

ECDC DIRECTOR'S PRESENTATION

Protecting Europe's health: How ECDC adds value for Europe

Visit of Her Majesty the Queen of Sweden to ECDC, 5 February 2013

Your Majesty,

It is a great honour to be able to welcome you today to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, ECDC.

Ever since I had the pleasure to meet Your Majesty, on the occasion of an official dinner at the Royal Palace in September 2011, I have been looking forward to this day.

Your Majesty showed a great interest in communicable diseases, when we spoke, and impressed me with your knowledge.

Your Majesty's knowledge in health issues and in communicable diseases did not come as a surprise to me as the Queen took the initiative of founding the 'World Childhood Foundation' in early 1999.

And I understand that this foundation supports a large number of health-related projects, worldwide, and has done a world of good.

Tomtebodaskolan in 2013



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Tomtebodaskolan used to be a school for blind children, as Your Majesty is well aware of.

ECDC is proud of this heritage and Tomtebodan is still a place with a strong commitment to the public good; more specifically, to public health. And training still goes on here, as a matter of fact, but now of young epidemiologists.

I would very much like to thank Her Majesty for accepting this invitation and for giving us an opportunity to present you to the *'Nya Tomtebodaskolan'*.

I would also like to thank Baroness Christina von Schwerin and my colleague Helena Holland for preparing this visit today.

If you agree, I would like to spend the next few minutes to briefly introduce Your Majesty to ECDC and to our core work.

2005: ECDC established in Stockholm



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In May 2005, ECDC became operational in Stockholm, and we are very pleased to be located in this beautiful capital of Sweden.

When ECDC was established, the European Union created, for the first time, an organisation that engaged in Europe-wide disease surveillance and that actively monitored health threats across Europe.

Brussels, European Parliament



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Already in 2004, and following a proposal by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union established a new European Centre for Disease Control.

The idea of a European disease centre was loosely modelled on the US CDC in Atlanta, Georgia.

What you see here are our Founding Regulations.

30.4.2004 Official Journal of the European Union L 142/1

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(Acts whose publication is obligatory)

REGULATION (EC) No 851/2004 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 21 April 2004 establishing a European centre for disease prevention and control

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 152(4) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the Commission,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee ⁽¹⁾,

of the Council of 24 September 1998 setting up a network for the epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases in the Community ⁽²⁾, which requires timely scientific analysis in order for effective Community action to be undertaken,

(4) Decision No 2119/98/EC expressly calls for the improvement of the coverage and effectiveness of existing dedicated networks between Member States for the surveillance of communicable diseases on which Community actions should be built and the need to foster cooperation with third countries and international organisations competent in the field of public health, and in particular to pursue closer collaboration with the World Health Organisation

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ECDC's mission is to strengthen Europe's defences against communicable diseases.

Our mission



- **Strengthen Europe's defences** against communicable diseases.
- **Identify, assess and communicate** current and emerging **threats to human** health from communicable diseases.
- **Cooperate with our Member States** in the fight against communicable diseases.



We do this by working together with our Member States in a wide variety of areas, ranging from disease surveillance to outbreak response and to scientific advice and training.

This is ECDC staff outside our main entrance. The photo was taken during the summer of 2010, so we have many more staff members now. I am very pleased that all nationalities of the EU Member States are currently represented at ECDC.



ECDC's core values

We aim to be:

- service minded
- quality driven
- one team

- Budget 2012: EUR 58 million
- Staff: 300
- All EU nationalities

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We believe that what we do make a difference, add value, and benefit all of Europe. Our work on scientific advice is centred around seven disease-specific programmes. These are on antimicrobial resistance and healthcare-associated infections;



Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and healthcare-associated infections (HAI)

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Photo: (cc) Ralf Heß

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emerging and vector-borne diseases;

Emerging and vector-borne diseases (EVD)



Photo: (cc) Sean McCann

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food- and waterborne diseases and zoonoses;

Food- and waterborne diseases and zoonoses (FWD)



Photo: © iStock

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HIV, sexually transmitted infections and blood-borne viruses;

HIV, STI and blood-borne viruses (HASH)

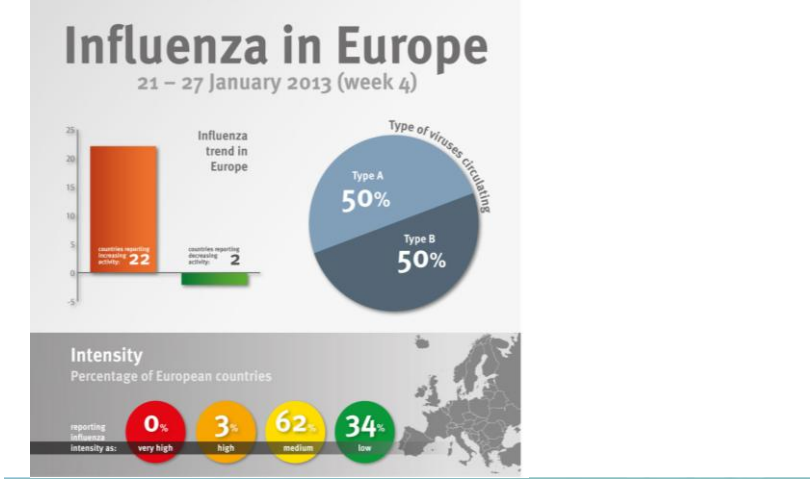


Photo: © iStock

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influenza;

Influenza



Influenza in Europe
21 – 27 January 2013 (week 4)

Influenza trend in Europe

Category	Value
Countries reporting increasing activity	22
Countries reporting decreasing activity	2

Type of viruses circulating

Type	Percentage
Type A	50%
Type B	50%

Intensity
Percentage of European countries

Intensity level	Percentage
very high	0%
high	3%
medium	62%
low	34%

Infographic: ECDC, Weekly Influenza Surveillance Overview (WISO)

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tuberculosis



– the above photo was taken during a visit to Romania in 2011 and shows children who all suffer from TB in a Romanian orphanage –;

and finally, vaccine-preventable diseases and invasive bacterial infections.



Some of these disease areas will soon be presented to Her Majesty in more detail.

Vigilance in an interconnected world



Photo: © Ho-Yeol Ryu

All these diseases, we see in the global context of an interconnected world:

a disease outbreak in a remote corner of the world can, at any time, turn into an outbreak somewhere in Europe.

And ECDC is here to be prepared.

This slide was taken in this very room we are sitting in: the Emergency Operations Centre, or the EOC.

Core functions of ECDC



Every working day at 11:30, a roundtable meeting in ECDC's Emergency Operations Centre assesses threats, official alerts and epidemic intelligence for around the EU and the world.

- Disease surveillance
- Epidemic intelligence
- Risk assessment
- Scientific advice and guidance
- Response support
- Preparedness and capacity strengthening
- Training

Photo: ECDC

In the EOC, we evaluate the epidemiological data we receive from our Member States and global partners.

In addition, we also track unofficial information sources from the media and the internet.

We are monitoring health threats in over 50 languages; in the 23 official EU languages, but also, for example, in Russian and in Thai.

Every day at 11:30 a.m., a roundtable meeting takes place here to share information, discuss and assess emerging public health threats.

But I will say no more about this, because my colleague, Dr. Denis Coulombier, who is the Head of the Surveillance and Response Support Unit, will very soon present our work on preparing and responding to threats.

ECDC works in partnership and cooperation with several international and European organisations as well as with all our Member States.

Whenever a Member States asks ECDC for assistance and support, we have the right experts to help them.

Just recently, our experts were on location in Madeira during a dengue fever outbreak.



Photo: Paula Vasconcelos

An ECDC team went to Spain to investigate an outbreak of Legionnaire's diseases, and ECDC was on mission in Greece to assess the West Nile fever situation.

We also went to Romania to assess the situation of children with tuberculosis.

I would like to end this presentation by showing Her Majesty a short video clip that we produced with photos we took in Romania.

It is called 'Childhood TB in Europe'.



Your Majesty, thank you for your time and attention. I would be honoured to answer any questions the Queen may have.

Helping Europe and its Member States to save lives

