

Welcome 2014!!!

With a smile

A spirit of giving

A sense of humanity

A pledge to spread

peace and happiness!



Editorial

Dear EAN Friends,

We would like to welcome the New Year with our much awaited winter newsletter!

We have included updates from ESCAIDE 2013 in Stockholm and some more updates from our community. Our two new EAN board members are introducing themselves, while Lorenzo Pezzoli, aka "il Presidente" has written a note from his heart, to the new Madam President and EAN.

We also have a "Story from the field": two Spanish epidemiologists, sending us news from Philippines!

A very interesting article, regarding Scam Journals, has been written by one of our members, who unfortunately happened to have this very unpleasant experience.

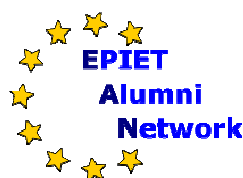
Lastly we have an open call for our newly established Editorial Team, an invitation to a secret party, and a reminder for the renewal of your EAN membership fees!

Your board sends to you and your family wishes for a healthy, prosperous, full of beautiful adventures and success, New Year!

Enjoy the read!

Yours,

The EAN Board



Board

President

Naomi Boxall

Vice-President

Arnaud Le Menach

Treasurer

Giovanna Jaramillo Gutierrez

Treasurer

Javiera Rebolledo

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Secretary

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Travel Grants

As every year, EAN provides travel grants to new researchers in order that they to be able to come to ESCAIDE and present the results of their work,

This year, EAN used resources derived directly from membership fees, from ECDC/ETSF crowdsourcing and from one donor (that wishes to remain anonymous). Also, special thanks to people who offered accommodation solutions to our grant receivers (particularly to Tarik Derrough for his contribution)!

Grant recipients and titles.

Ramesh Allam (India)

Survival probability and predictors of mortality among patients enrolled for first-line antiretroviral therapy (ART), Andhra Pradesh, India, 2008-2011

Predictors of First line Anti-retroviral Therapy (ART) Failure among HIV infected adults, Andhra Pradesh, India, 2008-2011

Saindou Bel Ali Mbae (Unions des Comores)

Food-poisoning outbreak and fatality following ingestion of sea-turtle meat in the rural community of Ndrondroni, Mohéli Island, Comoros, December 2013

Thanks to Epiconcent, including Marta Valenciano and Thomas Seyler

Cirit Osman (Turkey)

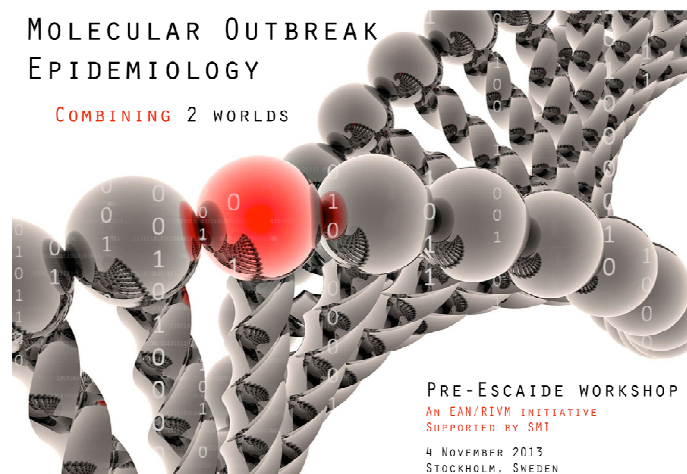
Microorganisms isolated from blood samples and their antimicrobial susceptibilities (poster)

Mini EAN Module “Molecular Outbreak Epidemiology”

by Remko Enserink

On the 4th of November, the day preceding the ESCAIDE 2013, the EAN and the Dutch Institute of Public Health (RIVM) organized a joint workshop on 'Molecular Outbreak Epidemiology'. The goal of the workshop was to, using R, get familiar with a recently propose method to analyze the dynamics of an infectious disease outbreak where epidemiological and genetic data were combined. During the first, theoretical part of the workshop, the general methods behind combining epidemiological and microbiological data were explained in two short lectures given by Professor Dr. Fernando Conzalez Candelas (University of Valencia, Spain) and Dr. Steen Ethelberg (SSI, Copenhagen). In the second, practical part of the workshop, Dr. Rolf Ypma (Cambridge University, Cambridge) and Dr. Thibaut Jombart (Imperial College, London) guided participants to use R on their own laptop to explore the proposed methodology using a manual provided. The workshop brought together the worlds of the population geneticist, microbiologist, epidemiologist and mathematician and considered a great success by the organizers and the 25 participants and speakers.

EAN would like to encourage its members to communicate and develop ideas for future workshops and seminars just like Remko did!



Congratulations



Oral and Poster Prize

The EAN assigns a prize at ESCAIDE for the two presentations (one oral and one poster) that are most effective in transmitting a public health message. This year's winners were:

Best oral presentation

Unprotected casual sex equally common with local and western partners among long-term Dutch travellers to (sub)tropical countries, respectively

Jane Whelan, the Netherlands

Best poster presentation:

Immunization related behavior among Health Care Workers in Europe - Results of the HProImmune survey

Agoritsa Baka, Greece

A big thanks to our judges-volunteers for their contribution and devotion!

Photo Contest

This year EAN run the 2nd photo contest during ESCAIDE, open to all conference attendees! The photos were displayed during the conference and all attendees were asked to vote for their preferred picture.

Ioannis Karagiannis won the 1st prize with

"Waiting to be interviewed"



EAN Drinks & Dinner Night!

We would like to thank all our members who joined us for the EAN Drinks & Dinner Night at Vapiano's in Central Stockholm, the night preceding ESCAIDE.

It is always great to see "old faces" and meet the new ones!

After this last BIG success, we decided to through another Drinks & Dinner party!



This time it will take place *in London, on Saturday 14th of March 2013!* The location is secret!

If you are interested in joining us, DO send us an email to eanboard@gmail.com, to found out the secret meeting location and more hot details! Shhhh....

EAN Democracy!

During 2013 EAN GA, we sadly said goodbye to two of our old members. Lorenzo Pezzoli, who served EAN as president for the last 4 years and Christopher Williams, Treasurer, who has been on the EAN board since 2007!

A big welcome to our new members Naomi and Javiera! We asked them to introduce themselves to the rest of the family! EAN board, now consist of 5 women and 1 men!

New President: Naomi Boxall

Several years have elapsed since I finished my EPIET fellowship, undertaken at the SZU in Prague (ahem, Cohort 2005) during which I 'returned' to the HPA, working both centrally and regionally. I'm a NewZealander/british scientist – originally studying biochem/gen/mol bio – gaining a PhD in Veterinary Epidemiology in NZ. My career continues to reflect the multifaceted public health world; I recently started at Mapi – a contract research organisation who conduct post-marketing studies examining effect and safety of drugs. Through my recent iterations; I've benefited hugely from EPIET, not only in terms of the training I received, but the forever-network it creates. As your new president; I endeavour to help instigate the re-invigoration of this diverse disparate group enmeshing the intellectually curious and emotionally brave individuals I'm thrilled to have met, worked alongside and consider to be some of my closest friends. Onwards together: let's do this thing.



New Treasurer: Javiera Rebolledo

I am a Chilean/Belgian vet, I grew up and studied Veterinary Medicine in Chili, after that went back to Belgium and I did my Master in Public Health at the Université libre of Brussels. After two enriching and eventful years at the Health Protection and Surveillance Centre in Dublin, I graduated from EPIET in 2012 (cohort 16). Before EPIET I worked for a couple of years at the Belgian Scientific Institute of Public Health, where I came back to work after my fellowship. Being an EPIET fellow was an extremely important step in my professional and personal growth. I enjoyed it a lot as well as being part of the EPIET network. I believe the EAN is a great platform for sharing experiences, knowledge and to keep the EPIET/EUPHEM/FETP network alive. As treasurer, I would like to contribute to the great work the network has done up to now by supporting and reinforcing (with a Latin touch J) its current activities and specially the financial activities. I am looking forward to working with you all!!





Dear Madam President,

Some weeks ago, while we were sitting next to each other at ESCAIDE, you asked my advice on your new role as chair of the EAN. I probably blabbed something confusing, as usual. The fact is that I do not really know what it is necessary to be a good president.

Since then, while walking with a dog named Flai in the frosty Piedmontese countryside like a proper retiree, I have repeatedly asked myself this question. How to be a good president? And you know what? I did not get an answer. Not even from the dog. Then I realized that maybe this was not the right question in the first place.

So, I have been asking myself what is the EAN, instead. Is it an organization? An association? A confederation? A society? A league? A club? A tribe? It is maybe a bit of all of this. But it was not necessary to look that hard in the Google thesaurus to find out what EAN especially is. It's in our name. EAN is a network.

I don't think that this definition was chosen randomly by our founders back in 2001. We are in fact a group of people who are connected by work. But is it just our job or is there something more that connects us?

Still walking with the dog in my homeland, I suddenly remembered something that I had studied long ago at school. The German concept of *heimat*. What was *heimat* again? I could not remember exactly. So again I went to Google. Wikipedia says: "*Heimat* (pronounced ['haimat]) is a German word with no English equivalent that denotes the relationship of a human being towards a certain spatial social unit".

So what connects all of us members of the network? It's not simply work, intended as a job, since we all have many different jobs, it is something broader, it is ensuring public health. If we forget for a moment about geography, it's our field that "certain spatial social unit" that connects us.

In that sense EAN is not very different from a state. From a practical point of view, our EAN state originates in the identification from all us citizens in a common good. So the real question is not how can one be a good president, but really how can one be a good citizen.

Another name of network is synergy, which comes from the Greek as the composition of *ἔργον* (work), the same word that is in energy, and *σύν* (together). A synergy is

the entity where the sum of all individual parts is greater than the total. So first and foremost in a network, one has to be a good element capable of interacting with other elements to achieve something greater.

To find answers to your ESCAIDE questions, in my retirement, I have recently browsed Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws* (great title by the way) and I came across to this sentence: "The strength of individuals cannot be united without a conjunction of all their wills". So, how can we join all our wills as EAN members? Here is again is where I am grateful to our founding fathers and mothers who as first EAN board, back in 2001 in Veyrier, laid down the EAN Statutes.

The "conjunction of our wills" is in the Statutes. They tell us the objectives of EAN and how to achieve them. What a wonderful tool, which is not set in stone, but, as the conjunction of our wills, can be modified and adapted democratically if the will changes.

So, Mrs President, I am not sure if I was a good president or not, but at least I have tried to be a good EAN citizen. Every time that I had a doubt about EAN's will, I went back to the statutes and also tried to listen to the will of my fellow citizens.

To sum-up all these walks with the dog and all this googling, my advice to you and to all EAN citizens is simple: listen.

Listen to the statutes. Most of the time you will realize that the answer is already there (like for example, the excellent suggestion of creating working groups of EAN members to alleviate the work of the EAN board, which was discussed at the last GA).

Listen to the Network too. We have the privilege of being a very small "state", with give or take 400 citizens. What an great platform to listen to our joint will, the perfect democracy.

Finally, listen to yourself (allow me this at the cost of sounding like Ben Kenobi, another retired person).

Let's all listen more than we speak. At the same time, let's do what we were founded to do. Let's continue to work together to make this wonderful Network greater and greater.

Best wishes for a wonderful term, Mrs President!

Lorenzo Pezzoli

Member of the EAN

Dear Lorenzo and EAN,

Your advice is invaluable; as ever, so for that, my gratitude. There are quite some words in German for which there are none in English. Or rather, we have so many words in English; some of us relish the opportunity to use many over few.

Verbiage aside, it is humbling indeed to have been elected President. I'm grateful to you for recognising something from my hastily outlined vision circulated prior to the General Assembly in Stockholm that resonated within you sufficient to put me here.

I think what Lorenzo is trying to say is that the EAN board, and myself especially – we are your tool. We exist, by your good graces, to enact the statues (and amend them as time marches, ever onwards, bringing change in it's handluggage) and to embody the training we – all of us – received. We represent you, the network, at a variety of meetings where decisions about that training are made.

That said, we are mere mortals, and – as yourselves – have jobs, families, a desire to maintain good (mental and physical) health. The network has grown to over 400 members (I'm sure I remember it was only just over half that when I completed my training), the spirit of the network has reached global proportions (or at least, destinations), yet the size of the board representing it has been static (don't make me draw a graph!).

So yes. It is our job to listen, as Lorenzo eloquently advises. It's also our job to consider ideas and put them in place. But the ideas can't only come from

such a small representative group. We six are from Cohorts 2005-2010 (11-16) – so there are many voices unheard. We rely on you for ideas to implement. We rely on you to help implement those ideas. We rely on you for thoughts about changes. We rely on you for constructive feedback. We rely on you, because we represent you.

If, over the next few years, you feel as though you're being approached too frequently by the EAN board, that a lot is being asked of you, that you feel compelled (by whatever emotion) to correspond with us and to participate in more; then I will feel as though I have done my job. We are all busy with the list of things above. While a chain is only as strong as it's weakest link, we are not a chain, but a network. We have multiple chains; when one chain is applied to something requiring its particular strength, another can be directed to another issue. I feel that while we spearhead the network, the EAN board are not the network. You are. So tell us what you want. Tell us what you can do. Tell us what you think.

We eagerly await. To listen.

Best,

Naomi

Happy new year to you all!

As of 4th of January we are writing these lines from Zamboanga City, on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao. Many of you would probably think that our work here is related to the super typhoon Haiyan that claimed thousands of lives across the country at the beginning of November. However our mission here is not related to it: we have been working here for several months as GOARN short term consultants in the Zamboanga City crisis that started last September 2013.

And, what has happened in Zamboanga City? On 9 September 2013, a fighting broke out between Muslim rebels and the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The conflict lasted three weeks and resulted in around 200 deaths, 10,000 houses destroyed and more than 120,000 displaced (over 10 per cent of the city's population). The Government defined the situation as "humanitarian crisis" due to the high level of displacement and the devastating impact of the livelihood of the community. At that point is when different UN humanitarian partners and NGOs were deployed in Zamboanga City. The local and regional governments are leading the response and the humanitarian agencies are supporting and coordinating. To cater to the displaced population, 58 evacuation centers were opened. The largest center, a city sport stadium, hosted over 70,000 people. Moreover, in October, severe flooding brought by tropical cyclones worsened the living conditions of the conflict-affected communities.



In this context, we were recruited by GOARN to work as part of the WHO team as epidemiologists/public health advisors. Our team has five people: the team leader (Dr. Roy Cosico), the information manager (Rael Santos), the driver (Eduardo Fallorina) and us. Since the displaced people are living in overcrowded conditions and with limited access to basic sanitation facilities and a high risk of potential waterborne outbreaks, one of our main goals is to enhance event-based surveillance for communicable diseases, especially diarrheal diseases and waterborne infections due to flooding. In addition, we are leading the response on all public health matters in the conflict situation coordinating with local, regional, national and international partners. Local and regional authorities are being very hospitable and very generous giving vital information and help. We are working very closely with them in the daily surveillance of diseases, in the implementation of laboratory surveillance in evacuation centers, and in the evaluation of the existing surveillance system in post-extreme emergencies and disasters (named SPEED). We are also working in the coordination of the drinking water quality and sanitation response together with other partners such as UNICEF, local and regional governments.



What has made the mission even more challenging is the fact that we are in a region with a security level 5 (the maximum in the UN scale is 6) because of the high risk in the area of kidnapping and criminal attacks by rebel groups. Because of this, we had received several briefings by the UN department of safety on security precautions, radio procedures and travel advisories. In addition we have had to adhere to curfew schedules (it is compulsory to stay back in the hotel everyday by 9 pm) and it is strictly forbidden to walk around or move around without our WHO car.

In Christmas, due to security reasons, we had to leave the city and come back to Manila. We were able then to take some days off which were like a breath of fresh air after having limited movements to go out in Zamboanga City. However, despite the security issues, this does not limit our work and we still manage to coordinate the different agencies and stakeholders in Zamboanga.

Since it is part of the Filipino culture to celebrate Christmas, it has been also a time for us to socialize with them through Christmas gatherings. This has given us a better perspective and knowledge of their culture. We have discovered an amazing city with amazing people, and traditions, with unique history (it is the only city in Asia where citizens speak a dialect called “Chabacano” or “broken Spanish” really similar to Spanish that have allowed us to conduct meetings with the government in Spanish!, that is why Zamboanga is also known as the Latin Asian city). We hope that the situation here improves ASAP since this city deserves a much better future than the present that it is experiencing right now.

To read more about the Zamboanga crisis, read here:

<http://unocha.org/top-stories/all-stories/philippines-zamboanga-forgotten-crisis-shadow-haiyan>

Will keep you posted!



Lola Fernandez-Garcia (Spanish, EUPHEM alumni cohort 2011, currently working at the Spanish Carlos III Institute of Public Health)

Bernardo Guzman-Herrador (Spanish; EPIET alumni cohort 16, currently working at the Norwegian Institute of Public Health)

Beware the predatory publisher

Before starting my EPIET fellowship, one of the first things I had to do was find a flat in my new city. I turned to the internet for help, and after browsing a few sites found a very promising looking place in an excellent location, fantastic rent, beautiful spacious rooms, sunny garden...almost too good to be true. I emailed the owner, the apartment was still available and he said I would make an ideal tenant. We started making the necessary arrangements and all was going great – until he told me that as he wouldn't be in the city when I arrived, I would have to send him the first month's rent beforehand and he would send me the keys in the post. That's when alarm bells rang, and the alarm bells said "SCAM!". Sure enough, when I put "owner" 's email address into google, scores of expat forum posts came back – the too-good-to-be-true apartment was in fact too good to be true – it wasn't true at all in fact, it didn't exist and scores of unsuspecting expats had handed over hundreds of euros to a faceless person whom they had found through the internet and put their trust in. It was a cautionary tale, a tale that will always make me think twice when finding a flat. But a tale that still didn't prevent me falling into a similar trap later on in my professional life....

Last year I was involved in an outbreak investigation from which we learned several important lessons. Remaining true to EPIET mantra, we wanted to communicate those lessons to as wide a public health audience as possible, and to do so, my boss was keen that we published in an Open Access journal. However, the department had limited budget to cover Author Processing Fees which limited our scope somewhat. I heard about the journal, *Epidemiology: Open Access*, after my head of department forwarded me an email that the journal had sent to her inviting submissions. The email had slightly strange English, but nothing to raise my suspicions, particularly as it had been recommended by a senior colleague. I hadn't heard of the journal before, but checked out the website and it had what looked to be some nice epidemiological

papers, an auspicious group of people from well-respected universities on the editorial board, a fast turnaround time and no mention of author processing fees.

I submitted the article through a standard web platform for author submissions. On submission a message appeared that I would receive a confirmation email, but I didn't, so I looked for contact details on the website so I could make sure the submission had gone through OK. It took quite a while to find any contact details on the website, but eventually I was successful. The details were based in the USA, giving the impression that this was a US-based journal, but the response I got was in strange English again (although again not enough to make me suspect anything).

The paper went through peer review and I received two sets of very good comments. Turnaround time for revising the comments was only 7 days, which I thought was very short, but put this down to it being part of the journal's fast turnaround time. After a few weeks, I received an email congratulating us that our article had been accepted, but attached to the email was an invoice for \$1519! I hadn't been anticipating any author processing fees, but thought this was my error and I must have missed something when looking at the author information. However, in fact there are no APFs mentioned anywhere on the website or author information – one only finds out about them on acceptance of the article. In any case, I contacted my head of department who agreed to cover the costs, and we set in motion the departmental process to pay the invoice. Meanwhile I corrected the galley proof and sent that back within the requested 48 hour window (again, very short, but I thought this was to do with the turnaround time).



My suspicions were first raised when, just six days later, I received another email, this time in *very bad* English, urging that I transfer the money straight away. The style of the email and the fact that it was sent less than a week from when the invoice first arrived prompted me to do some internet research on the journal. Here I found out that the publishing group (OMICS) is actually based in Hyderabad, India, not the USA; that there are >250 journal titles, some of which don't even have any articles in them; that for the journals that do have articles, a very high proportion of articles are accepted and then the authors stung with unexpected APFs, of which there are no mention on their website; that many of the editors listed on the editorial boards have no knowledge of being listed as thus; that for all of these reasons, the articles are no longer indexed in PubMed or other online libraries; that the United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) sent a cease-and-desist letter to OMICS in April, 2013, alleging trademark violations by OMICS...in short, the "SCAM!" alarm bells echoed in my ears again.

Having discovered this, we halted the processing of the invoice and I sent an email to the journal on informing them that we did not wish to publish and that we were withdrawing the manuscript. I received several emails from them after this date requesting payment and saying that I could not withdraw a manuscript at this stage, all of which I answered stating that we would not be paying the invoice, had not agreed to publish and did not want the article to be published. Irritated but glad we had found out about the journal without handing any money over, I decided to put the incident down to experience and set about finding a respectable journal to resubmit to. A couple of weeks later, while re-drafting the manuscript, I discovered by chance that our article had in fact been published by OMICS anyway, against our express wishes and without our paying. I'm not sure when the exact published date was, as I did not receive any notice of this. I immediately emailed them saying that we had never consented for them to publish and to take the article down immediately, but this (and several emails since) have only been met with responses saying "it is impossible to withdraw the manuscript after publication, pay us the money".

The SOCO? If an Open Access journal looks too good to be true – it probably is.

Further googling has shown this to be a common story, and that there is little to no hope of getting articles removed after they publish them, even if you don't pay (I suppose the advantage for them is that their journals actually have some content). Having had my requests ignored by all of the OMICS personnel I had corresponded with, I contacted the journal's "Editor in Chief" to ask for his assistance: he replied saying that he'd resigned from this post a while ago, and they continue to use his credentials on their website and even send correspondence in his name without his knowledge. So we are stuck with an article in an undindexed, disreputable journal and are unable to submit it anywhere else because it's already published. I feel that having my name linked to this publishing group has damaged my professional integrity, and in addition, it's incredibly frustrating that a (in my opinion) good article which involved a lot of hard work has ended up being published somewhere where nobody will ever see it. I also felt several weeks feeling very stupid that I had been fooled in this way. It was cold comfort to learn that another colleague had also been fooled - her article was published in the same journal even though she withdrew it after it was accepted without peer review.

To this day I am receiving threatening emails from OMICS telling me to pay the article fees. These days they go directly to my Spam box, although I'm sure many researchers feel intimidated into paying the fees, which is of course how the journal makes its money. Legally, there is nothing I can do to get the article taken down as the journal is based outside the EU and the internet is largely a lawless land. The best thing that can come from this horrible experience is to broadcast it amongst the public health community far and wide to make sure nobody else ever falls victim to these predatory journals – OMICS is just one of a growing number of such enterprises. So do please tell your colleagues this story, and make sure you are never affected yourselves!! If ever in doubt, Beall's List of Predatory Publishers is a good place to look - Jeffrey Beall is an academic librarian at the University of Colorado Denver and keeps a list to help separate out the genuinely good Open Access publishers from the ones that are more interested in your money than your science: <http://scholarlyoa.com/2012/12/06/bealls-list-of-predatory-publishers-2013/> .



EAN Newsletter Editorial Team We need you!

The Board is looking for enthusiastic EAN members to create a regular Editorial Team to assist us in putting together the ever-popular quarterly EAN newsletter.

Your path to literary fame starts here!!

Email us at eanboard@gmail.com to let us know your interest.

Thank you!

Annual EAN membership fees

DON'T FORGET!!! The annual membership fee is €20 and runs from January until December!

Fellows in their first and second year of training are exempt from paying membership fees, according to the accepted statutes change at the 2012 General Assembly.

The details for how to transfer fees by online banking are on this page; if you require any further information on membership payment, we kindly ask you to contact the EAN board (eanboard@gmail.com), putting "membership payment" in the subject line.

Please indicate your name and membership year as reference in the bank transfer and also send an email to eanboard@gmail.com to inform us about your payment (sometimes names are not correctly transmitted with the transfer). Thank you for your support!

EURO ACCOUNT (€20p.a.)

Bank: HSBC UK
Address: 18 London Street, Norwich, NR2 1LG, UK
Account holder: Epiet Alumni Network
Account Number: 71822755
Sort code: 40-05-15
IBAN: GB11MIDL40051571822755
BIC/Swift: MIDLGB22

GBP ACCOUNT (£18p.a.)

Bank: HSBC UK
Address: 18 London Street, Norwich, NR2 1LG, UK
Account holder: Epiet Alumni Network
Account Number: 43922782
Sort code: 40-35-09