Accounts since DG Sanco was not responsible for instructions indicated therein. While acknowledging his request, Anja Van Brabant clarified that the instructions emanated from DG Budget (EC).

116. The Austrian Member sought an explanation of the Library expenditure and suggested that it be placed on one budget line. Anja Van Brabant elaborated that one type of library expense relates to administrative expenses and the other one relates to scientific (operational) expenses.

117. The Chair proposed that the Board adopt the Provisional Annual Accounts 2012.

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* Item for consultation and feedback.
[10] Item 10 - ECDC 2014 Work Programme Priorities (M Sprenger)
[11] Item 4 - Summary of Twenty-second AC meeting (J Carlson)
* Item for decision.
[12] Item 4a - Provisional Annual Accounts 2012 (A Van Brabant)

The Management Board adopted the Provisional Annual Accounts 2012, including the Report on Budgetary and Financial Management.

*Item 4b – Third Supplementary and Amending Budget 2012 (Document MB27/7)**

118. Anja Van Brabant presented the Third Supplementary and Amending Budget 2012.[13] The Chair of the Audit Committee informed the Board that these transfers had already been carried out in 2012 and that there are no errors in the document.

The MB took note of the Third Supplementary and Amending Budget 2012.

*Item 4c – Draft Budget 2014 (Documents MB27/8; MB27/Info Note 4)**

119. Anja Van Brabant presented the Draft Budget 2014. The member of the EC advised the other members not to approve the Draft Budget 2014 due to the fact that the approval of the Multi-annual Financial Framework 2014-2020 is still pending.[14]

120. The Chair of the Audit Committee informed that despite the uncertainty of the situation, the Committee recommended that the MB approve the Draft Budget 2014.

121. The meeting was adjourned without holding a vote on the topic.[15]

Item 11 – Follow-up of decision and action items since the last meeting of the Management Board (14-15 November 2012), amongst others

122. The Chair welcomed everyone to the second day of the MB meeting. She then recalled the following proxies submitted to the Secretariat: Franz J Bindert, Germany (proxy given to Françoise Weber, France); Audrius Ščeponavičius, Lithuania (proxy given to Tiiu Aro, Estonia); Marianne Donker, Netherlands (proxy given to Daniel Reynders, Belgium); Minerva-Melpomeni Malliori, European Parliament (proxy given to Jacques Scheres, European Parliament) and John F Ryan, European Commission (proxy given to Martin Seychell, European Commission).

123. The Director started with the disapproval for the Draft Budget of 2014 and requested for a revision of the decision by that day. He referred to the Founding Regulation the Draft Budget 2014 has to be approved by the MB latest by 31 March 2013 to be sent to the European Commission. He further informed that approval of the Draft Budget 2014 by the MB allows ECDC to request the Commission to proceed with the implementation of the Work Programme 2014. He also recalled that the Audit Committee has recommended adopting the Draft Budget 2014.

124. The EC representative requested to postpone the decision to vote for the Draft Budget 2014 until they had clear instructions from their Legal Advisors in Brussels. The Chair acknowledged the remark of the EC representative and then asked the MB if they could respect the rule as set forth in the Founding Regulation, namely, to vote on the Draft Budget. The Chair highlighted the fact that the vote pertains to the Draft Budget 2014 and not the Work Programme, which allows for discussion and negotiation. The vote requested is one of the steps in the process of the adoption of the Work Programme. The vote is required in order to respect the ECDC Founding Regulation and for the ECDC Director to submit an initial draft version to the European Commission. The Chair then proposed to postpone the item until the representative of the European Commission received legal instructions from the Legal team in Brussels.

* Item for information.
[13] Item 4b - Third Supplementary and Amending Budget 2012 (A Van Brabant)
* Item for decision.
[14] Item 4c - Draft Budget 2014 (A Van Brabant)
[15] Agenda item 4c (Draft Budget 2014) was revisited on Day 2 of the MB meeting.

Item 11a – Update on implementation of Independence policy and implementing rules on Declarations of Interests *

125. Ben Duncan, Senior Advisor to the Director and Compliance Officer, ECDC, recalled that the Management Board had agreed to ECDC's Independence Policy by written procedure on 22 December 2012, subject to a final legal review by the Commission's DG HR to verify that those aspects of the policy relating to ECDC staff are compatible with the EU's Staff Regulations.[16] Since January 2013, ECDC has applied the Independence Policy to the Advisory Forum, the Management Board and external experts contributing to ECDC's scientific work.

126. Application of the Independence Policy to ECDC staff can occur only after the legal review of the policy by DG HR has been completed. In this regard, ECDC has received an initial opinion from DG HR, which recommends a few technical changes to the version of the Independence Policy agreed by the MB in December 2012. ECDC has now submitted a slightly revised text to DG HR to take into account these recommendations. DG HR has indicated that its final opinion should be delivered to ECDC in June. ECDC does not expect any major changes to the Independence Policy following receipt of the final opinion of DG HR.

127. Ben Duncan further presented some graphs to illustrate the current state of implementation of the Independence Policy in ECDC. The Centre has already received 160 declarations of interest, the majority of which emanated from the Advisory Forum and the Management Board. The members of the Senior Management Team, the Heads of Disease Programmes and also the Head of Section, Microbiology Coordination (Marc Struelens) and the Deputy Chief Scientist (Piotr Kramarz) have completed their Annual Declaration of Interests in advance of the policy applying to ECDC staff members and agreed to have their declarations published on ECDC's website. As regards to external experts, the ECDC Founding Regulation clearly stipulates that members of ECDC Ad Hoc Scientific Panels should complete a Declaration of Interests form. Ben Duncan informed the MB that declarations had been taken from all the members of the first such Ad Hoc Panel ECDC proposed to be created in 2013 (on Childhood Tuberculosis) and that these declarations had been reviewed by him prior to the Panel members being appointed.

128. The Compliance Officer noted that a significant number of members of the Advisory Forum and the Management Board had not completed their forms correctly. However, this is a learning process and the error rate decreased once further guidance was circulated by ECDC to AF and MB members. For this first declarations exercise under the new policy, he explained that his intention was not to regulate every detail, but rather to support individuals in understanding the process including the essential nature of the Independence Policy.

129. In November 2013, the 12-month review of the policy will occur and the Compliance Officer will present proposals for further improving relevant processes in 2014. These may include proposals to simplify the form, and he is very open to ideas and suggestions from MB members on this subject.

130. Ben Duncan indicated that out of all of the key target groups (AF, MB, ECDC Staff), the Management Board are the furthest ahead in the process of completing their 2013 Annual Declarations of Interest forms. He thanked the MB for showing leadership on this and credited and thanked the Compliance Assistant, Johanna Banks of ECDC, for her contribution of time and effort on the Independence Policy and Declarations of Interest.

131. The Chair stressed the fact the MB members have to reach the credibility of 100 percent implementation of their Annual DoI exercise 2013. She thanked the MB members who completed their Annual DoI and recommended the MB members to remind the absentees of the MB to complete their Annual DoI.

132. Ben Duncan then recalled the issue related to the Annual DoI of the Chair of the Management Board, which has been circulated previously to all the MB members. He confirmed that no comments had been submitted to the Deputy Chair of the MB and so he regarded the review of the MB of the Chair's Annual DoI as having been successfully concluded.

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* Item for information.

[16] Item 11a - Update on implementation of independence policy (B Duncan)

The MB took note of the Update on implementation of Independence policy and implementing rules on Declarations of Interests.

Item 11b – ECDC Management Board Working Group on new business models and financing on large-scale EU level actions for which ECDC budget is insufficient; ECDC and WP7 in a full project proposal to develop a Blueprint for EU level monitoring of vaccine benefit/risk (ADVANCE/IMI 7th call) (Document MB27/14; MB27/15)*

133. The Chair informed the MB that they need to review further the IMI project and to find funds for the project. The decision on the approval of the project needs to be taken on that day.

134. Maarit Kokki, Senior Advisor to Director, Head of Section, International Relations, ECDC, presented the MB with the proposal on the Work Package (WP) 7.[17] She informed the draft terms of reference for the MB working group was to be discussed as requested in the last MB meeting. The aim of the project is to develop a blueprint plan for EU level monitoring of vaccine benefit/risk. The five WP's are:

- To establish best practices rules to develop studies in this area;
- Mapping and promoting synergies to maximise the use and identify the gaps;
- To profile the existing database;
- To adopt and develop new methods for monitoring vaccines;
- To create the data platform and evaluation of practicalities, testing the proposals from the other WP's.

135. All the WP's are working under the coordinating team and WP6 is project management of this project. The WP7 is led by ECDC and referred to as 'implementability analysis', which in practise means reality testing of the proposals from other WPs. Based on this, and following consultations, a final blueprint has to be drafted. Maarit Kokki ensured that partners could report on results independently. There will be a separate Implementability Advisory Board (IAB) to support the WP7 in the review of products of other WPs, and she foresees a small operational task force to support the practical work. She further informed that the WP7 is not connected to the coordination team; ECDC would be a full partner in the advance project and participate in the steering committee. She also informed that ECDC is the exclusive leader of the package and would also participate in the strategic decision making as a member of the general assembly.

136. Maarit Kokki informed that ECDC, being a full partner, requires resources to run the project. The estimated budget is approximately €320 000, and the contribution from the private sector has not been discussed. The outcome of this project will be the blueprint for the future EU level activities in this field. The project would allow real life studies to be carried out after the second year of the project; however, the full project duration is five years.

137. Some of the MB members expressed their reservation over relinquishing the independence of ECDC in the project *vis-à-vis* conflicts of interest. The MB members inquired about the composition of the other partners in the project and to what extent the partners will be involved in the project. They also asked whether an equitable balance exists between public/private institutions. Maarit Kokki responded that some public health institutes that were part of the eBrave consortium have either joined as full members or associate members, and national advisory counterparts are involved as well. The MB members sought further clarification on the composition of the scientific advisory board, to which Maarit Kokki replied there were four partners from public health, experts, ethics and two task force members. It should be noted, however, that the separate Implementability Advisory Board would ensure that the voices of those partners not involved in the ADVANCE project directly (Ministries of Health, data owners, such as healthcare providers, NPHI, NRA, insurance companies) could be taken into account.

* Item for information.
[17] Item 11b - Update on IMI (M Kokki)

138. The EC representative congratulated ECDC on the project and supported positively the project on the basis of ECDC's full independence.

139. The Alternate from France recalled that France has not been in favour of the participation of ECDC in the IMI since the issue has been presented at the MB.

140. The Director clarified that ECDC is not under the coordination team at the same level as other work packages, but rather part of the Steering Group together with other leaders of work packages. ECDC is also present at the General Assembly and also has a separate Advisory Board. All of these contributing factors ensures ECDC's independence including an appropriate level of separation, albeit, not fully, as ECDC needs to be able to be involved in the entire process.

141. The Chair conceded with the MB members and the Commission on proposing to accept the project on the basis of ECDC maintaining their full independence in respect to their Independence Policy. She further proposed that ECDC gives a written position statement to assure the Management Board. It was subsequently agreed that a separate position statement would not be needed but that the minutes clearly stipulate the rationale for how ECDC has taken on board all the observations made by the MB members and the precise terms and conditions of engagement of ECDC's participation with a view to guaranteeing its independence.

142. Following the discussion, the MB voted on the participation of the ECDC in the ADVANCE project as the leader of the WP7. There were no objections, five MB members abstained.

143. The MB discussed the proposed Terms of Reference of the MB Working Group to explore possible new mechanisms to conduct large EU level actions, both in terms of business models and financing options. In her introductory remarks, Maarit Kokki indicated that this work could also contribute to the final blueprint of the ADVANCE project.

144. The EC representative was cautious in reference to the working group seeking additional financing and informed that the Commission intends to explore it on a case-by-case basis. While he expressed his openness to explore options, he noted the general condition that applies to all EU agencies participating in EU projects and programmes.

145. Based on the comments of the MB members, some ambiguity remained in respect to the objectives of the proposed MB Working Group; therefore, the Terms of Reference will be updated based on today's discussion and the MB will discuss the revised version in the June 2013 Board meeting.

The Management Board approved ECDC's participation in the ADVANCE project as leader of the Work Package (WP) 7.

The Management Board will discuss the revised Terms of Reference of the MB Working Group in the June 2013 Board meeting.

Item 11c – Update from the ECDC Management Board External Evaluation Steering Committee[*]

146. Daniel Reynders, Chair, ECDC Management Board External Evaluation Steering Committee, updated the Board on the status of the second external evaluation of the Centre. He informed that the Steering Committee re-examined all of the comments made in the minutes of the previous meetings for the first call for tender in order to identify ways to improve the process. The comments were subsequently integrated into the new Terms of Reference and circulated to the Committee and approved thereafter. The new Terms of Reference and the call for tender will be launched after the administrative procedures are completed.

147. The MB Chair thanked the Belgian Member for his update and the work of the External Evaluation Steering Committee.

The Management Board took note of the update from the ECDC Management Board External Evaluation Steering Committee on the recent developments of the second independent external evaluation of the Centre.

[*] Item for information.

Item 4c – Draft Budget 2014 (Documents MB27/8 and MB27/Info Note 4)

148. The Chair reopened the discussion on the aforementioned matter and recalled that the Management Board had not yet approved the Draft Budget 2014.

149. The Director recalled Article 22(5) of ECDC's Founding Regulation.[18] He then reiterated the Audit Committee's proposal to adopt the Draft Budget and also cautioned that the approved Budget can always be negotiated following the adoption of the Multi-annual Financial Framework.

The Management Board approved the Draft Budget 2014 with one abstention from the European Commission.

Item 12 – Roundtable discussion on ECDC staff matters[19]

Item 12a – Information on results of CO-DO and action *

150. The Director started by introducing two members of the ECDC Staff Committee, Irina Dinca and Ingela Soderlund. The Director then initiated the roundtable discussion by providing the Board with an overview of how the SMT engages with staff members. Accordingly, ECDC conducts staff surveys every 12 to 18 months; every two years, staff members elect representatives to ECDC's Staff Committee; staff members help draft ECDC's annual Work Programme and its strategic Multi-annual Programmes, such as the draft SMAP (2014-2020); ECDC's quality management and quality improvement processes, which are driven by input from relevant staff and; staff also provided extensive input into how to further improve ECDC during the "CO-DO process" in 2012.[20]

151. ECDC carried out staff surveys in 2009, 2010 and 2012. The response rate (approximately 70%) for each of these surveys was reasonably high. The questionnaires for these surveys were developed with input from internal working groups at ECDC, which included staff representatives. Once the results of the surveys were presented by the SMT to the Centre as a whole, a cascading process occurred during which staff from individual Units and Sections discussed how their results correlate with the results of ECDC as a whole. This enabled Units and Sections to identify priority issues and challenges emerging from the survey and develop action plans to address them.

152. The ECDC staff members are represented by a Staff Committee, which they elect every two years. This Staff Committee is consulted by the SMT on all matters that are likely to have an impact on staff. For instance, the Staff Committee is consulted on:

- Implementing Rules under the EU Staff Regulations;
- Internal procedures affecting the rights and obligations of staff;
- Recruitment process: the Staff Committee nominates one of the members of the Selection Committee for all recruitment processes run by ECDC;
- The Senior Management Team (SMT) decision regarding staff matters;
- Organisational changes (adjustments to the organisation of Units/Sections);
- Calls for tenders for services of specific interest to staff (e.g. occupational health services, accommodation services for staff, etc.);
- Other matters impacting staff, such as allocation of parking spaces at ECDC.

153. The Director and his Deputy meet with the Staff Committee at least once a month. These meetings are open and useful two-way dialogues. It is not just the SMT that puts forward items for consultation: the Staff Committee also puts forward matters for discussion that it considers to be of

[18] Each year the MB, on the basis of a draft drawn up by the director, shall produce an estimate of revenue and expenditure for the Centre for the following year, This estimate, which shall include a draft establishment plan, shall be forwarded by the MB to the Commission by 31 March at the latest.

* Item for information.

[20] Item 12a - Information on results of CO-DO action plan (M Sprenger)

interest to the entire staff. *Ad hoc* meetings sometimes take place between the Director and the Staff Committee when issues arise that require urgent consultation.

154. ECDC staff have been consulted and involved in the design of the Centre's reorganisation. In 2010, a working group, chaired by Andrea Ammon, reviewed the operation of ECDC's matrix organisation. The working group included staff representatives who conducted focus groups with a wide cross section of staff. The group's recommendations to the SMT formed the basis for the April 2011 re-organisation. The working group conducting the evaluation of the April 2011 reorganisation involved staff from all parts of the organisation and included a representative from the Staff Committee. The adjustments to ECDC's structure since 2011, such as the creation of the Information Communication and Technologies (ICT) Unit in 2012, have all been carried out following consultation with the staff concerned.

155. The Staff and the managers at all levels in ECDC help develop the Centre's annual and Multi-annual Programmes, such as the draft SMAP (2014-2020) discussed under agenda item 8. ECDC's quality management and quality improvement processes are also driven by input from pertinent staff. 15 staff members from across ECDC conducted the self-assessment of the Centre under the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) methodology in 2012. This year, ECDC's Quality Management Team launched the 3i tool to "transform inefficiencies into ideas and innovations". The 3i is an online system available on the Centre's Intranet that enables all staff members to report on inefficiencies and suggest how they might be remedied. Staff can also use 3i to put forward ideas and share innovations. Staff can then choose whether to put forward their reports or comments anonymously or in their own name. In parallel to this online system, staff can also participate in meetings of ECDC's Customer Forum. This meeting is dedicated to solving problems and reducing administrative burdens within ECDC. The Forum is open to any staff member who wishes to attend.

156. The Director then recalled the CO-DO process (Challenges and Opportunities in further Developing our Organisation). This was launched in the spring of 2012 when initial results from the 2012 staff survey showed that while staff enjoyed working at ECDC, they were less keen on the Centre as an Organisation. The SMT conducted around 100 confidential face-to-face meetings with staff members. The SMT then developed an analysis of the opportunities and challenges facing ECDC based on insights gathered from these meetings with staff, the results of the staff survey and the initial results from the CAF self-assessment process. The SMT had a series of meetings with the Staff Committee based on the results of CO-DO, and this led to a decision on an Action Plan in June 2012. The Action Plan focuses on the following five themes:

- Revitalise vision and values;
- De-mystify the Senior Management Team;
- Remove 'avoidable' stress in the matrix;
- Empower middle management;
- Career opportunities and personal development.

157. The Director briefly reported on actions taken under these various headings. For instance, the work on SMAP (2014-2020) and the Long-term Surveillance Strategy (LTSS) is helping to revitalise and clarify the Centre's vision for fulfilling its mandate in the coming year; rapid communications are circulated to all staff within 24 hours of each SMT meeting to avoid any confusion (or mystery) about decisions the SMT has taken and the reasons for taking those decisions; and regular meetings of all ECDC middle managers have aided in giving them a stronger voice in shaping key policies and decisions.

Item 12b – Evaluation of the reorganisation[*]

158. The Chair gave the floor to Andrea Ammon to present some preliminary and selected results from ECDC's evaluation of the April 2011 reorganisation.[21] The evaluation had been developed by a working group chaired by Andrea Ammon and comprised of one representative of the Staff Committee and 10 other staff members drawn from all Units affected by the 2011 reorganisation. The working group decided that the evaluation should focus on the extent to which the 2011

[*] Item for information.
[21] Item 12b - Evaluation of the reorganisation (A Ammon)

reorganisation achieved its initial aims, to assess its impact on the staff and to establish concrete proposals for improvement to the current implementation of the reorganisation and for future changes. The group developed a set of questions that were put to ECDC in an online survey done during November 2012. A total of 90 out of 280 staff members participated in the survey, which represented a 32% response rate. The survey showed that while some aims of the reorganisation were achieved (e.g. an increased focus on quality, planning and project management), others need further development. The work of some new Sections created during the reorganisation is appreciated by staff (Quality Management, Microbiology Coordination, Epidemiological Methods, Internal Communications), while some other Sections may need further improvement. The Respondents reported that they find the workflows and processes in ECDC more complex following the reorganisation. Many reported having to deal with more hierarchical layers, and many of the staff working in the matrix part of ECDC's structure find their work obligations toward the Disease Programmes and their Unit less clearly defined than before. The need to make ECDC's matrix work better is a key finding of the evaluation. The free text comments accompanying the survey contain some good suggestions as to how this might be done, and the evaluation working group is currently analysing these.

Item 12c – Recent organisational adjustments[*]

159. This item was not discussed.

Item 12d – Overview of Human Resources Metrics[*]

160. Jessica Mannheim, Head of Section, Human Resources, ECDC, presented data on the composition of ECDC staff by gender and by nationality.[22] Overall, ECDC has more female than male staff members (60% female, 40% male). However, in the upper level contracts (Grades AD8 to AD15), this situation is reversed (60% male, 40% female). ECDC is highly multinational, with all EU nationalities apart from no staff representation from Luxembourg. In 2012, a total of 13 staff members resigned from ECDC, thereby incurring a turnover rate of 4.7%. A further seven staff members left the Centre for "other reasons". These "other reasons" typically include staff members who come to the end of a contract with ECDC and are not offered a new contract and staff members who reach retirement age. In 2012, ECDC filled a total of 44 vacant posts. 12 of these posts (27%) were filled by internal candidates while 32 were filled by external candidates. Under the EU's Staff Regulations, ECDC is obliged to run open and competitive recruitment procedures for its positions. However, existing staff members can and do apply for new posts within ECDC. In respect to ECDC's organisational chart, by year end, 61 out of 278 staff members (22%) successfully applied for a higher level post in ECDC. Accordingly, this represents a significant degree of career progression achieved by staff within ECDC. In addition, there are also many learning and development opportunities open to ECDC staff via internal and external training courses and e-Learning. In 2012, ECDC staff spent an average of 4.5 days on training.

Item 12e – Reinforcement of support to staff related to accommodation search[*]

161. Jessica Mannheim ended by outlining the various services and support functions available to staff and their families within ECDC, ranging from support in finding accommodation in Stockholm through to counselling and healthcare support.

Item 12f – Update on the ECDC building project[*]

162. The agenda item was discussed on day one.

163. The Chair then gave the floor to Irina Dinca who confirmed that the Staff Committee has a very good and constructive relationship with the Senior Management Team. She added that the Staff

[*] Item for information.
[*] Item for information.
[22] Item 12d - Overview of HR metrics (J Mannheim)
[*] Item for information.
[*] Item for information.

Committee has established a working group to conduct a study on career development at ECDC. The Staff Committee would be pleased to present results from this study at the next MB in June.

164. The MB members expressed their appreciation for the extensive information and analysis presented by ECDC. Several members felt they needed more time to "digest" this information before commenting on it. There was also some discussion as to the significance of the relatively low response rate to the survey on evaluation of the reorganisation (32%) in comparison with the staff surveys (approximately 70%). The MB members were interested in seeing further results from the evaluation of the reorganisation, including the planned analysis of comments from the staff, and having some analysis of the possible reasons for this low response rate.

165. The Chair concluded that the MB clearly wants to have some additional information and a further opportunity for debate. Still, in recalling the MB discussion under item 5 about receiving too many pages of information, the Chair emphasised the need to strike the right balance between transparency and information overload. She also cautioned that the MB should avoid trying to second guess the Director on the internal management of ECDC: the role of the MB is to support the Director in his efforts to further improve the welfare of staff.

166. The Director concluded that the key "confounding factor" in relation to the reorganisation and the evaluation thereof is that ECDC grew very rapidly in the period 2008-2012. The organisation and its functions are both complex and demanding. The Experts at ECDC are required to carry out work for a core function such as Surveillance and for a Disease Programme. Simultaneously, with little or no notice, they are asked to work in a team producing a Rapid Risk Assessment about an emerging threat. Working at ECDC can be challenging given the complexity of the organisation. In order to help address this complexity, ECDC has recruited a management expert to be "guardian of the matrix". This is one of the actions put forward in the CO-DO action plan of 2012. This new staff member will help ensure the smooth functioning of ECDC's matrix and its various process.

167. Ingela Soderlund agreed with the Director that the rapid growth of ECDC from a small organisation to a relatively large one prior to 2011 is a confounding factor. She speculated that one of the reasons for the low response rate to the 2012 survey on the evaluation of the reorganisation may have been "re-organisation fatigue". She then thanked the Director for having conducted the survey on the evaluation of the re-organisation in a very open manner.

The MB took note of information presented in the roundtable discussion on ECDC staff matters.

It was decided to schedule a further discussion on staff issues for MB28 in June and to invite the Staff Committee to present the results of its study on career development at that meeting. ECDC should also present results from the further analysis of the survey on evaluation of the reorganisation at MB28.

Item 13 – Any other business

168. The Director of ECDC thanked all the Members for their participation and fruitful discussions. Flowers were presented to Maarit Kokki and Jan Mos for their exceptional work with the IMI and Strategic Multi-annual Programme 2014-2020, respectively. The Director also extended his appreciation to the Senior Management Team (SMT) for their support.

169. Françoise Weber took the opportunity to also thank the Management Board, as well as the ECDC Director, for their excellent work. She also extended her thanks to the interpreters for their work and also to Corinne Skarstedt and her team.

170. There was no other business. The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the ECDC Management Board will convene on 19-20 June 2013.