



Bye summer, Welcome autumn!



Editorial



Board

Dear EAN Friends,

Welcome to the much awaited autumn edition of the EAN newsletter! We hope you all had a fantastic summer, travelled the world, got a tan, studied and worked intensively.

In this edition, you will find the stories from the fellows of the first cohort (2011) of the EPIET MS Track, a "story from the field" on malaria in Greece, and also a contribution to our new section "Where are you now?" by Marta Valenciano.

We have a lot to come with ESCAIDE, a call for volunteers for an EAN Prize Committee, the ESCAIDE Photo Contest, the mini-module on molecular epidemiology organized jointly by EAN and RIVM, and the welcome to the new cohort

2013 and the farewell to cohort 2011 who will soon graduate.

In case you are wondering : no, it's not too late to volunteer as moderator or EAN prize jury member. Just drop us a line at eanboard@gmail.com

Also, if you are planning to attend ESCAIDE don't miss our social event at Vapiano restaurant on Monday night!

Exciting times!
Enjoy the read!

Yours,

The EAN Board



President

Lorenzo Pezzoli

Vice-President

Arnaud Le Menach

Treasurer

Chris Williams

Treasurer

Giovanna Jaramillo Gutierrez

Secretary

Georgia Ladbury

Secretary

Maria Keramarou



In June 2013, I went back to my country (Greece) for an international mission with EPIET. I went to Evrotas, Laconia, southern Greece; one of my known places, as I was working there with MSF last summer, in a joint malaria project with the Hellenic CDC. This year, I had to assess the knowledge, attitudes and practices towards malaria transmission and prevention measures, among local and migrant residents in Evrotas area and provide feedback to guide any future interventions.

Some background information on malaria in Greece. Malaria was officially eliminated in 1974. Since 2009, every summer, some locally-acquired cases of *P.vivax* occurred in Evrotas and, there was a risk of malaria becoming re-established in the area. Malaria cases were also reported in the immigrant community, coming mainly from the Indian subcontinent, which is endemic to malaria. In 2012, the Greek authorities joined their efforts with MSF to stop the on-going transmission, while ECDC and WHO provided technical support. Some of the mitigation activities included community sensitization campaigns on malaria protection and prevention and active house-to-house case-finding.

I had less than one month available to prepare everything, from protocol-writing to pre-departure arrangements. Quite a lot of work, but with some generous and precious help from my front-line coordinator (Kostas Danis), MSF (Annick Lenglet), our collaborators in Greece (Prof. Takis Panagiotopoulos, Maria Tseroni and Giorgos Theocharopoulos) and my translators (Ijaz and Shamas), we made it! (many many thanks!)

Although the schedule was tight, the project looked quite straight-forward. But, things are never as we think or wish they were! Some problems arose with the local authorities and no interviews with the local Greek community were allowed...but at least, I could go on with the immigrants. And then, the 2nd interviewer withdrew last minute...So, there I was, with my Urdu translator having to undertake all the survey by ourselves.

However, and despite the difficulties, we managed to conduct the survey and to have a fantastic time. Interviews were starting at 6:00pm and finishing at around 11:00pm, since participants were working all day in the fields. In the mornings, we were organizing the evenings and entering the completed questionnaires in the database.

In the evening, off we were driving in the villages, getting lost in the orange orchards and finding our way to the participants' houses. Well, many of them were warehouses, makeshift shelters or even ex-stables. All people were men, mostly young and not speaking the language (the translator was a must!); they were dreaming of a better life but had to deal with everyday harsh reality and basic living conditions. Talking with the people and interviewing them, was very rewarding. The people were very polite, welcoming us in their houses with a cup of tea, sugared milk or even some food. I recognized some of them from last year and some remembered me as well. "Hey, doctor! How are you?" Very nice feeling!

Now, we are at the stage of finalizing the analysis and then it's the report writing and the dissemination of the results to the Greek authorities. I do hope that the findings will be useful for future prevention activities. For me, the whole experience was very fruitful and rewarding. I certainly learnt a lot!

Where Are You Now? -by Marta Valenciano, EPIET Cohort 3

Alicia Barrasa (ISCI/ECDC), Marta Valenciano (Epiconcept), Alain Moren (Epiconcept), and Amparo Larrauri (ISCI)



Where am I? The answer is easy... Back home 😊

After 15 years abroad (for some periods far away from Spain), eight years ago (already!) I came back to Madrid. I am really “back home” as my office and my home are located in the apartment where I was born and where I grew up! In addition, I am “back home” because I work with Alain Moren, the “phirzt épidémiologiste hoo introdused mee to fielde epidemiologiee 16 yearrz egó” (to be read with Moren’s accent). I work for EpiConcept, a small company specialised in health information systems and epidemiology (www.epiconcept.fr). When Alain left EPIET, he joined EpiConcept and started developing the epi activities (before, EpiConcept was only working in IT/health information systems). Two years later, he offered me to work with him. I was at that time working as an EPIET coordinator which I really enjoyed, but I felt that I could not continue teaching/supervising fellows without doing epidemiology myself. One year later, Esther Kissling joined us, then Ariane Halm, Thomas Seyler, Camelia Savulescu and finally Marc Rondy. We are currently nine epidemiologists (based in the Indian Ocean, UK, Spain and France) among whom, six EPIET alumni + one “papa-EPIET-Alain”. People who knows me may ask “What is Marta doing in private company?”. Well, EpiConcept is a “special” private company with an NGO or cooperative spirit, public health oriented, that stimulates the creativity and, with an ethical chart to which I fully adhere. After having worked in big international Public Health institutions, I really enjoy working in a small team in which everybody is available for discussing, exchanging, with no fights between various departments and teams.



I work from home but I do not feel isolated: we have an internal chat to discuss work related things, exchange jokes, gossips, etc as if we were in front of the coffee machine. In addition, with the magic of Skype, we often have team meetings and I see Moren’s moustache at least three or four times per day. We have also opportunities to meet face to face during workshops, meetings or trainings we organise.

Our projects are varied: evaluation of the effect of vaccines (effectiveness/impact of influenza, HPV, rota, PCV), strengthening surveillance/response systems (8 year project in five countries of the Indian Ocean), training (coordination of a regional FETP in the Indian Ocean, organising modules and supervision of the FETP in Hong Kong, modules for ECDC, private sector, Senegal river region, etc), join epi/IT projects, etc. My everyday work consists in supporting Alain in management/coordination issues, coordination of I-MOVE (EU network measuring influenza vaccine effectiveness), supervising all projects we are involved in, teaching, developing training material and reading the excellent Esther’s epi-cartoons! Now that I’m “back home”, I have managed to combine all the epi areas that I like: applied research, international health, teaching, management. I do not do myself outbreak investigations, but I still feel the “excitement” of field investigations through the FETPs we work with. Furthermore, EpiConcept seconded me to GOARN for one month during the cholera outbreak in Haiti. You asked me how EPIET helped to shape my career... well, before EPIET I was a vet working in rural development projects, managing NGO rural credit programmes. Without the two years EPIET fellowship at InVS I would DEFINITELY not be where I am! Through the two EPIET years, I learnt what field epidemiology was, I worked in one of the best epi teams in Europe, I got involved in exciting projects and I met people who influenced not only my professional life but also my personal life. Since then, in all the places I have worked (InVS, WHO, EPIET coordination) I have felt the support of the EPIET network. And now I work in a team with, I think, has the highest proportion of EPIET alumni in the world (66.6%!) 😊. As a summary, where is this Cohort 3 Spanish EPIET alumnae? I am “back home”, in an EPIET-family team, having fun, still learning A LOT from my colleagues. A perfect combination!



Yvan Hutin (ECDC), and Marta Valenciano



Danae Pervanidou, MS-track fellow at the Hellenic Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, Athens, Greece

MS-track fellowship has been a big challenge for me. Which were the advantages? One important advantage was that -as I had already been working at the Department of Surveillance and Intervention of the Hellenic Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (HCDCP) before the fellowship- I was familiar with the followed practices and was at once fully integrated to the surveillance team. Moreover, MS-track fellowship was the only way to get this valuable training, as my family responsibilities would not allow me to go abroad, during this period of my life. What did I gain from EPIET training so far? Firstly, it is very satisfying to realize I am adequately skilled now to perform basic analysis by myself and I feel more independent and confident to design a study, and perform it. I also gained communication skills that I lacked before. Even more, all the networking and the life-long bonding with my fellows are priceless. And as I will (hopefully) continue working to the HCDCP and belong to the public health work-force of my country, I can already realize the impact of this training to my work quality. Which were the challenges? Well, I was placed in a very demanding unit (of vector-borne diseases) and I had to deal with both locally-acquired malaria and West Nile virus outbreaks (including enhanced surveillance, case investigations, malaria focus investigations, communication with public, health professionals and stakeholders). Furthermore, due to economic crisis there was a staff shortage. Therefore, my routine daily work-load was heavy, especially during summer and autumn, and frequently I could not spend enough time on my EPIET training needs. With these working demands, the only way to manage achieving the EPIET training objectives was to combine my daily work in the unit with my training. To conclude, sometimes the demands of my combined duties were exhausting, however MS-track fellowship is surely cost-effective and I would strongly recommend it to other colleagues!



Sabine Maritschnik, MS-track fellow at Department for Infectious Disease Epidemiology in Vienna, Austria

I had been working in the Department for Infectious Disease Epidemiology in Vienna, Austria since March 2008 and we were already a training site for the EPIET Fellowship since 2007. In Spring 2011, I was very excited to hear about the opportunity to apply to the EPIET programme in this new “MS-Track” format. I realized that I could now participate in this valuable 2-year training and that this new track would enable me to stay at my position in the Department. I doubt that I would have been able to apply to the Fellowship otherwise since we are a small department and need to “hold on to” our staff as much as we can. Now that we have finished our 2-year training as the first MS-track cohort, I feel very privileged to have been allowed to participate in the EPIET training. I truly enjoy each and every module: they are very useful with a high quality standard of teaching. I often refer to past lectures and case studies, maintaining my work according to the EPIET standard. I can say that the past two years have solidified my confidence in epidemiology and I have also had the great pleasure of gaining friendships that will last through the years. It’s definitely not an opportunity to be missed!



Bolette Søbørg, MS-track fellow at the Statens Serum Institut, Denmark.

I am a medical doctor with a PhD in epidemiology. Prior to EPIET I was working within academia, primarily doing epidemiological research and within public health conducting routine surveillance of infectious diseases at a national level. Alongside my EPIET training I have been enrolled in a national Public health training program for Danish medical doctors in order to qualify for a consultant position. Prior to joining EPIET I was aware of the program through all the EU track fellows that have been hosted at Statens Serum institute. The opening of a MS track offered an excellent opportunity for me to join the program, I would not have considered an EU track position due to my career in Denmark. I am the first Danish MD to go through the EPIET program which gives me an opportunity as well as an obligation to feed back my experience to the Danish MD public health community. It has been great to team up with all the co-fellows from around the EU and their fellowship experiences, both the EU- and MS tracks has taught me a lot about the EU community and how we can work together across the continent. I have been fortunate enough to be involved in an international outbreak doing my fellowship which taught me how the cooperation between ECDC, across fellows and member states works when in action. To my experience there are some differences between the MS and EU track fellowships: the MS track fellow has an advantage in speaking the native language and in knowing their way around the system. They can be put into use in outbreak investigations and take the lead on new projects quite early in the fellowship. The draw back for the MS fellows is finding the right balance between routine work and fellowship assignments. If the MS track fellow is allowed enough time for their EPIET assignments, he or she can be of great value to their institute both during the fellowship and afterwards as their competencies can be developed to fit the needs of their future national position. I do not have a permanent position waiting for me after my fellowship, but I know that wherever I end up, the fellowship has taught me some valuable tools and given me an irreplaceable international network, THANK YOU cohort 2011; cohort of cohorts, supervisors and coordinators.



Szabó Rita MS-track fellow at the National Center for Epidemiology, Hungary.

My name is Rita Szabó and I work for National Center for Epidemiology in Department of Hospital Epidemiology and Hygiene. My background is BSc and MSc in Nursing. I am also the national contact point of the survey of healthcare-associated infections in long-term care facilities (HALT-project) at ECDC. I think, the MS-track programme was a very good opportunity for me to learn epidemiology and to practice English language. It was an ease that my boss was my supervisor and we had a daily contact and I had a fantastic professional support from my frontline coordinator, my supervisor and my colleagues. During these two years, I had a lot of benefits (e.g. our cohort is a fantastic group, all modules were very useful and I can use them in my work, etc.). Although, it was very hard to combine my official work with the learning objectives. During my fellowship, I was involved in two outbreak investigations (Multistate outbreak of Salmonella Stanley infection, Gastroenteritis outbreak in a long-term care facility), I wrote a research protocol (Incidence, Outcomes and Risk Factors of Acquired Bloodstream Infections in a Neurosurgical Intensive Care Unit in Hungary, 2011-2012), I got teaching experiences (Epidemiological Methods for Point Prevalence Surveys of Healthcare Associated Infection, Course on epidemiology and statistical methods for epidemiology, Course on surveillance of healthcare-associated bloodstream infections), I developed and analysed surveillance modules on 1) healthcare-associated infections and antimicrobial use in long-term care facilities, 2) hospital-acquired bloodstream infections in acute care hospitals and 3) carbapenemase-producing Enterobacteriaceae in healthcare settings. And I also had international oral and poster presentations and papers on these topics. After graduation, I will continue my work in the same institute and start my PhD fellowship at Semmelweis University in Budapest. Finally, I must say many thanks to all teachers and facilitators for their work and patience.

MS-track fellows experiences Cohort 2011

Cristina Giambi MS-track fellow at the Istituto Superiore di Sanità, Italy

Cristina Giambi, MS-track EPIET fellow from Italy, cohort 2011. I feel very lucky to have had this opportunity. Many EU-track fellows have stayed in my Institute (Istituto Superiore di Sanità, ISS) in Rome in the past years, so I have had the opportunity to know the EPIET world. I would have liked to participate in this kind of training but I could not apply for it, because for personal reasons I could not leave my country for two years! Finally, the opportunity of the MS-track EPIET programme arrived and I applied for it immediately! I am fully satisfied of this experience... I got from it exactly what I expected!

First of all I benefited a lot from the modules: the quality of the lectures was always very high and the case studies and fellows' presentations made the modules very practical, interactive and attractive. Moreover, I had the opportunity to share experiences with fellows and facilitators, to receive a constant support from the EPIET team, to share doubts and questions and to become part of a pro-active network of expert epidemiologists and motivated fellows. Not to forget the added value of the daily and night life with a so harmonious group of fellows!!

Of course, my workload during these two years was a bit higher than before, because I had to combine my daily activities with the EPIET work, but nothing of excessive! My local supervisor gave me a solid scientific support and was able to combine as better as possible the routine work with the activities for the EPIET training, in order to minimize the extra work. In order to achieve the EPIET objectives, I had the opportunity to work on new topics and projects! One of the main objectives that I got was the ability to perform a statistical data analysis autonomously, without waiting for the help of a statistician! And for an epidemiologist ... it is a very important resource! I had also the opportunity to work together with a EU-track fellow based in Rome and, in addition to the birth of a new enduring friendship, it resulted in a great benefit for both of us. She could benefit from my knowledge of the sites, the procedures, the health system as well as the national, regional, and local organization; and she was a constant stimulus for me, facilitating my involvement in new projects and exchange of experiences. This collaboration also helped to define my role as "fellow" during the two-year fellowship. Since September 2011 two years have passed, this experience is going to finish; I'll go on working in ISS but with an improved knowledge, new practical tools and an international vision. In conclusion... I am really very happy to have participated in the EPIET adventure and have become part of the EPIET network!

From the EAN board

ESCAIDE Prize Committee - EAN needs YOU!

WE NEED YOU !!
JOIN US !



Annual EAN General Assembly 2013 and EAN Board Elections

This year, the GA will take place on 6th of November 2013 from 18.00 to 20.00 in the ESCAIDE Conference Venue. The agenda of the GA was distributed in early October. The board elections will be held during the annual GA. Physical votes will be accepted during the GA. For those NOT attending the GA, electronic votes will be opened from 8.00am to 8.00pm on the same day (6th November 2013). Two out of the six board posts are up for election. These posts are the President, and Treasurer.

The board elections will be held during the annual GA. Physical votes will be accepted during the GA. For those not attending the GA, electronic votes will be opened from 8.00am to 8.00pm (CET) on the same day (6th November). Two out of the six board posts are up for election. These posts are the President, and Treasurer.

Role of the President: The President is the legal representative of the Epiet Alumni Network. As representative of the Association, the responsibilities of the President are: ensuring that the posts on the Advisory Board are filled; ensuring that the decisions made by the Advisory Board are executed; running and controlling the general administration of the Association; being the legal and public representative of the association; representing EAN in the ESCAIDE Organizing Committee; representing EAN in the EPIET Training Site Forum (ETSF); represents the EAN in any other formal occasion as required (e.g. the EPIET Selection Committee) or with any other association or organisation (e.g. ECDC, TEPHINET, APARET, EIS, etc...), which may be in contact with the EAN; chairing the EAN general assembly; and last but not least dealing with any other task that may be decided in consultation with the other members of the Advisory Board.

Role of the Treasurer: The two treasurers work together and split their task as they wish. The responsibilities include: Download bank account statements every 1 month; Update membership fee database; Send email reminder for membership fee payment; administer EAN travel grants; Find new sponsors for grants; Select grant applicants according to criteria; Reimburse fees after ESCAIDE; and again last but not least dealing with any other task that may be decided in consultation with the other members of the Advisory Board.

As a board member, you will be involved in EAN's regular and ad-hoc activities. The board usually has a telephone meeting once per month, with an annual physical board meeting in December/January, to set the agenda for the year. The positions in the board run for two consecutive years marked by the EAN General Assembly. Hence the expected term of these two is from the 2013 GA to the 2015 GA.

Alternatively, you can make your candidacy known to us just prior to the GA - note that this doesn't allow getting any delegated or electronic votes. In consultation with the candidates, a list of members standing for each position will be presented during the GA. We are looking forward to receiving your applications!

”EAN get together”



Join us for a

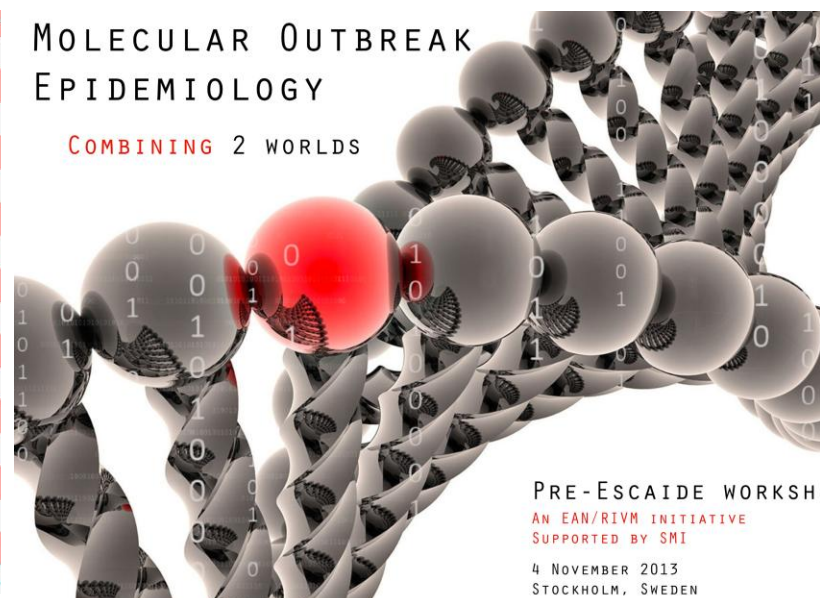
EAN Drinks & Dinner

Vapiano

15 Kungsbron str,
Near Central Station, SE 11122
Tel +46(0) 8242980

Monday 4th November 2013
19:00

Please R.S.V.P. by Friday,
November 1st
at eanboard@gmail.com



MOLECULAR OUTBREAK
EPIDEMIOLOGY

COMBINING 2 WORLDS

PRE-ESCAIDE WORKSH
AN EAN/RIVM INITIATIVE
SUPPORTED BY SMI
4 NOVEMBER 2013
STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

ESCAIDE 2013 PHOTO CONTEST



Join the EAN photo competition! Submit inspiring photos to display at 2013 ESCAIDE: <http://bit.ly/1cDJUUM>

These are the last year photos, see the album:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.545918085436643.136321.128888153806307&type=3>

Welcome cohort 2013!!!!





EPIET "Meet-up" photo



The happiest day of his life in Zante, Greece....Sofie Gillesberg Lassen (C16), Lisi Aichinger (C16), Ellen Heinsbroek (C16), Giovanna Jaramillo (C16/EUPHEM C3) and Naomi Boxall (C11) celebrate with Roy on the day of his wedding to Georgia Ladbury (C16). *If you have any pictures of EPIET Alumni Network meet-ups/unions/reunions anywhere in the world, please send them to us at eanboard@gmail.com !*



Treasury: EAN membership payment

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

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!