



ECDC Management Board

# Minutes of the Thirtieth Meeting of the ECDC Management Board Stockholm, 27-28 March 2014

*Adopted by the Management Board at its Thirty-first meeting, 17-18 June 2014*

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## Summary of Proceedings – ECDC Management Board Meeting

The Thirtieth meeting of the ECDC Management Board (MB) convened in Stockholm, Sweden, on 27-28 March 2014. During the meeting, the Management Board:

- adopted the draft agenda;
- adopted the draft minutes of the Twenty-ninth Management Board meeting;
- took note of the update on the main activities since the last meeting;
- took note of the update on the external evaluation process;
- took note of the update on the implementation of the decision on serious cross-border threats to health and agreed to include this item into the agenda for the next MB meeting in June 2014;
- took note of the lessons learned from the approval process of SMAP 2014-2020 and WP 2014;
- unanimously approved the Annual Report of the Director on the Centre's Activities in 2013, including Draft Analysis and Assessment of Authorising Officer's (Activity) Report in 2013;
- took note of the update on the analysis of the indicators for the Strategic Multi-annual Work Programme 2007-2013 and agreed to provide the Board with regular updates on the implementation of the SMAP 2014-2020;
- took note of the ECDC 2015 Work Programme Priorities and agreed that the ECDC will provide the Board with further information and/or tools to facilitate the prioritisation process;
- took note of the update on the ECDC Independence Policy and Implementing Rules and agreed that delegates that had not submitted their Declaration of Interest and Declaration of Commitment should not be allowed to participate in the meetings of the Management Board;
- endorsed the Provisional Annual Accounts 2013, including the report on Budgetary and Financial Management;
- took note of the Fourth Supplementary and Amending Budget 2013;
- approved the Supplementary and Amending Budget 2014;
- approved the Draft Budget 2015;
- adopted ECDC's Financial Regulation and its Implementing Rules (consolidated version);
- took note of the update on the progress of the Working Group on Rules of Procedure and draft Code of Conduct;
- approved the ECDC's Financial Regulation and its Implementing Rules;
- took note of the process and timeline for the nomination process of the Director and agreed that the European Commission will duly inform the Board of any developments at the first possibility;
- took note of the presentations made by the European Commission;
- agreed that the organisation of ESCAIDE will remain as per the first model of the proposal and postponed the final decision on the future of ESCAIDE until ECDC has received the results of the external evaluation as well as provide the Board with a third model based on the received comments;
- took note and greatly supported the ECDC International Relations Policy.



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

1. Françoise Weber, Chair of the ECDC Management Board (MB), welcomed all the participants to the Thirtieth meeting. A special welcome was extended to Susanne Wald, newly appointed Member from Germany, Michał Inicki, Alternate from Poland, attending for the first time and Ivan Eržen, newly appointed Alternate, Slovenia. Apologies had been received from Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Malta (proxy to Netherlands) and Romania. The Directorate General for Research and Innovation, European Commission, had provided a proxy to John F Ryan, Member, European Commission. Jacques Scheres, Member, European Parliament, who had to leave the meeting early on Day 2 provided his proxy to Minerva-Melpomeni Malliori, Member, European Parliament. Lastly, the Board was informed that Martina Brix, Advisor, Austria, and Frédéric Denauw, Advisor, Belgium, would be present for the meeting.

2. In reference to the latest changes in the meeting programme, as informed via email correspondence on 25 March 2014, the Board was assured that the numbering of the meeting documentation would be corrected after the meeting and the final documents will be available on the MB Extranet.

## Welcome from the Director, ECDC

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

## Item 1 – Adoption of the draft agenda (and noting the declarations of interest and proxy voting, if any) (*Documents MB30/2 Rev. 1; MB30/3 Rev. 1*)\*

4. The Chair called on the Board members to bring forward any possible conflicts of interests in reference to the meeting agenda. No interests were declared.

5. Tiiu Aro, Deputy Chair, informed the Board, in reference to the ECDC Independence Policy<sup>1</sup>, that no conflicts of interest were detected in the Declaration of Interest of the Chair, Françoise Weber.

6. It was recalled that the item on implementation of the decision on serious cross-border threats to health would be live streamed to ECDC staff, as noted previously in the invitation letter.

The Management Board adopted the draft agenda without changes.

## Item 2 – Adoption of the draft minutes of the 29<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Management Board (Stockholm, 13-14 November 2013) (*Document MB30/4*)\*

The Management Board adopted the draft minutes of the Twenty-ninth Management Board meeting (13-14 November 2013).

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\* Item for decision.

<sup>1</sup> As well as in reference to the document MB30/Info Note 2 on the Annual Declaration of Interests 2014 of the MB Chair

\* Item for decision.

## **Item 6 – Update from ECDC on the main activities since the last meeting of the Management Board (13-14 November 2014)** *(Document MB30/Info Note 1)\**

7. ECDC Director presented a brief update on the main activities since the last meeting of the Management Board. The presentation focused on the past, the present and the future of ECDC. The Heads of Units, in support of the Director, also provided a short update each on the priorities for 2014.<sup>2</sup>

8. Following the update, Tiiu Aro, Deputy Chair, highlighted the importance of the communication toolkits provided by ECDC, which are very useful for the smaller Member States, such as Estonia.

9. The Member from Germany proposed, in reference to the adopted draft agenda, to move the item on the proposed timeline for nomination process of the ECDC Director to Day 1 of the meeting. Additionally, it was requested to ensure that EPIET would be included to the agenda for the next meeting in June 2014. In the light of these requests, it was concluded by the Chair to change the ordering of agenda items during Day 2 of the meeting, starting with the Update from the European Commission. As regards to EPIET, the German colleague was requested to prepare questions in order to plan for the agenda for the June meeting.

10. Further to the update from ECDC, some of the Board members proposed to further elaborate on how the presented ECDC activities align with the Work Programme and its implementation, in order to assist the MB to monitor the progress. Such update could be incorporated into the Info Note. This proposal was debated as the Centre does already provide the Board with all relevant documents; thus it would not be recommended to further overload the Info Note. The Chair concluded that there should be a balance between what is interesting and what is relevant and welcomed the initiative from the MB members to provide their input and/or suggestions on their expectations from the update from ECDC and the accompanying document.

11. The European Commission pointed out that the primary task of the Board is to ensure good governance of the Centre, i.e. addressing the matters of scientific excellence, efficiency and added value. In order to ensure the added value of ECDC, clear and measurable indicators must be in place.

12. The ECDC Director concluded his presentation with a follow-up on the decisions from the previous meeting and informed that the Centre is on track in reference to the implementation of the Work Programme. Further reference was also provided on various sources for statistics.

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

## **Item 8 – Update from the ECDC Management Board External Evaluation Steering Committee**

13. Daniel Reynders, Member, Belgium, and Chair of the ECDC Management Board External Evaluation Steering Committee (MEES), provided a brief update on the latest developments in the external evaluation process. The Inception Report was received by 30 December 2013, in accordance with the agreed timeline, and was discussed during a meeting in Brussels on 14 January 2014. The comments and remarks made by the MEES were duly taken note of and the Committee decided not to request a revised report. The evaluators are currently in the process of interviews and the collection of relevant data. The Interim Evaluation Report is expected by 6 June 2014, and the MB will be further updated during the June meeting. All Board members were kindly requested to ensure that relevant staff in all countries is aware of the evaluation and ready to collaborate.

The Management Board took note of the update on the external evaluation process.

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\* Item for information.

<sup>2</sup> Item 6 - Update on ECDC activities.

## Item 13 – Update: implementation of the decision on serious cross-border threats to health\*<sup>3</sup>

14. John F Ryan, Member, European Commission, provided the Management Board with an update on the implementation of the decision on serious cross-border threats to health.<sup>4</sup> Following the presentation, the ECDC Director highlighted the importance of ECDC's Rapid Risk Assessments (RRAs) and noted the communication between all relevant bodies, such as the WHO, etc., needs to be good.

15. The Member from Norway updated the Board on the implementation of this decision in Norway, an EEA Country. One of the questions remaining might be the demands which the Health Security Committee (HSC) will place on the EEA Countries. The Minister of Health of Norway is in a position that this decision is both relevant and acceptable and falls under the general EEA agreement. The preliminary position is currently with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and once accepted, Norway can adopt the decision.

16. Many questions were raised by the Board members, mainly relating to (risk) communication and the role of ECDC. It was questioned how and at which level EWRS should be used for communicating environment-related threats now assigned to the Centre, considering available surveillance for all environmental threats, not limited to health-related aspects only. In case of threats related to food and feed, what is the position of ECDC? At which moment is risk communication defined and communicated by the Centre? In reference to TESSy, it was queried at which point a country should also copy the message to the EWRS. In reference to risk communication and the role of ECDC, it was pointed out that it might be a good opportunity, in the light of implementing the decision, to ensure clear limits regarding the risk communication within the Centre's mandate.

17. Considering the importance of ECDC communicating directly with the Member States, in addition to communicating with the countries as members of the HSC, a plea was made that the direct communication lines with the Member States would remain untouched as well as that the scientific information would reach the countries unfiltered, as policy and science should be kept separate. It was pointed out by one of the Members that the role of HSC should be discussing the implications of the provided scientific advice and not the content of it.

18. Reference was made to the reestablishment of scientific (or *ad hoc*) committees in Luxembourg, and it was thus questioned how this work will be carried out in the light of the decision. It was also queried how the non-EU countries will be linked to the actions covered by Decision 1082/2013 in the long term.

19. The implications of the decision on the mandate of ECDC were considered quite significant by the Board members, and it was highlighted that further discussions are required in order to monitor closely the progress of the implementation. It was thus proposed to include this item in the agenda of the next meeting in June. It was also noted that the decision would not only impact the Centre, but also the Management Board and members of the HSC. The role of the HSC was also questioned in terms of the extent to which it can discuss the risk assessment without jeopardising the independence of ECDC's scientific advice.

20. It was also questioned whether the Commission would provide an updated roadmap, considering that at the moment of the agreement on the decision, a roadmap was provided with an end date of June, however, the original map noted March. Further clarification was also requested on how the new decision is linked with other tools already in place, as well as the implications for ECDC and its relations with other Agencies.

21. In reference to the international dimension, the Board was informed by the representative of the Commission that such matters will be solved on a case-by-case basis, in collaboration with the Council. Implementation in the Candidate Countries will be carried out in collaboration with ECDC to

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\* Item for guidance.

<sup>3</sup> This item was live streamed to all ECDC staff

<sup>4</sup> Item 13 - COM update Health Threats Decision implementation

ensure that the legislation is fully implemented, including actual activities. Based on the ECDC Founding Regulation, the Centre is free to communicate objective, reliable and easily accessible information to the Member States. An article on this matter has been duly included in the decision. Risk communication could be carried out by ECDC via risk assessments. The bottom line is that there is no difference between the previous and current situations, and the Centre will still be able to communicate freely with the Member States. The independence of ECDC's scientific advice will not be changed. As regards to the alert systems, this has been looked at by the Commission in three possible solutions: a) doing nothing; b) doing little; or c) changing everything. Considering the consequences and related work, it was decided that it would be easier to stretch EWRS over the additional "new" threats by creating links between various alert systems. As all the various alert systems are created under differing legislative rules, it would have been impossible to create a unified system. While the success of this solution has been supported in reality, some fine-tuning remains to be done, such as ensuring some kind of electronic pre-selection in order to ensure that appropriate information reaches the correct person/persons. Alert, risk communication, risk management: this is the order that is set up in the decision. After the alert is received via EWRS, a risk assessment is made, after which the HSC will discuss the next steps and coordination of measures (and not the risk assessment). The independence of ECDC's scientific advice will remain unchanged. It is realised that the decision may have some implications on the staff of the Centre, considering the increased workload; thus it is important for the MB to be kept informed about the progress. In reference to the roadmap, it was noted that the process has actually progressed faster than anticipated; thus it is well ahead of schedule.

The Management Board took note of the update on the implementation of the decision on serious cross-border threats to health.

It was agreed to include this item in the agenda for the next Management Board meeting in June 2014.

## **Item 14 – Lessons learned from the approval process of SMAP 2014-2020 and WP 2014\***

22. The Chair recalled the Written Procedures from the end of 2013 on the SMAP 2014-2020 and the Work Programme 2014. Several of the Members had raised questions during the Written Procedure process and thus it was decided to dedicate some time during the Board meeting in order to reflect on the lessons learned.

23. The Board members expressed that, even though they were content with the final results of the Written Procedure, the process itself was unpleasant and confusing as it felt as though the European Commission bypassed the Management Board, which raises great concerns. Further on to the process, it was queried whether the aim of the Written Procedure was clear enough, did ECDC amend the SMAP and Work Programme according to comments received from the Board, and who has the right to take which decisions? Based on the Founding Regulation, the MB adopts the Centre's programme of work and the revisable multiannual programme while ensuring that these programmes are consistent with the priorities of the Commission. The Written Procedure process in December 2013 seemed to diverge from this practice. In the light of this, the role of the European Commission was questioned, i.e. was the Commission a part of the MB or rather the end recipient of the SMAP and Work Programme? It was also highlighted that during the process, the Commission made provisions for the Budget 2014, based on the SMAP, and it was not clear what this provision was based on. Thus, further clarifications were requested on the actual procedure for approving the Centre's budget. Additionally, it was felt that the issue of indicators, which were relatively in the background of the process, became very important rather suddenly. It was also pointed out that time factor played an important role, both by pressuring the Board to make swift decisions in a very short timeframe, as well as by potentially influencing the quality of the programmes and the ability of ECDC to ensure all comments were taken on board as much as possible. The Board members emphasised that lessons should be learned in order to be more aware of this process in the future.

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\* Item for guidance.



24. The European Commission assured the Board that the MB is clearly responsible for the governance of the Centre and the roles of the Commission and the Board should be complementary. The European Commission is responsible and politically accountable for all the EU Agencies. The Commission's first responsibility is to have a dialogue with the Agencies in order to assure the Board of the coherence with the policy objectives in the Member States. Based on the Financial Regulations, which specify in great detail how the Commission is responsible for using public money, e.g. the budget, the Commission insists on having indicators in order to show to the European Parliament and the Council that the budget has been executed in a proper manner. Additionally, the Commission is obliged to transmit to the Agency its opinion on the Human Resources programming, which must be factual and based on sound financial management. Moreover, notwithstanding clear legislative reasons for which the Commission is required to follow, it was underlined that a similar approach is applied to all Agencies and not solely ECDC. It has to be demonstrated that the work of the Agencies is conducted effectively and the money is spent in an appropriate manner. The added value and satisfaction has to be measurable in hard facts and figures. With all this in mind, the Commission reiterated that it does not perceive any conflicts with the Management Board.

25. With regards to the indicators, further reference was made to the Financial Regulation, which clearly notes that each activity has to be defined by performance indicator(s). Therefore, the Commission focused particularly strongly on the indicators in order to defend same in front of the Parliament and of the Council. In the future, it is of course anticipated that the entire process could be carried out earlier. It was also pointed out that the approval of the Work Programme via Written Procedure was exceptional. The comments from the Commission should already be taken into consideration during the development phase of the Work Programme, prior to presenting it to the Board. In reference to the linkage between the SMAP and the Budget 2014, it was recalled that this was not made as a threat as there were real risks of not being able to defend the budget in the Parliament and the Council without the accompanying indicators. It was also remarked that the Commission and the MB are equal partners within the Board.

26. Based on the explanations of the Commission, the Board reflected that such vital clarifications should have been brought to the attention of the MB at a much earlier stage. It was however hoped that lessons could indeed be learned from this in order to avoid similar situations in the future. The Board needs to be fully aware why it is requested to take action and thus, an open and transparent way of communicating relevant information in a timely manner is absolutely vital. It was requested to keep a close eye on the timetable for the Work Programme and SMAP, especially after 2020. It is the Board's responsibility to ensure, regardless of the order of priorities that the indicators are in place and in line with the criteria of the Commission. The MB needs to ensure the Centre has resources to carry out its mission.

27. As there was still some confusion related to the role of the Board versus the Commission during the process, further reference was once more made to the new Financial Regulations, adopted in October 2013, which provide much more detail as compared to the past. Additionally, during the process of approving the Work Programme and SMAP, the Commission was also in negotiations regarding the budget. It was underlined that this is not the first instance the issue of indicators has been raised by the Commission. The Board can change priorities, and in that case, new indicators need to be developed.

28. ECDC Director noted that much time and effort were spent on the development of SMAP, which was heavily impacted by the new legal implications, such as the new Financial Regulation as well as the decision on cross-border health threats. The development of indicators was a struggle, but the end result was good. Considering the process of the Written Procedure, the Director opined that it was a coincidence of special circumstances. In the future, the Centre should strive towards working more closely with both the Commission and the MB.

29. The Chair summarised the discussion and invited the Commission to explain and clarify relevant steps and actions clearly to the Board in due course. The Board's responsibility is the governance of the ECDC and ensuring the Centre is fulfilling its mission in line with the priorities of the Commission. The Chair also underlined her vigilance to represent the Board in the discussions with the Commission in the future.

The Management Board took note of the explanations by the European Commission on the respective roles of the MB and the European Commission and wish that the lessons learned from the approval process of SMAP 2014-2020 and WP 2014 be used in other similar situations.

### **Item 3 – Annual Report of the Director on the Centre’s Activities in 2013 (including Draft Analysis and Assessment of Authorising Officer’s (Activity) Report in 2013 (Document MB30/8)\***

30. Philippe Harant, Head of Section, Quality Management, Resource Management and Coordination Unit, ECDC, presented the Annual Report of the Director on the Centre’s Activities in 2013, including the Draft Analysis and Assessment of Authorising Officer’s (Activity) Report in 2013.<sup>5</sup> The presentation was followed by the comments from the Chair of the ECDC Audit Committee, Johan Carlson, Member, Sweden.

31. The Member from Germany requested further clarification related to the activity on varicella, which had been cancelled in 2013 but not postponed to 2014. It was agreed that ECDC shall clarify this specific matter and a note will be included into the report.<sup>6</sup>

The Management Board unanimously approved the Annual Report of the Director on the Centre’s Activities in 2013, including the Draft Analysis and Assessment of Authorising Officer’s (Activity) Report in 2013.

### **Item 11 – Analysis of the Indicators for the Strategic Multi-annual Work Programme 2007-2013 (Update 2013) (Document MB30/5)\***

32. Philippe Harant, ECDC, provided a brief update on the analysis of the Indicators for the Strategic Multi-annual Work Programme (SMAP) 2007-2013.<sup>7</sup>

33. The Board Members paid tribute to all the work done by ECDC over the years. In reference to monitoring the progress of SMAP, it was requested to provide the Board with an update on the implementation of activities every trimester.

The Management Board took note of the update on the analysis of the indicators for the Strategic Multi-annual Work Programme 2007-2013.

It was agreed to provide the Board with regular updates on the implementation of the SMAP 2014-2020.

### **Item 12 – ECDC 2015 Work Programme Priorities (Document MB30/6)\***

34. Marc Sprenger, ECDC Director, presented the priorities for the ECDC 2015 Work Programme.<sup>8</sup>

35. In the light of the priorities for 2015, it was recalled that the results of the external evaluation, as well as the elections of the European Commission and Parliament, should be taken into consideration. It was noted by the Commission representative that the current document is

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\* Item for decision.

<sup>5</sup> Item 3 - Annual Report 2013.

<sup>6</sup> It was clarified by Denis Coulombier, ECDC, that the specific activity was cancelled due to an outbreak.

\* Item for guidance.

<sup>7</sup> Item 11 - Analysis of the Indicators 2013.

\* Item for consultation and feedback.

<sup>8</sup> Item 12 - WP 2015 priorities.

considered a work in progress and a more complete paper on this matter will be presented to the Board in June. All relevant legal implications, as well as the external evaluation, will be taken into account.

36. The Board members questioned the roles and remit of ECDC and the Commission, as well as the WHO and the HSC vis-à-vis the priorities of the Work Programme. It was also queried whether the Board could submit written comments on the document, and if yes, until when. It was questioned whether the annex of the document is still applicable if some activities have to be stopped. Further clarifications were requested regarding the efficiency and prison system studies mentioned in the paper. The preparedness part of the document was considered to be too open and too general. More information was requested on the ECDC premises and deadlines related to this matter. Related to the query on SoHO, the Commission clarified that as this aspect does impact human health, there are parts of the regulation that are relevant and thus included in the Work Programme for 2015.

37. Overall, it was felt that the document should have reflected more on which activities will be done less or will be cancelled entirely and why, in order to be clear on what ECDC will not do. Considering the proposed agenda for 2015, it was questioned whether it is actually feasible to accomplish this within a year. In the light of this, it was recommended to clarify in the next draft which activities are necessary to have and which are 'nice to have', i.e. basic core activities and activities which are additional and add value, possibly including some rating system in order to present it more clearly. It was also cautioned that such a split between activities will open the door to budget cuts. In respect to some of the activities, alternatives should be developed/included for activities that are potentially not possible to carry out under the umbrella of ECDC. In the light of the discussions, some of the Board members felt that the MB should perhaps not focus too vigorously on the priority setting, in order not to lose focus on the content.

38. With reference to the ECDC Advisory Forum making their conclusions from the standing point of public health, it was pointed out that it is the task of the MB to conclude what the Centre can or cannot carry out and such choices should be highlighted in the next version of the priorities document. Johan Giesecke, Chief Scientist, noted that ECDC is not obliged to follow the advice of the Advisory Forum on their priority setting, in case the rationale can be clearly explained.

39. ECDC Director pointed out that the Board has continuously been requested in the past to inform the Centre which activities it should discontinue, however, no suggestions on what to stop have ever been received. The MB was once again encouraged to express their views on this. The Chair commented that if it is not clear how to prioritise, the Board cannot provide ECDC with answers on this and thus the Centre should provide a prioritization method including at least some preliminary criteria. The Commission representative added that the Centre and the MB should be aligned in respect to how the priorities are handled. From the point of view of the Commission, three criteria should be used: (i) what is the added value? ii) what are the political objectives/policies; iii) what are the costs? Of note, the added value equates to situations whereby something is not done, an activity is stopped, and/or there are consequences.

40. In relation to the questions surrounding the ICT and related priorities, it was noted that as ICT is one of the most important aspects of the Centre, considering tools such as TESSy, EWRS, etc., it has to be ensured that these functions are of top quality, reliable and sustainable. On the ECDC premises, the Board was informed that options for this project will be presented to the Board in November 2014. If possible, the dormant Working Group on this issue may be reconvened.

41. It was noted that the results emanating from the second external evaluation of the Centre may provide some assistance in terms of prioritisation. However, it was pointed out that it is not the task of the external evaluation to evaluate whether ECDC has been providing added value to the EU, nor is it their job to work out the process on how to create added value.

42. The discussion was concluded by reiterating that the Centre should provide the MB with adequate tools and sufficient information in order to enable the Board to make responsible and clear choices, in spite of the complexity of the prioritisation process of the Work Programme.

The Management Board took note of the ECDC 2015 Work Programme Priorities and agreed that the ECDC will provide the Board with further information and/or tools to facilitate the prioritisation process.

## **Item 7 – Update from ECDC on Independence Policy and Implementing Rules (*Document MB30/7*)\***

43. Jan Mos, Senior Adviser and new Compliance Officer, Director's Office, ECDC, provided an update on the implementation of the ECDC Independence Policy and Implementing Rules, including the statistics.<sup>9</sup> The Chair recalled the risks of disqualified decisions in case of failure to complete the Declaration of Interests and Declaration of Commitment and thus urged all the Members to complete them as soon as possible. The MB was informed that the European Commission is willing to approach the countries in case this should be needed. The Chair concluded that one more reminder should be sent out after which countries should be approached individually.

44. The representative of the European Parliament stressed the importance of transparency among Board Members and also proposed to identify those Members who have failed to complete their declarations.

45. The Chair proposed that participants who have not submitted their completed declarations should not be allowed to participate in the MB meetings. The MB members would of course be informed of such proceedings beforehand.

The Management Board took note of the update on the ECDC Independence Policy and Implementing Rules.

It was agreed that members of the MB that had not submitted their Declaration of Interest and Declaration of Commitment should not be allowed to participate in the meetings of the Management Board.

## **Item 4 – Summary of discussions held at the 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the ECDC Audit Committee (26 March 2014) including its recommendations**

### ***Item 4a – Provisional Annual Accounts 2013, including report on Budgetary and Financial Management (Document MB30/9)\****

46. Anja Van Brabant, Accounting Officer and Head of Section, Finance and Accounting, Resource Management and Coordination Unit, ECDC, presented the provisional annual accounts of 2013, including the report on budgetary and financial management. The presentation was followed by the recommendations of the Audit Committee (AC).<sup>10</sup>

47. A comment was made on the non-commitment of all appropriations of the budget, and it was pointed out that in case of better planning, it would be possible to achieve better results. It was explained by ECDC that there are various reasons behind the non-usage; in the case of 2013, reference was made to the negative decision of the Court of Justice on the salary adjustment. The Chair concluded that such information should be available for clarification in the PowerPoint presentation.

The Management Board endorsed the Provisional Annual Accounts 2013, including the report on Budgetary and Financial Management.

\* Item for information.

<sup>9</sup> Item 7 - Update on the implementation of the draft Independence Policy.

\* Item for decision.

<sup>10</sup> Item 4a - Provisional Annual Accounts 2013 & report on financial and budget implementation 2013.

**Item 4b – Fourth Supplementary and Amending Budget 2013**  
(Document MB30/10)\*

48. Anja Van Brabant, ECDC, presented the fourth supplementary and amending budget 2013.<sup>11</sup>

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

**Item 4c – Supplementary and Amending Budget 2014** (Document MB30/11)\*

49. Anja Van Brabant, ECDC, presented the supplementary and amending budget 2014.<sup>12</sup> The Chair of the Audit Committee concluded that the AC recommends the approval of the supplementary and amending budget; however, it was also pointed out that further dialogue with the European Commission is needed with regards to the increased weighting factor for salaries, considering the expensiveness of the Swedish krona.

The Management Board approved the Supplementary and Amending Budget 2014.

**Item 4d – Draft Budget 2015** (Document MB30/12)\*

50. Anja Van Brabant, ECDC, provided further information to the Board on the Draft Budget for 2015.<sup>13</sup> The recommendation from the Audit Committee referred to the same caveat as in case of the previous item on supplementary and amending budget for 2014.

51. Clarification was requested on the budget increase in the light of staff cuts. It was explained that the staff costs include cuts, however, there are other expenditures related to staff which are not dependent on the number of staff. The issue of the weighting factor was highlighted once more.

52. In reference to a query on the reductions in training and missions, it was clarified that the cuts were made in order to ensure sufficient funds for the results on the weighting factor dispute. Regarding cuts in the missions budget, it was noted that the Centre has tried to limit this in order to ensure more rational usage of these funds.

The Management Board approved the Draft Budget 2015.

**Item 4e – ECDC's Financial Regulation and its Implementing Rules**  
(consolidated version) (Document MB30/13)\*

53. Anja Van Brabant, ECDC, provided an update on the ECDC's Financial Regulation and its Implementing Rules.<sup>14</sup>

54. It was agreed to postpone the final approval by the Management Board until the second day of the meeting until written approval on this item would reach the ECDC from the European Commission. Following receipt of the approval from the European Commission the following day, ECDC's Financial Regulation and its Implementing Rules (consolidated version) were adopted.

The Management Board adopted ECDC's Financial Regulation and its Implementing Rules (consolidated version).

\* Item for information.

<sup>11</sup> Item 4b - Fourth Supplementary & Amending Budget 2013.

\* Item for decision.

<sup>12</sup> Item 4c - MB30-11- Supplementary & Amending Budget 2014.

\* Item for decision.

<sup>13</sup> Item 4d - Draft Budget 2015.

\* Item for decision.

<sup>14</sup> Item 4e - Rules of Implementation to ECDC's Financial Regulation 2014.

## Item 9 – Update from the ECDC Working Group on Rules of Procedure and draft Code of Conduct\*

55. Anita Janelm, Alternate, Sweden and Chair of the ECDC Working Group, updated the Board on the latest developments related to the work on Rules of Procedure and draft Code of Conduct.<sup>15</sup>

The Management Board took note of the update on the progress of the Working Group on Rules of Procedure and draft Code of Conduct.

### *Opening and welcome by the Chair*

56. The Chair opened the meeting and thanked the ECDC Director for the pleasant dinner the evening before.

57. ECDC Director informed that correspondence had been received from the European Commission on the Implementing Rules on the Financial Regulation. The Chair thus invited the Board to proceed with its decision.

The Management Board approved the ECDC's Financial Regulation and its Implementing Rules.

## Item 17 – Update from the European Commission:

### *Item 17a – Proposed timeline for nomination process of the ECDC Director\**

58. The European Commission provided an update to the Board on the timeline and process of the nomination of the ECDC Director. It was recalled that the current contract of the Director will expire at the end of April in 2015. Reference was made to provisions regarding the process in the ECDC Founding Regulation. It was noted that the Commission Directorate General for Human Resources is streamlining the process for all decentralised Agencies. The role of initiating this process is the responsibility of the Commission and the standard procedure is to publish a vacancy notice. It is also possible in duly justified cases to renew the contract once. The initial decision will be made by the Commission and is not dependent on the performance of the incumbent. In case the Commission decides to extend the mandate of the current Director, the rationale has to be clearly explained and justified to the Management Board. Such decision needs to be based on the added value to the Centre and/or on the need for continuity.

59. In case the Commission decides to issue a vacancy notice, the Board shall be informed accordingly and consulted on the content of the vacancy notice. Following the Commission's selection process, leading to the adoption by the College of Commissioners of a Commission short list, the short list will be sent to the Management Board that nominates one of the persons included in such short list. Thereafter, the nominated candidate will be heard by the European Parliament, and the ECDC Management Board makes the final appointment of the Director.

60. In reference to the timelines, and while taking into consideration the expiry of the current contract, the Commission's decision to either renew the contract or publish a vacancy notice has to be initiated by the Commission before the end of May 2014, i.e. the decision will be made to be discussed internally within the Commission. The College of Commissioners will be responsible for adopting the Commission's short list, and thus it has to be also taken into consideration that this can only be expected after the new College of Commissioners has taken office. The adoption process also includes other key services besides DG SANCO. Therefore, the final decision on the Commission's short list may be expected at the earliest by December 2014/January 2015, after which the Commission's short list will be sent to the ECDC Management Board, which is the appointing

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\* Item for information.

<sup>15</sup> Item 9 - Update from the WG on revised RoP and Code of Conduct.

\* Item for information.

authority. It was agreed that, if possible, information on the preliminary decision will be provided to the Board by the June 2014 meeting.

61. Based on the timelines, the Chair, with the support of the Board, stated that an extraordinary MB meeting might need to be arranged in order to ensure timely proceedings, also considering that the current mandate concludes by the end of April 2015. It was clarified by the Commission that there are procedures in place, in case the process is delayed, to appoint an Acting Director.

The Management Board took note of the process and timeline for the nomination process of the Director. It was agreed that the European Commission will duly inform the Board of any developments at the first instance.

### ***Item 17b – Developments: collaboration between the European Commission and the World Health Organization\****

62. John F Ryan, Member, European Commission, updated the Board on the developments in the collaboration between the Commission and the World Health Organization (WHO). Moscow Declaration, an agreement in place to clarify the areas of collaboration, was recalled. The roadmaps for ensuring an overview of the collaboration are in place. In the area of health security, the cooperation has an additional dimension, the involvement of ECDC; thus it is important than when the roadmaps are discussed, ECDC should be adequately involved. Many of the activities will be carried out by the ECDC. The Commission has proposed that in the future, the meeting between the WHO/Europe and the ECDC (Joint Cooperation Group) should take place on the margins of the senior officials meeting of WHO/Europe and Commission. This meeting will take place for the first time in 2015, due to the changes in the Commission. The WHO/Europe, the Commission and the Agencies are all involved in ensuring that there are roadmaps developed and regular meetings would be set up in order to follow up on the collaboration. These meetings would be more strategic and would not focus on specific matters, such as data collection, etc. The Board was informed that during the MB meeting in November, included into the update on the roadmap, the Commission can provide further information on the areas of collaboration.

63. Some comments were made on the specific issues related to the collaboration, such as double reporting and data collection. It was highlighted that some success stories exist; however, the future might be trickier considering the current political situation in the Ukraine and Russia, while keeping in mind the EU is not collaborating with Russia due to this, however, the latter is very keen on reporting cases.

### ***Item 17c – Update on the upcoming Action Plan on HIV/AIDS\****

64. John F Ryan, Member, European Commission, updated the Board on the upcoming Action Plan on HIV/AIDS. It was mentioned that as the policies on alcohol, nutrition and HIV will conclude at the same time as the Commission and Parliament will be renewed, it was decided to try and bridge the gap. External evaluations on these policies were launched. In respect of nutrition and physical activity, an action plan has been developed on childhood obesity. The alcohol group is currently developing an action plan as well. And for HIV, the Commission adopted a Commission Communication and action plan which will cover a two year period, bridging the old policy with the new one.<sup>16</sup>

65. It was questioned why the action plan is discussed within the HSC. It was clarified that this is due to new legislation and for exchanging views on the actual policy. Upon questioning the actual remit of HSC, it was explained that the activities of HSC cover all threats to health, in particular, the communicable diseases such as ARHAI, HIV/AIDS, etc. In the future, it is foreseen by the Commission that it is prudent to consult with the HSC on the documents on various diseases.

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\* Item for information.

\* Item for information.

<sup>16</sup> Item 17c - COM update HIV Action Plan.

66. The representative from European Parliament queried whether the Commission will include a link between HIV infection and austerity measures in the future activities, as such a link is evident in Romania and Greece, for example. The Commission noted that it is aware of the impact of the crisis on the spread and prevention of diseases and this matter has thus come up during the meetings. It was also mentioned that the Greek EU Presidency will be reserving half of the ministerial level meeting on this matter.

67. In the light of the content of the policy, ECDC's role was questioned, as based on the text, ECDC was responsible for ensuring the monitoring of the Dublin Declaration, which does not fall under the remit of the Centre. The Commission's representative confirmed that this is indeed an activity not included in the mandate but entrusted to ECDC. This might also come up for the Work Programmes to see whether it is possible in the future. It will also depend on the available resources, this is linked

### ***Item 17d – Short update on TATFAR\****

68. John F Ryan, Member, European Commission, updated the Board on the Transatlantic Taskforce on Antimicrobial Resistance (TATFAR),<sup>17</sup> which is collaboration between the EU and US. As part of this process, TATFAR has adopted 17 recommendations for strengthening the collaboration. Based on the review of progress of the implementation of these recommendations, the mandate of the taskforce has been extended by two more years. Overall, the work done under the taskforce is complimentary in the context of other initiatives on antimicrobial resistance (AMR). It was also highlighted that the role of ECDC has been central in the process.

69. Anita Janelm, Alternate, Sweden, pointed out that Sweden takes specific interest in this issue as it was initiated during the Swedish EU Presidency. The work of the taskforce is much appreciated and it is positive to see that many more initiatives on this matter are developed. As the Council is the full member of the TATFAR, it would be appreciated if the Commission and ECDC, who are operationally involved, would provide information to the Council more regularly.

The Management Board took note of the presentations made by the European Commission.

### **Item 5 – Proposal for the future development of ESCAIDE (Document MB30/14)\***

70. Andrea Ammon, Head of Resource Management and Coordination Unit, ECDC, presented the proposal for the future development of ESCAIDE, as was requested during the last Management Board meeting.<sup>18</sup>

71. The Board members highlighted the importance of the conference and pointed out that beyond the costs, the added value the event provides to the Member States and the EU as a whole should be taken into consideration.

72. In reference to the presentation, it was questioned whether ECDC has considered a third model of arranging ESCAIDE in countries where the public health functions need further encouragement and where networking would provide the greatest value for that MS but also at the EU level. This would also avoid a mere rotation system, which is less efficient and not achievable. It happens that these countries could allow lower costs for the organisation and logistics of ESCAIDE. It was also queried whether there was any feedback from the attendees available. Considering the presented figures and maps, it was noted that it may still be better to convene the meetings outside Stockholm considering the participation rates of different country representatives in comparison with ESCAIDE in Stockholm versus another Member State. Considering the practical arrangements, it was suggested to look into specialised service providers. It was felt that an evaluation on the impact of ESCAIDE on the skills of epidemiologists at national level should be conducted.

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\* Item for information.

<sup>17</sup> Item 17d - COM update AMR TATFAR.

\* Item for decision.

<sup>18</sup> Item 5 - MB30 ESCAIDE.



73. In reference to the budget breakdown of ESCAIDE as presented, one question was raised about the cost related to the EPIET fellows which is probably already included into the EPIET budget, and if so, it should not be counted twice. Further on the costs, it was suggested to also look at other initiatives provided by ECDC which could perhaps be combined with the conference. Overall, the MB members concurred that the costs differences are not as significant as compared to the added value provided.

74. Based on the participation figures, the European Commission representative concluded that it seems that some countries can only afford to participate in the conference when it is arranged in their country. Moreover, to date, due to the associated costs, we have not been able to ensure that all EU countries could really benefit from the event and participate therein. Questions which the Board should reflect equate to the budget, notwithstanding the high level of ECDC staff attending ESCAIDE in Stockholm and the possible consequences in case the Centre will no longer support this event. It was noted that a future EU Presidency may wish to arrange this conference instead in order to highlight the communicable diseases, and this may be one of the possible solutions, considering the potentially higher financial support provided to Presidencies.

75. While reflecting on the questions and comments provided by the Board, ECDC responded that it has to be clarified what ESCAIDE is supposed to be, keeping in mind the comments on EPIET MS-track, combined with other ECDC initiatives. Considering the attendees, would the benefit of the conference be higher if it was arranged in respective home countries? The evaluation of ESCAIDE in terms of skills at national level is not possible to be carried out by ECDC. Related to the costs, it was confirmed that, overall, EPIET costs include participation in the conference; thus the costs presented only reflect the part related to ESCAIDE. ECDC staff attendance at the event is more significant when abroad as staff members would be on mission for the whole duration of the conference, as opposed to only attending the relevant sessions when in Stockholm. The investment of ECDC in this conference has to be examined. The overwhelming feedback from participants and other stakeholders is considered very important. In case an EU Presidency was interested in arranging ESCAIDE, the Centre would be open for this. In reference to the follow up on the trainees, it has been confirmed that the majority remain within the public health sector in the EU. However, it should be kept in mind that ESCAIDE represents only a part of the training for the EPIET fellows.

76. ECDC Director highlighted that ESCAIDE is to be considered one of the most significant achievements of the Centre and thus the proposal only reflects the efforts to rationalise the conference and its associated expenses. The question is not whether ECDC should continue with ESCAIDE. In case the MB supports convening the conference in another country where there is a need and it will be cheaper, ECDC will be open to such proposal.

77. The Chair stated that the Board may need to rate ESCAIDE in comparison to other activities and thus work in more detail with this item. It can be concluded that the MB feels uncomfortable with the fact that lower income countries are not presented and thus it should also be looked at whether this is a priority to the Member States and whether the current organisation meets the objective of networking.

78. It was proposed by one of the members to keep the first model proposed for 2014 and not take a decision on the overall proposal, allowing ECDC to discuss the comments from the Board and additionally wait for the external evaluation results regarding this specific item, which are due by the end of 2014. The MB could therefore receive further info on this during the June meeting and make the final decision in November. On the issue of costs, it was suggested to clarify that there would be no additional costs involved if the conference was arranged by another country and that ECDC would be still the one subsidising the costs.

79. Clarification was provided that the Board should only decide on where to arrange ESCAIDE and not whether to continue with the event, even though the proposed second model would result in ECDC no longer 'owning' the conference. The European Commission pointed out that ESCAIDE is neither the core mission of ECDC nor a legal obligation of ECDC. The added value of the event, if applicable, may remain the same in case another entity arranges the conference. Therefore, it is vital to ensure that the right questions are asked while evaluating this matter. Using tax payer's money needs to be clearly justified in hard facts. In response to the added value issue, it was recalled by one of the Board members that the conference supports applied infectious disease epidemiology and activities carried out by ECDC and the Member States. There is no other conference similar to

ESCAIDE and there is no other organisation than ECDC to sponsor such an event, which is not a research event, but clearly public about public health and applied infectious disease epidemiology.

80. The Chair concluded the discussion and encouraged the Member States to elaborate on their comments and questions related to ESCAIDE and submit these in order to better prepare for future discussions. Issues such as added value and importance for countries should be considered.

The Management Board agreed that the organisation of ESCAIDE will remain as per the first model of the proposal.

A final decision on the future of ESCAIDE will be postponed until ECDC has received the results of the external evaluation, as well as provide the Board with a third model based on the received comments.

## **Item 16 – ECDC International Relations Policy (2014-2020)** *(Document MB30/7)\**

81. Maarit Kokki, Head of Section, International Relations and Senior Advisor, Director's Office, ECDC, presented the ECDC International Relations Policy 2014-2020.<sup>19</sup>

82. The Board members noted that the Centre's impact outside the EU is increasing, and therefore ensuring good collaboration with the neighbouring countries is very important. An example of MediPIET was pointed out. It was queried whether ECDC has ever considered inviting any of the succession countries to take part in the regular ECDC country visits. In reference to the activities with the non-EU countries, it was asked to clarify where the funds for such work are taken from. Considering the previous discussions on the Work Programme, it was also highlighted that the international relations policy should be addressed, including the ranking of priorities.

83. The success of collaboration with the non-EU countries was also praised by the Commission. Such collaboration enables a satisfactory overview of the actual situation in different countries, rather than simply ensuring that the relevant legislation is being implemented on paper. Additionally, ECDC has been able to mobilise assistance where needed, for instance, during the developments of the Arab Spring or the natural catastrophe in Haiti. The Centre has also been successful in ensuring close links with the WHO/Europe and WHO Geneva.

84. In response to the questions raised, the Board was informed that currently the country assessment teams are composed of ECDC staff, Member State experts and the Commission; however, the idea of including experts from the non-EU countries will be taken into consideration for the future. The financing for the work with the Enlargement and ENP Countries emanating from the Commission grants. Assessments are partly paid from the core budget.

The Management Board took note and greatly supported the ECDC International Relations Policy 2014-2020.

## **Item 15 – Improving performance: ECDC initiatives on quality management** *(Document MB30/14)\**

85. Due to time constraints, this item was not discussed.

\* Item for guidance.

<sup>19</sup> Item 16 - International Relations Policy 2014-2020.

\* Item for information.

## **Item 10 – Update from the Working Group on New Business Models and Financing of Large-scale EU Level Activities\***

86. Due to time constraints, this item was not discussed in detail. However, Anne-Catherine Viso, Alternate, France, and Chair of the Working Group, pointed out that the presence of the European Commission and EMA representatives at the next meeting(s) is required in order to progress further.

## **Item 18 – Any other business**

87. The Chair, Françoise Weber, thanked all the participants for their input and fruitful discussions during the meeting. The Chair also thanked the colleagues of ECDC for their outstanding professionalism throughout the meeting. Last but not least, a special thank you was extended to the interpreters for their expert assistance.

88. The next meeting of the ECDC Management Board will convene in Stockholm on 17-18 June 2014.

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\* Item for information.