



ECDC Management Board

Minutes of the Second Extraordinary Meeting of the ECDC Management Board Stockholm, 20 January 2015

Adopted by the Management Board at its Thirty-third meeting, 24-25 March 2015

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Summary of Proceedings – ECDC Management Board Meeting

The Second Extraordinary meeting of the ECDC Management Board (MB) convened in Stockholm, Sweden, on 20 January 2015. During the meeting, the Management Board:

- ❖ agreed to postpone the discussions on the recommendations from the second independent external evaluation until June 2015;
- ❖ agreed to postpone the discussion and subsequent adoption of the revised Rules of Procedure until after the recruitment procedure for the ECDC Director is finalised;
- ❖ adopted the proposed draft programme excluding the item on the revised Rules of Procedure;
- ❖ adopted the draft minutes of the Thirty-second meeting of the Management Board (18-19 November 2014);
- ❖ adopted the proposal made by the ECDC on the Work Programme 2015 with a caveat made by the Netherlands;
- ❖ took note of the discussion paper on public health training;
- ❖ agreed that the first draft of the final public health training strategy would be presented to the Board in June 2015;
- ❖ took note of the Fifth Supplementary and Amending Budget 2014;
- ❖ decided that the proxies and proxy voting will be accepted during the elections of the ECDC Director;
- ❖ agreed that the count of eligible votes will be based on all Members of the ECDC Management Board as opposed to attending delegates only;
- ❖ decided that the countries with observer status, i.e. Iceland and Norway, will be present during the interviews, as well as the ECDC Legal Advisor and the ECDC Corporate Governance Section representatives;
- ❖ agreed that the elections will be planned for Day 2 of the meeting, i.e. 25 March 2015;
- ❖ requested a closed session to take place on 24 March, prior to the elections;
- ❖ took note of the Second face-to-face meeting of the MB External Evaluation Recommendations Drafting Group on 23 March 2015.

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 Second Extraordinary meeting of the Management Board. In the light of the recent horrific events in Paris, France, the Chair expressed her gratitude towards all the countries who have offered tremendous support during these difficult times in order to protect the freedom of speech.
2. In reference to the Annual Declarations of Interests, the Chair stressed the importance of duly completing and submitting them and informed that delegates who had not done so would be approached by ECDC dedicated staff members during the morning in order to meet the requirements.
3. Apologies had been received from Austria, Cyprus, Croatia, Greece, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Romania, Slovak Republic and European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (Line Matthiessen-Guyader, Member, had given proxy to Martin Seychell, Member, European Commission, DG SANTÉ). Further to proxy arrangements, the Board was informed that Slovak Republic had given their proxy to Czech Republic.
4. In reference to the First meeting of the MB External Evaluation Recommendations Drafting Group, which had been held during the previous day, 19 January 2015, Daniel Reynders, Member, Belgium, and Chair of the Drafting Group, informed the Board that based on the conclusions from the meeting, the discussions on the recommendations from the evaluation should be postponed from the March meeting until June. This was accepted by the MB. Additionally, the Drafting Group had agreed to have an additional face-to-face meeting on 23 March 2015.

Welcome from the Director, ECDC

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

Adoption of the draft programme (and noting the declarations of interest and proxy voting, if any) (*Document MB Extraordinary 2/01 Rev.2*)*

6. In reference to the IAS Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2014-2016, which was initially proposed to be discussed in January, the Board was informed that as it is preferable that the ECDC Audit Committee discuss the document prior to MB, it was proposed to postpone this item until the March meeting. Of note, the document in question had not reached ECDC at the time of the January meeting.
7. Additionally, upon request from the ECDC Director, an item on the ECDC contribution to the fight against Ebola in West Africa had been added into the meeting programme. Relevant information, including a letter on this matter, had been previously submitted via email correspondence on 9 January 2015.¹
8. Lastly, reference was made to the email correspondence from the European Commission, dated 16 January 2015, with the request to remove the item on the Revised Rules of Procedure of the ECDC Management Board from the draft programme. Based on this request, the Board was provided with a revised version of the draft programme, excluding the above-mentioned item. The representative of the European Commission provided additional explanations on this matter, stating that it was unwise to discuss the Rules of Procedure (RoP) during the recruitment process for the ECDC Director as this could severely jeopardise the legality of the election process, as elements of the voting are included in the RoP. Thus, it was proposed to discuss the RoP once the election process is duly finalised. Alternatively, the Board could vote on Article 2 of the revised RoP, regarding the Appointment of the Director, while the application would be suspended until after the election of the ECDC Director. However, this would be a difficult process and would be unacceptable from a legal point of view as it would signal that the MB is not pleased with the current procedure and has agreed to change them, even though only after the recruitment process is finalised. It is vital that all of the applicants in the recruitment process would

* Item for decision.

¹ Please refer to email correspondence, dated 9 January 2015 (DIR-2015-OUT-0016-MSSiMa)

have the legal certainty as to what basis the procedure will operate. The example of the recent court case against the Commission and the European Medicines Agency was brought out and it was noted that in case the Board agrees to postpone the discussions on the RoP, it would allow the Commission to suggest any changes which would result from the above noted court case. The Chair supported the Commission and added that the Board should not allow for any failure in the recruitment process for the ECDC Director.

9. The matter of proxies and proxy voting was raised by the MB. The Chair of the Working Group on the RoP, Anita Janelm (Alternate, Sweden), noted that in the revised RoP, the procedure of proxies and voting by proxy has been further clarified. For example, voting by proxy during a secret ballot is not permitted in accordance with the revised rules. The representative of the Commission advised that the procedure from past elections should be followed, including the proxy voting, in order to not take any unnecessary risks during the recruitment procedure. Many of the Board Members agreed with this view. Regarding proxies, some of the Members expressed that it was unfortunate that this matter was not yet put to rest, considering the amount of work which has been undertaken over the years. Additionally, it was stated that proxies should in any case be an exception as all Members should ensure their attendance in all meetings. Considering the recruitment of ECDC Director, it was also felt that voting by proxy without attending the meeting, i.e. without following the interview process, is rather difficult. It was also queried how the MB should handle possible issues which might arise during the actual election day. In this regard, it was proposed to refer to the minutes/decisions from past meetings where elections have taken place in order to be prepared as much as possible, even though it is realised that the Board cannot predict every single situation which may occur. In case a new unexpected issue arises, the MB needs to make a decision on the spot.

10. The Chair requested to circulate the minutes from the 2010 March meeting for the closed session later in the morning. Additionally, it was requested to clarify the vote count during the election. The postponement of the revised Rules of Procedure was thereafter put on a vote, there were no objections.

11. In reference to the proposed draft programme which already excluded the item on the revised Rules of Procedure, it was requested to clarify the decision on the adoption of the draft programme. It was also noted that the Board should agree on the items to be included/excluded from the meeting agenda.

12. The Board members were requested to state any additional declarations of interests in connection with the revised draft programme, if applicable. None were declared.

The Board unanimously agreed to postpone the discussion and subsequent adoption of the revised Rules of Procedure until after the recruitment procedure for the ECDC Director is finalised.

The Management Board adopted the proposed draft programme excluding the item on the revised Rules of Procedure.

Adoption of the draft minutes of the 32nd meeting of the Management Board (Stockholm, 18-19 November 2014) (Document MB Extraordinary 2/02)*

13. In reference to the draft minutes from the previous meeting, a comment was made on the lack of content under the item on Budget and Establishment Table 2015. It was explained that as the ECDC Audit Committee had previously discussed this matter in great detail, reference can be made to the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting(s) which are available to all MB Members via the [MB Extranet](#) (upon the adoption of same at every subsequent meeting). As there are often no comments or questions (followed by a lengthy discussion) from the MB on the financial matters, this also explains the shortness of the relevant paragraphs in the minutes.

The Management Board adopted the draft minutes of the Thirty-second meeting of the Management Board (18-19 November 2014).

* Item for decision.

ECDC Work Programme 2015 & consequences of Ebola outbreak^{2*} (Document MB Extraordinary 2/03 Rev.1)

14. Marc Sprenger, ECDC Director, gave a presentation on the ECDC Work Programme 2015 and consequences of the Ebola outbreak.³ The last meeting of the Board was recalled, where the Work Programme 2015 was previously discussed, with a caveat that due to the current Ebola crisis, further amendments in the programme might be necessary. The ECDC Director highlighted the visit of Commissioner Andriukaitis to ECDC on 11 December 2014, during which Ebola was high on the agenda. The Director also noted the urgent requests the Centre has received from both Zsuzsanna Jakab, the Director of the World Health Organisation's Regional Office for Europe, as well as from Thomas R Frieden, the Director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), on the need for French-speaking experts. The Board was also presented with the provisional results from the 2014 Work Programme demonstrating 85% of expected outputs fully achieved, even considering the additional work carried out on the Ebola crisis. Only about 5% of the expected outputs had been cancelled or postponed to 2015. Considering the Ebola outbreak, the ECDC, along with the Commission and other relevant parties, have been developing an action plan in order to support the efforts in West Africa. As the initial plan included a cost estimation of 700 000 EUR, the Centre revised the plan and decreased the number of ECDC staff by including EPIET fellows to be deployed together with the ECDC experts. As the Centre is already paying for the EPIET fellows, there is no additional financial burden. As it is not possible to quantify precisely the consequences of sending three ECDC senior experts to the field, it is believed that there will be no further impact on the latest Work Programme for 2015. A video from West Africa, filmed by ECDC, was shown to the Board in order to demonstrate the work on the field. The need for planning, training, strategy, coordination, leadership, etc., was highlighted. A special thanks was extended to Portugal for having expressed an interest to provide assistance.

15. The Chair stated that the Board would need to agree on the involvement of ECDC in this very important mission, however, the balance between ECDC's work as opposed to all other organisations on-site needs to be considered, to avoid any overlapping of activities, as well as the balance with other activities carried out in the Centre. The ECDC Director referred to the latest correspondence, dated 9 and 19 January 2015 on this matter, including the updated plan resulting in no further impact on the ECDC budget.

16. In reference to the deployment plan, the Centre was asked how the funding of travel and people's life on the ground has been solved. It was also queried how many French-speaking epidemiologists are currently on the ground as well as what are the plans for the future in this matter. The position of the Health Security Committee (HSC) was questioned as well.

17. Overall, the Members strongly supported ECDC's initiative and the deployment plan, noting that even though the actual work might be carried out in Africa, the gained experience and its educational value is a great contribution for the EU. As the Centre also has a role for health threats, which could enter into the EU community, it is very important that ECDC is playing a full part in this outbreak.

18. With respect to the Health Security Committee, it was pointed out that the new decision on the cross-border health threats has been put into use in a formal way for the first time in connection with the current crisis by the identification of alerts which were communicated by the Member States via EWRS and it has worked very well. A comment was also made on the common case definition used in order to maintain a common basis for the reporting. Additionally, the HSC has been reviewing imported cases as well as it has taken the responsibility for the arrangements for the imported patients, suspected or confirmed. One of the more political issues examined by the HSC is the entry and exit screening. The issue of hospital-acquired infections has also come up following the imported case in Spain, causing much concern among the medical staff, and in connection to this, a joint procurement initiative has been launched for personal protective equipment. ECDC is contributing to the tender specifications for such equipment. Regarding vaccine development, the European Medicines Agency and the DG RTD are strongly involved in this, trying to bring together the different clinical trials. In terms of public information, a video available in all community languages has been developed in collaboration with the Commission and WHO and has been submitted to the HSC. Under the Latvian EU

² Please refer to email correspondence, dated 9 January 2015 (DIR-2015-OUT-0016-MSSiMa)

* Item for decision.

³ WP 2015 and consequences of Ebola (M Sprenger)

Presidency, there will be a discussions on the lessons to be learned during the formal Council, followed up by several workshops arranged under the Luxembourg Presidency.

19. In reference to the ECDC Work Programme for 2015, it was questioned whether the activities which are cancelled or postponed have been discussed with the Commission. Also, it was queried which criteria had been used in order to prioritise some activities over others. In reference to requests from the Commission on support to coordination of ECDC polio work and EU assessment visit to Turkey added in December 2014, which had led to lower priority to other activities previously discussed with the Board, it was questioned how such requests are dealt with.

20. It was confirmed that all relevant information is always discussed with the Commission, even considering that the Work Programme might sometimes change during the year. In reference to new/additional requests from the Commission, it was noted that the Centre was prepared for this in consideration of the appointment of the new Commissioner for Health and Food Safety. The ECDC Chief Scientist clarified that, with regards to prioritisation of activities, that the Centre focuses on looking at a number of requests from the Advisory Forum and the National Focal Points in order to pinpoint the areas where more assistance from ECDC is required. Additionally, there are regular meetings with the European Commission held monthly in order to exchange information. With regards to postponing activities, it is aimed to postpone items which have been originally scheduled to be undertaken in the second half of the year, in order to minimise the impact. Less ideal procedure for prioritisation of activities refers to review of staff members not present to carry out the work due to the Ebola crisis.

21. The representative of the Commission stated that overall, the proposed amendments in the Work Programme 2015 are rather minor in nature and that it is believed that the Centre can deliver the majority of the work, some activities with delays. In reference to AMR, particularly the initiation of the evaluation of existing HAI prevention and control guidelines to develop the toolbox of essential control options and interventions to prevent and control HAIs, it is felt that this should be maintained, even if some other elements of the AMR work are delayed. Concerning the HIV, sexually transmitted infections and viral hepatitis, the Commission considers that the work on hepatitis should be maintained. In reference to Vaccine Preventable Diseases, the proposal made by the ECDC can be accepted, except for the surveillance standards for VPD in the Annual Epidemiological Report. Considering the work on polio and the assessment of Turkey mentioned before, it was noted that the changes related to polio were made in connection with the Italian EU Presidency, also taking into account the report of the Committee of the WHO Regional Office for Europe as well as the Council's conclusions on immunisation. As regards to the assessment visit to Turkey, this had already been previously planned and subsequently delayed due to security issues. Based on the current advice on security matters, the Commission had proposed for ECDC to take this on board again. On behalf of ECDC, it was further clarified that in reference to AMR, the work will start this year and only some of the milestones will be postponed until 2016. The activity on hepatitis is cancelled, however, there are discussions with the new Commissioner regarding the actual activities and support needed from the ECDC in the future, and there is willingness from the Centre's side to revisit this matter. In reference to VPD, the work with the surveillance standards is actually carried out by the human resources from the surveillance core activities and thus the VPD resources will be used for other activities.

22. In response to a comment whether the ECDC Advisory Forum has had the opportunity to discuss these matters, the ECDC Director noted that there was unfortunately no time during the last AF meeting in December 2014, which was conducted via audio conference.

23. The Board agreed to adopt the proposal for the Work Programme 2015; however, it was declared that the Netherlands is not satisfied with the clarifications received during the discussions, mainly on the item of prioritising polio on the cost of pertussis as well as the postponement of AMR activities. The ECDC agreed to look into possibilities to further amendments considering this request.

The Board adopted the proposal made by the ECDC on the Work Programme 2015 with a caveat made by the Netherlands.

Timeline and process for nomination of ECDC Director 2015-2020*

24. This session was closed for the members of the Management Board only.

* Item for decision.

Discussion paper on public health training*

25. Karl Ekdahl, Head of Public Health Capacity and Communication Unit, ECDC, presented the item on public health training, including the comments received from the written consultation conducted in December 2014.⁴ The Members who had not responded to the written consultation were encouraged to submit their comments.

26. In reference to the question of whether to have an agreed "standard" for the number of trained specialists in the Member States to guide ECDC and national training efforts, it was felt that while in principle, it is agreed that some form of training needs analysis could be very helpful, there should not be an agreed standard for the number of specialists, as countries have very different systems, making it difficult to make any comparisons. It was also opined that it is not within the EU remit to create such standards. Additionally, as the training programmes offer such qualitative results, the focus should not be on the quantitative aspects. In terms of ECDC shifting its training resources towards "prioritised" Member States with the largest identified gaps (less own resources), both EPIET and EUPHEM programmes are highly valued in building a network of public health specialists across Europe as well as supporting the countries to build their capacities and in reference to prioritisation of countries, this would really depend on the aim of the programme; however, it was felt overall that the ECDC-run training programmes would be complementary rather than replacing training at country level or trying to supplement lack of capacity in Member States. It was proposed that further discussions on public health training strategy as a whole might be needed, between public health authorities for training in the Member States and all other focal points already involved in the programmes. The issue of brain-drain was brought out. It was suggested for ECDC to investigate other EU training programmes in order to see which practical arrangements are made in order to ensure that people will stay/return to their home countries. In reference to shifting from EU-track to MS-track fellows in order to expand the programme, it was highlighted that administrative and financial restrictions in the Member States should be carefully considered and be a strong part of the strategy. It was noted that the results of the second independent external evaluation should also be taken into account as its recommendations will most likely have an impact on the strategy.

27. Overall, it was agreed that the training programmes are more for the networks rather than for filling in gaps in the individual Member States. The ECDC assured that all the comments received will be duly taken on board. As the current document is only a discussion paper aimed to point out some of the issues which need to be addressed, the Centre will work further on this matter in order to develop a comprehensive strategy. A first draft is planned for the June 2015 MB meeting, followed by further discussions and thereafter the finalised strategy could be tabled for adoption in the November meeting.

The Board took note of the discussion paper on public health training.

A first draft of the final public health training strategy will be presented to the Board in June 2015.

Fifth Supplementary and Amending Budget 2014* (*Document MB Extraordinary 2/04 Rev.1*)

28. Anja Van Brabant, Accounting Officer and Head of Section, Finance and Accounting, Resource Management and Coordination Unit, presented the Fifth Supplementary and Amending Budget for 2014.⁵

The Board took note of the Fifth Supplementary and Amending Budget 2014.

Any other business

29. In reference to the closed session discussions earlier during the meeting, the Chair concluded that the Board decided, after receiving legal advice from the Commission and taking into account the proceedings in 2010, that the proxies and proxy voting will be accepted during the elections of the

* Item for information.

⁴ Discussion paper on public health training (K Ekdahl)

* Item for information.

⁵ Fifth Supplementary and Amending Budget 2014 (A V Brabant)

ECDC Director. The Board also agreed, based on the Founding Regulation, that the count of eligible votes will be based on all Members of the ECDC Management Board as opposed to attending delegates only. Additionally, it was decided that the countries with observer status, i.e. Iceland and Norway, will be present during the interviews, as well as the ECDC Legal Advisor and the ECDC Corporate Governance Section representatives. The Chair also noted that the Board has requested another closed session to occur on 24 March, prior to the elections. It was agreed that the elections will be planned for Day 2 of the meeting, i.e. 25 March.

30. The Chair thanked the Board for their commitment and useful inputs. A special thanks was also extended to ECDC colleagues and interpreters for their excellent work.

31. The ECDC Director recalled the annual stakeholder survey, launched on 16 January 2015, and urged everyone to respond accordingly.

32. The next meeting of the Management Board, including the election of the ECDC Director, will be held during 24-26 March 2015. Additionally, the MB External Evaluation Recommendations Drafting Group will hold their second face-to-face meeting on 23 March 2015.

33. The meeting was adjourned.

Annex: List of Participants

Country/Organisation	Representative	Status
Belgium	Daniel Reynders	Member
Bulgaria	Angel Kunchev	Member
Czech Republic	Roman Prymula	Member
Denmark	Dorte Hansen Thrige	Alternate
Estonia	Tiiu Aro (<i>Deputy Chair</i>)	Member
Finland	Anni Virolainen-Julkunen	Member
France	Françoise Weber (<i>Chair</i>)	Member
	Anne-Catherine Viso	Alternate
Germany	Susanne Wald	Member
	Gesa Lücking	Alternate
Hungary	Hanna Páva	Member
Ireland	Colette Bonner	Member
Italy	Maria Grazia Pompa	Alternate
Latvia	Dzintars Mozgis	Alternate
Lithuania	Audrius Ščeponavičius	Member
Luxembourg	Robert Goerens	Member
Malta	Mariella Borg Buontempo	Alternate
Netherlands	Marianne Donker	Member
	Herbert Barnard	Alternate
Poland	Pawel Gorynski	Member
Portugal	Paula Vasconcelos	Alternate
Slovenia	Mojca Gobec	Member
Spain	Karoline Fernández de la Hoz	Member
Sweden	Johan Carlson	Member
	Anita Janelm	Alternate
United Kingdom	Helen Shirley-Quirk	Member

Country/Organisation	Representative	Status
European Parliament		
	Minerva-Melpomeni Malliori	Member
	Jacques Scheres	Member
European Commission		
	John F Ryan	Member
	Martin Seychell	Member
EEA Countries		
Norway	Sverre Berg Lutnæs	Member