



EAN mini module, Rome, April 2022, *photo by Laura Bubba*

Editorial

Dear EAN friends,

It has already been a few months after the last newsletter and we would like to share with you what has been ongoing work at the EAN board, the Network and upcoming events and plans.

In this Spring edition of the EAN newsletter:

- Meet the new EPIET coordinators at ECDC, **Katie Palmer**, **Emily White Johansson** and **Lynn Meurs**
- Meet EPIET alumna **Alexandra Brazinova** and find out about her experiences after the fellowship and during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Read our summary of **EAN plans** and main activities for the coming year following our face-to face-meeting in Palma de Mallorca, Spain
- Read about the **EAN Mini Module in Rome** and upcoming events
- **And much more...**

Enjoy the newsletter and hopefully see you all soon.

The EAN Board

The EAN board

President

Iro Evlampidou

Vice-President

Stine Nielsen

Deputy Treasurer

Timothée Dub

Treasurer

Charlotte Hammer

Deputy Secretary

Anna Maisa

Secretary

Laura Bubba

General Board Member

Justine Schaeffer

Word from the president

Dear EAN friends and colleagues,

In March 2007, the 2nd EAN newsletter was published by the then EAN Board (Gabi, Susan, Lara, Mirna, Barbara and Angie) and since these last 15 years we continue creating and sharing with you quarterly - and almost uninterruptedly - our news, experiences and events.

As the world comes out slowly from 2 years of COVID-19 isolation we feel that now is the time to celebrate our various birthdays, breaking the tradition of the classical regular intervals! So, in 2022, EPIET turns 27, the EAN 22, EUPHEM 14 and the UK-FETP 11 years. We are all now young adults or teenagers starting to explore the world and its wonders! We want to be together, meet, laugh, dance and exchange. But some of us may also be faced with various dilemmas, challenges and physical and emotional tiredness.

Last February, during the EAN Board's face-to-face meeting in Palma de Mallorca - the island inspired us - we decided to focus on the members and address these needs by organising a series of events that will bring back together alumni and fellows and provide occasions for celebration, discussion and development. After reviewing the main results of the Membership Survey 2021 as to where the members want the EAN to go, we set up some very ambitious goals and started realising them. We hope you will support them and actively participate.

The online EAN lunches happening every last Wednesday of the month and the GIS Module in Rome at the beginning of April were the first ones. For summer and autumn, we are planning a series of face-to-face and online discussions and webinars on inequalities and access as well as on epidemiology, politics and ethics.

Many more scientific, training and social activities are underway but the biggest is the **face-to-face EPIET/EUPHEM & EAN birthday celebration event** that will take place on the weekend after ESCAIDE 2022. We do hope that many of us will gather to have these dances but also the stimulating discussions that we have so much missed. We will need your help though to materialise these plans, so please get in touch with us and volunteer! In addition, we are still planning to meet on the 2-4 September in Lisbon for the EAN board F2F meeting and a D&D will be organised.

For the above and many more past and planned EAN activities keep on reading this newsletter.

I wish you a lovely end of spring and happy summer!

Iro Evlampidou



Interview with the new EPIET coordinators

Katie Palmer

First of all, can you describe your background and how you ended up in field epidemiology?

I stumbled into epidemiology as well as EPIET by chance. After doing an MSc in Health Psychology in the UK I was in Stockholm teaching English. One of my students was a researcher at Karolinska Institutet and she asked if I wanted to do some data collection work there. Within a few weeks I was doing a PhD myself – my thesis was on Alzheimer's disease, identifying early signs and symptoms of the prodromal phase in a large, longitudinal, population-based cohort. I then moved to Italy for a Fellowship and started working in different institutes, helping with statistical analyses and scientific paper writing; this is where I learnt to apply epidemiological methods to different disease areas, from oncology to neurology to pharmacology and, in particular, geriatric disorders and multimorbidity. In recent years the interest in how communicable diseases affect non-communicable disease progression has grown in interest, and when the pandemic hit, I was working as the coordinator of a trial about the effect of seasonal influenza on older people with non-communicable diseases. This, and other projects, suddenly shifted in focus and I was involved in various studies looking at the role of multimorbidity in the progression of COVID-19 as well how the infection can cause long-term health problems (post-COVID-19 condition). After living in Venice for ten years I moved my family back to Stockholm and, by chance, saw a job posting on LinkedIn for my current role with EPIET. During my interview, my now-colleagues were very open to the idea that, despite my lack of direct experience in field epidemiology, I had some skills that may be useful to the programme. I am very grateful for this approach and I believe that we will increasingly find more cross-over between communicable and non-communicable disease epidemiology, rather than seeing them as distinct and unrelated fields.

When did you first hear about the EPIET/EUPHEM programme?

I first heard about it when I applied for my current role. As a non-communicable disease epidemiologist I had very little awareness about the EPIET/EUPHEM programme. So, I have learned everything about this fantastic programme while on the job.

Why did you apply for the function of coordinator?

I saw an advertisement for the position on LinkedIn and felt like it would be an interesting potential. I worked as an online tutor on the MSc Epidemiology program at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine for more than 15 years and it has always been one of my favourite jobs. We are constantly working to find

ways to make online training more efficient and engaging, and I felt that I can bring some of that online training experience to my current role.

When did you join the EPIET/EUPHEM programme and what do you like about your role as coordinator?

I joined in November 2021. I am particularly impressed by the incredibly high standard of the Fellows. I like that every Fellow and site are different and that the topics being investigated are so diverse.

What kind of activities does your function involve? Can you describe 'a typical day' of a coordinator's life?

Each day is different as we have many functions. I keep in touch with my Fellows to discuss their work and provide guidance where needed. Recently, I was a Facilitator for the first time at the TSA course in Rome and that felt very atypical as I have not met many colleagues or Fellows in person before.

What do you enjoy doing the most and what are the challenges you are facing?

Mostly I enjoy when the Fellows are designing a new project or investigation. The biggest challenge I experienced so far was Facilitating on the TSA in Rome because it was the first time that we did a hybrid course with participants both onsite and online. It is difficult to make online participants feel part of the course and we were trying to find ways to improve the experience for them.

Is there something typical about you (work or private) that people don't know and that you want to share with the network?

I hate video meetings and I think that there should be one day a week when it is forbidden to schedule them. Before the pandemic started, I had been working remotely from home for 10 years. I used to love it when I was the only one doing it!

If anyone in the network wants to join me in my campaign for one day a week free from video calls, let me know (I propose Thursdays!)

Any tips or words for the new fellows?

I think the best way to learn and develop is to be realistic about your strengths and weaknesses. If you admit that you don't know something, someone will always step forward to guide you. I would also suggest that you always try new things and be bold in your training and career as you never know what opportunities may arise. A final tip is to have one video-meeting-free day a week to get all your tasks done (see above!).

Lynn Meurs

First of all, can you describe your background and how you ended up in field epidemiology?

I first ended up in the field and then in epidemiology. I am a biomedical scientist by training and got interested in infectious diseases during my studies. I was most intrigued with parasites because I thought they looked beautiful under the microscope. And I wanted to go to 'the field' to experience what life is like in parasite-endemic areas. My first trip to the field was unforgettable and I have taken as many opportunities as possible to go back to the field since then. During my PhD and postdoc studies, I focussed on schistosomiasis in Senegalese villages, and in that process, I

developed from a lab-based researcher into an interdisciplinary scientist and epidemiologist.

When did you first hear about the EPIET/EUPHEM programme?

I still remember we got to do an EPIET case study back in university, what it was about (an outbreak related to horse meat), and how exciting that form of teaching was. Later on, when I was finishing up my PhD thesis, I first heard about EPIET. My supervisor told me she'd always wanted to do either EPIET or the CDC training in the US, and I decided to check these options out. I then also found out about EUPHEM (and actually applied for both paths).



Why did you want to become a coordinator?

I very much enjoyed my EPIET fellowship (cohort 2017), and I thought it would be great to get back to the EPIET/EUPHEM family as a coordinator. I now hope that I can give something back to the fellowship. It is a great programme and has brought me a lot. And that is why I like the idea that I can now contribute to giving current fellows a similar experience.

When did you join the EPIET/EUPHEM programme and what do you like about your role as coordinator?

I joined as a coordinator in March 2022 and I still feel a bit like an EPIET fellow that got the privilege of looking behind the scenes of the fellowship, rather than an actual coordinator. In my first weeks as a coordinator, I have enjoyed the interaction with the fellows most of all. I am also delighted to get the chance to dive into so many different projects, and to update my knowledge in the modules (MVA and TSA).

What kind of activities does your function involve? Can you describe 'a typical day' of a coordinator's life?

Since I have just started as a coordinator, I probably haven't had many typical days yet. Among other things, I have virtually attended the MVA and RAS module as an observer/ToT, and helped to organize an exercise and to revise a case study for the oncoming introduction course. I also read many incremental progress reports and reviewed the output of my fellows. I am based at the RIVM in the Netherlands, and I go there once or twice a week. The other days, I am mainly working from home, so my agenda is filled with online meetings with coordinators, fellows and other colleagues.

What do you enjoy doing the most and what are the challenges you are facing?

I enjoy the interaction with the fellows most of all. Also, I love to see all the familiar faces of the fellowship again. It is just a pity that we mostly interact via screens and that I haven't met so many colleagues in person yet, but that will soon change.

How do you see the EPIET/EUPHEM programme developing in the future?

I am not sure. I think it is already strong as it is, but as an alumna, I am probably biased. I am not sure how it can be achieved, but what I hope for is that the programme would aim (even) more for (sustainable) capacity building in areas with the highest infectious disease burdens.

Based on your own experience, what would you consider worthwhile transferring over to the programme?

In my experience, it is always very useful - and fun - to work together with people with different views, from different cultures, different scientific fields and different sectors in order to solve a given problem. This also is what typically happens in the fellowship already, and what made it such a nice experience for me as a fellow. But we could broaden our views on public health even further, I think, e.g. by adopting more of a one health perspective. That's one of the things I hope I can contribute to integrating more into the programme (where relevant).

Is there something typical about you (work or private) that people don't know and that you want to share with the network?

What is typical about me, is that I happen to know a lot about helminthic (co)infections, and especially schistosomiasis. Despite the fact that a large part of the world's population is infected with worms, I believe they are not studied often enough. So, if you are in need of a helminthologist I am always happy to think along where I can or put you in contact with a colleague.

Any tips or words for the new fellows?

I think the most important thing to do during your fellowship is to enjoy it. So besides and while learning a lot, I hope you will also get the chance to fully enjoy the fellowship.

Is there something you would like to say to the EAN?

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to introduce myself to the fellows and EAN in this way. I hope to see many of you in person soon!

Emily White Johansson

First of all, can you describe your background and how you ended up in field epidemiology?

I first took an epidemiology course as a university undergraduate. It was a new course. I couldn't pronounce epidemiology, but it satisfied credit requirements and fit into my schedule. I loved the course! The next semester I studied in Kenya and got linked with a field epidemiology program in maternal health, and that sealed my professional future. I did my Masters' degree at LSHTM, and years later after working with UNICEF for a while, completed my doctoral studies at Uppsala University in Sweden.

Afterwards, I worked at the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene as a Senior Epidemiologist for Maternal Health, which was a new position to help strengthen the maternal health work. It was such an interesting time! Our team established the first city-level Maternal Mortality Review Committee, built up a new surveillance system for severe maternal morbidity (serious complications during childbirth), and worked with hospitals to strengthen their review and reporting of adverse perinatal events. My role was to write the

protocols, build up the surveillance systems, and conduct research that fed back into programs. For all my technical training, I spent an enormous amount of time with the legal and IT departments! And I realized that I actually enjoyed these different sides of applied epidemiology too.

In 2018, my family moved to Abuja, Nigeria for my husband's work with UNICEF. It was not easy leaving my NYC job, but I landed with Tulane University School of Public Health in their Abuja office evaluating a social and behaviour change program for health. Through this work, I gained a profound appreciation for the extensive research and theories that underpin behavioural change programming! Working in Nigeria was both immensely interesting and shocking - a country with Nollywood, tech start-ups, and genomics research in the south, yet immunization rates close to single digits in the north. The health inequities in both Nigeria and New York City, like so many other places, is heart breaking.

When did you first hear about the EPIET/EUPHEM programme?

I first heard about EPIET/EUPHEM during my doctoral studies at Uppsala University in Sweden. I was considering what to do after I finished and would have loved to join a field epidemiology training program. We were living in New York City by that time, and I joined the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene as an excellent alternative that fit my family life.

Why did you apply for the function of coordinator?

In 2021, we moved from Nigeria to Sweden so my children could complete middle and high school here. I had known about ECDC in Stockholm and was hoping to return to applied epidemiology. When I saw the job posting for an Interim Scientific Coordinator, I thought it could be a nice fit. My past work was increasingly associated with supervision of doctoral students, research analysts, and Epi Scholars (a NYC training program for masters' level epidemiology students), and I really enjoyed these mentorship roles.

When did you join the EPIET/EUPHEM programme and what do you like about your role as coordinator?

I started about 3 months ago in December 2021. I'm still learning the job, but I really like the EPIET/EUPHEM team and enjoy working with the fellows who bring so much experience to the program.

What kind of activities does your function involve? Can you describe 'a typical day' of a coordinator's life?

My activities mostly involve working with fellows to review their project proposals/outputs and to ensure they're meeting the EPIET requirements. I've also participated in modules and facilitated case studies, which has been a nice learning experience for me too. A typical day involves a blend of these activities as well as team meetings. I'm working part-time with EPIET, so I also balance this with outside work.

What do you enjoy doing the most and what are the challenges you are facing?

I really enjoy working with the fellows to help shape their portfolios and fellowship experience. My main challenges are common to most new jobs – trying to remember names and faces (especially with remote working), figuring out my exact role, and basically learning the job. I also have less experience with outbreak investigations, so I've had to re-learn that.

How do you see the EPIET/EUPHEM programme developing in the future?

I don't have an answer for this question. I can say that I've been very impressed by the fellows I have worked with, both the experience they bring to the program and the projects they are now conducting. I'm also impressed by previous fellows' portfolios. It's a very strong foundation for whichever way the program may develop in the future.

Based on your own experience, what would you consider worthwhile transferring over to the programme?

My professional background is somewhat unique since I've lived and worked on three different continents over the past decade. I guess this experience brings a few things to the EPIET/EUPHEM program. First, the main constant across my different work experiences has been my epidemiological training. I think if an epidemiologist has strong methodological skills, they can adapt

somewhat easily to different settings or disease topics. It's nice to see EPIET's strong training in methods!

Second, I've benefitted tremendously from having a global perspective while working on local health programs. It helps to have this comparative view since many countries are working on similar public health issues but may have different resources or demographics or cultures that shapes the response. I'm glad many fellows have an International Assignment in their portfolios and are working in other EU countries.



Third, the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene was an amazing institution with many talented epidemiologists working on complex public health issues. I learned a lot there. I was most impressed by how the Agency adapted programs to a very diverse and crowded urban setting. I also really enjoyed working at the local level – directly with programs, hospitals, and community boards – while at the same time closely collaborating with US CDC on research and surveillance projects. It reinforced for me the importance of public health networks from local to national (and even global) levels.

Is there something typical about you (work or private) that people don't know and that you want to share with the network?

I was raised in NYC with its crowded subways, tiny apartments, and constant noise. My husband was raised in northern Sweden where physical distancing was the norm long before COVID19. Somehow it works, and we feel (mostly) at home in both places!

Any tips or words for the new fellows?

Hang in there! I think the start of any fellowship is tough -- trying to figure out a new institution, new methodologies and develop a portfolio. And for the new fellows this year, the start was combined with the omicron wave making it even tougher. It will only get better from here, I'm sure of it. It will be great to meet in person soon too!

Is there something you would like to say to the EAN?

I'm really glad to be connected to EAN and to join this network! I hope to meet you in person soon!

Interview with EPIET Alumna: Alexandra Brazinova

Alexandra Brazinova was one of Cohort 2018 EPIET fellows and she is sharing her experience of her professional life.

Interview by Ioannis Karagiannis, EPIET cohort 2006, EAN volunteer

EAN: Hello Alexandra, first of all, a bit of background. Could you please tell me something about yourself. Where are you from, what did you study, when and where did you do EPIET?

Alexandra: I am from Slovakia, born and raised in Bratislava, and graduated from the 3rd Faculty of Medicine (Charles University in Prague). I further specialised in Public Health; actually, right now I am doing another specialisation for clinical professionals in epidemiology. Apart from that, after finishing school, I taught epidemiology and public health at the Trnava University in Slovakia, MPH students. Five years ago, before doing EPIET, I moved to my current position, which is in the Faculty of Medicine in Bratislava, teaching epidemiology to medical students. It's aimed at 5th year students. I also did my academic progress ("habilitation") before EPIET. I was part of the 2018 cohort of EPIET, so we graduated in September 2020 (I'm not even sure if we graduated since there was no proper graduation ceremony!). As I did the member state track of EPIET, I was based in my home country.



EAN: What happened after EPIET, where have you worked and where do you work now?

Alexandra: The most important thing that happened is COVID-19, which had already started before I graduated. The first case in Slovakia was on 10/03/2020. I was at the regional public health authority in Bratislava and the regional authorities were at the frontline. They did all contact tracing and gathered information on cases. At the same time, my university work changed to online work so I spent the first 4 months of the pandemic in the regional public health authorities every single day, including weekends, since 24/7 hotlines needed to be attended to. We all took turns in this hotline and it was very demanding. I also asked my students to help and they were very eager, so I brought in 15 medical students and they also helped by taking turns.

I also completed a professorship in 2021 and I am now a professor of Epidemiology! In September 2020 I was also asked to lead the crisis committee of the Faculty of Medicine for COVID-19, which I continue doing until now. We adapt the national regulations and recommendations for our staff and students and do our best to ensure that we, as a faculty, provide good education and at the same time meet all the response measures for COVID-19 (e.g. online teaching). So, right now, I am a professor of Epidemiology,

the chair of the crisis committee and the chair of Institute of Epidemiology at the Medical Faculty of Comenius University in Bratislava, a member of the crisis committee of the same university, and a part-time regional health epidemiologist in the Bratislava regional unit. At the regional public health authority, I was given the task to manage the national HIV database.

I realise how EPIET helps with my work, I've already shared this a few times with my cohort.

I really like my job, I love it! My current position at the Faculty of Medicine and do research in epidemiology, I feel I have found my place in the universe! I really enjoy the combination of doing research and teaching and would love to improve the way it is taught in Slovakia, there's still some way to go.

In 2021, my colleagues and I did two big Covid-19 seroprevalence studies in Slovakia. One was our own research project and the other one we were asked to do by the Ministry of Health – in both we measured antibody levels among the unvaccinated in Slovakia and explored transmission conditions. We designed and implemented these studies by ourselves at my institute. It was very exciting! A lot of work.

EAN: Let's talk about the main topic for this interview: where are you now? What do you do?

Alexandra: At home, in Bratislava (laughs). As above. I took in a Ukrainian lady who fled the war in Ukraine and she will be staying with us for some time. All the people around me are preoccupied with the war. It's horrible and it's literally next door. We have a lot of refugees coming to or transiting through Slovakia so it affects us directly.

EAN: What EPIET skills do you need or use in your current job?

Alexandra: Everything I learnt helped. Seroprevalence study (see above). Mainly outbreak investigation skills and analytical skills. Whatever we learnt about epidemiological study design has been very helpful especially in the last couple of years. Analysis: also, for stuff I do with other students, e.g., cancer and mental health.

EAN: How did you get this job?

Alexandra: I was no foreigner to my working environment since I did MS track. How did I end up doing these new things since EPIET? I was very active, I tried to help and get involved, mainly in the COVID-19 situation, and I took the opportunity to do things that had to be done, e.g. provide information, explaining information in the media. I wrote articles, I was asked to speak on television and radio. Then I started being approached by the university management and the MoH in the country.

EAN: What do you like about it?

Alexandra: I very much like being able to connect our own research findings with what we need to teach the medical students. I like the fact that apart from the fact we have to teach medical students basics of epidemiology, I can also mention my own research as an example in teaching, from planning to interpreting.

EAN: Could you describe a typical day at work?

Alexandra: It depends on whether it's Monday, Wednesday, or Thursday (laughs). On Monday I teach, so that would take me the whole morning. In the afternoons I usually write or revise papers and diploma or PhD theses. I spend a lot of time calculating stuff. When I don't teach, I also have meetings with my colleagues and doctoral students about the next steps in their work. From time to

time I either go to give interviews on radio or television. Just yesterday I was on national TV to discuss the situation with omicron.

EAN: *Are you still connected to the current fellowship or with the EPIET network in general?*

Alexandra: Very little. I am part of my cohort's WhatsApp group. We also have a smaller group of EPIET and EUPHEM fellows, so we sometimes connect with each other socially. With some of them, I also connect professionally, for example with Paulo in Lisbon (hello, Paulo!), who works on legionella.

EAN: *Do you have anything to say, any tips or advice for current fellows with regards to their future careers, in field epidemiology or elsewhere?*

Alexandra: Just enjoy it, it's a great experience and you never know what will happen. It is difficult to think while you're a fellow how you will use the experience and the knowledge, you can't ever realise how useful it is!

EAN: *Anything else you'd like to add?*

Alexandra: I'd just like to do EPIET again! I would even take more out of it now with the more experience that I have! I'd try to learn more.



EAN Mini Module in Rome April 2022

On 9 and 10 April 2022 the first post-pandemic EAN mini-module happened! This was an opportunity to finally connect the network back together in real life. This mini-module was organised in Rome right after the TSA module, and both fellows and alumni attended.



Being together again was an important aspect, but the core of this mini-module was Geographic Information Systems (GIS). Participants started by learning about the different underlying concepts associated with GIS, their added value in public health and the traps to avoid in order to transmit unbiased messages through maps (or as unbiased as possible).



Two practical sessions were then organised for participants to experience the interpretation of maps. Finally, participants switched to the side of mapmakers with a hand's-on case study, using either QGIS or R.

This mini-module was also an opportunity for an EAN D&D! Participants and teachers from the GIS mini-module, fellows who stayed in Rome after TSA and alumni living in the area all came together on Saturday evening around some roman specialties and a few bottles of prosecco.



We are very grateful to the teachers and facilitators teachers and facilitators Amy Mikhail, Natalie Fischer, Xanthi Andrianou, Christina Mergenthaler, Margo van Grup, Henna Mäkelä, Heloise Lucaccioni that made this event a great learning opportunity. Like before the pandemic, this EAN mini-module allowed us to share knowledge and skills within the network. And we hope to see you all for the next one!

EPIET/EUPHEM Fellowship meeting

Since the last newsletter was out in February 2022, the Training Site Forum (TSF) members with the Fellowship Office met in different occasions to discuss topics concerning the fellowships such as the wellbeing of the fellows and relevant training, the scientific coordinator situation, improvements for the EPIET/EUPHEM selection process, the new ECDC report on the [core competencies in applied infectious disease epidemiology](#), as well as to the continued work of the TSF working groups.

The 2022 Q1 TSF meeting took place on 31 March. Additionally, the EPIET and EUPHEM supervisors continued to meet monthly and the

TSF working groups continued meeting through Q1 and Q2 of 2022 and are moving forward on their assigned topics.

Currently, the active working groups are on the "Curricular Revision Process", "Under-represented countries", "International Assignments", "Selection Process" and "Quality Improvement" and the EAN Board members are actively participating and providing input in all working groups. The objective of these working groups is to reflect on these topics and provide the fellowship coordination with an external opinion. It starts with identifying what can be done to improve and evaluate different options to fill these needs.

ESCAIDE 2022



ESCAIDE Stockholm and online, 23-25 November 2022

European Scientific Conference on Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology

We are very excited to see that the [ESCAIDE conference](#) is going to be a hybrid event this year, on **23-25 November 2022**. This means, not only that we can participate and reconnect in person with the EAN family, but also that people who cannot join in person due to individual constraints may still participate and benefit from the conference and exchanges.

The EAN board will be participating in person, with an info stand again and we will also be organising the BarCamp and Career Compass session. There will of course also be our general assembly, including updates on what has happened over the past year, plans for the future, and the election of new board members!

If you are interested in becoming a board member this November, reach out to us eanboard@gmail.com.

The [abstract deadline](#) for ESCAIDE is on 18 May 2022 – submit your abstract to share your work!

This year there is also a funding initiative to support ESCAIDE participation - read more here:

<https://www.escaide.eu/en/presenters/funding-initiative>

EAN volunteers to act as abstract reviewers for ESCAIDE 2022

Every year ESCAIDE counts with a pool of volunteer reviewers to help ensuring scientific quality and rigour of the work presented at the conference. Obviously, EAN members are well versed in the conference, and are well placed to deliver fair and balanced reviews, so the ESCAIDE team and the ESCAIDE Scientific Committee are very welcoming in having EAN members acting as reviewers.

Many EAN members have already received an invitation to sign up and express interest to review abstracts (sent by: abstracts@escaideconference.eu), but if you have not received it and are interested, please send an e-mail to escaide.conference@ecdc.europa.eu with the title "EAN volunteer to act as ESCAIDE abstract reviewer" by **Monday 16 May**. (NOTE: only graduated fellows should sign up, current fellows are not eligible to review abstracts)

Reviews will be assigned on 20 May and each reviewer is expected to assess up to six abstracts until 1 June. More information on the process of review and selection of abstracts for ESCAIDE is available on the [guidelines for reviewers](#).

EAN webinar on "Equitable access to medical innovation"

On 27 April, the EAN Board was very pleased to organise a webinar with [Els Torreele](#) to speak about the issue of inequity and continue the discussions started on "Vaccine equity" and the "Inequality pandemic".

Els Torreele gave us an introduction to her work on changing the current supply-driven, fragmented R&D ecosystem which relies primarily on the private sector to deliver health products. Also she gave some insights into her research on Ebola and COVID followed by an inter-active discussion on how field epidemiologists and public health microbiologists can be involved in creating a more robust health innovation system for infectious disease epidemics.

Welcome to the EAN webinar – 27 April 2022

Equitable access to medical interventions - what should be our role as field epidemiologists?

With Els Torreele

Researcher/advocate for social justice and health rights, incl medical innovation prioritizing health needs and equitable access. @ElsTorreele



Els is a former Director of the MSF Access campaign and currently at University College London (UCL) with over 20 years of experience in “access to Medicines and Innovation work, advancing health and human rights in the area of medicines with a focus on governance,

transparency and accountability, and supporting civil society voices”.

You can find the recording of the webinar on our [website](#).

News from the Network

Mike Ryan - Andrija Stampar Ceremony 2021

Each year [ASPHER awards the prestigious Andrija Štampar Medal](#) to a distinguished person for excellence in the field of Public Health and this year's recipient was Dr Mike Ryan.



Dr Mike Ryan completed his medical training at the National University of Ireland, Galway, a Master's in Public Health at University College Dublin, and a specialist training in communicable disease control at the Health Protection Agency in London. He is also an EPIET alumni (cohort 2 (1996)).

For nearly 25 years, he has been at the forefront of managing acute risks to global health and he served as Assistant Director-General for Emergency Preparedness and Response in WHO's Health Emergencies Programme from 2017 to 2019.

Dr Ryan first joined WHO in 1996, with the newly established unit to respond to emerging and epidemic disease threats. He has worked in conflict affected countries and led many responses to high impact epidemics.

He is also a founding member of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN), with which EAN is also collaborating to support the response to disease outbreaks around the world.

Dr Mike Ryan served as Coordinator of Epidemic Response (2000-2003), Operational Coordinator of WHO's response to the SARS outbreak (2003), and as WHO's Director of Global Alert and Response (2005-2011).

He was a Senior Advisor on Polio Eradication for the Global Polio Eradication Initiative from 2013 to 2017, deploying to countries in the Middle East.

Watch the video of the ceremony [here](#).

We were honoured to have Dr Mike Ryan participating in last year's EAN career compass at ESCAIDE – if you missed this, check out the video [here](#).

2022 FETP International Nights, Virtual organised by TEPHINET and CDC, 10-11 May 2022

This year, FETP International Nights, traditionally held during the [EIS Conference](#) in Atlanta, was a standalone virtual event.” FETP International Nights are an opportunity to share work done by Field

Epidemiology Training Programs (FETPs) around the world and to recognize the impact these programs make every day in public health.”

Find out more [here](#).

Summary of EAN activities and plans after the face-to-Face meeting in Palma

Planned events and decisions from the EAN board face-to-face meeting in February 2022

It was exciting for the EAN board to meet in person from 11-13 February 2022 in Palma, Mallorca and to discuss in depth the results of the EAN membership survey regarding its services and activities and, last but not least, to decide on our future plans! We are planning more face-to-face meetings, mini-modules and social events among fellows, members and EAN's friends for this year.

But first things first: thank you for completing and sharing your thoughts in the 2021 EAN member survey! Starting from your suggestions, it is a pleasure to share with you some news on the activities, which we will be delivering over the coming months:

Mini-modules

We were so far planning three mini-modules in 2022, one of which already took place, the **Geographic information systems (GIS)** mini-module in Rome on 9-10 April.



Basic and advanced R mini-module (online and in Paris). Dates to be confirmed – we will keep you posted! **Communication / infodemic management mini-module** planned as a side-event mini-module at the hybrid ESCAIDE conference 2022. Presumably taking place online and in Stockholm on 21-22 November.

Celebrations & social events

EPIET & EAN's birthdays: The planned 2020 celebration of the 25-year anniversary since the start of the EPIET programme was postponed due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. In August 2022, it will also be 22 years since the EPIET Alumni Network was formally created. We are therefore planning to organise a nice gathering this year. The plan is to get together and catch up with friends and colleagues, celebrate the birthdays, discuss the EPIET and EUPHEM programmes evolution, share nice laughs and plan for the future of our association! As you may know we sent out a google form to know the approximate number of participants; unfortunately out of about 100 replies, only about 25% would be happy to attend. However this would imply a quite large budget and time that we feel we should justify being sure to include a decent number of alumni. In addition, the original weekend in September is colliding with the TEPHINET congress. As well as following the suggestions from the google forms, we decided to move the celebration event to the weekend after ESCAIDE (26-27 November in Stockholm) – **SAVE THE DATE**.

Do not miss further information on the **22 years of the EAN and the 25+2 years of the EPIET programme celebration** in the weekly bulletin.



EAN monthly lunches will be held on-line every last Wednesday of the month, starting on today 23rd February at 12.30 CET. Mark it as a recurrent event in your calendar and use this [link](#) to join us!

D&D events will be organised during the EAN mini-modules, EAN board activities and fellowship modules, to try to keep fellows, alumni and EAN friends connected. Also, several ad hoc D&D events are planned. Anyone can take the initiative to do a gathering of EAN members in their place of residence. Other ideas are also on the table, such as Sunday picnics, museum visits, cultural walks, hiking groups or even ice-swimming! Tell us if you are interested in organising one or have a new idea for getting together and we will help you share the news. You will find up to date information in the weekly bulletin, so don't forget to read these! One of the planned D&D events will be taking place on the 3rd September in Lisbon, during the next EAN F2F board meeting.

EAN actions

Following the survey results, we are already implementing some members' suggestions on EAN's activities.

EAN bulletin

It seemed that to several EAN members the advantages of being an active (paying) EAN member were not very clear. Despite not all activities in the bulletin being accessible to inactive members. So, we decided as announced in the latest EAN bulletin that starting from 1st March the bulletin will be sent to active members only (paying members and current fellows). In addition, the bulletin has been reduced and modified to let active members capture quickly what are the news, available jobs and announcements. We would also like to include a new section with recommendations on books, podcasts, webinars, apps, documentaries, movies, songs or whatever people think might be of interest to the network. Start sending us emails and/or use the newly added social channel [#recommendations-for-epi](#) in EAN's Discord community platform.

About **Discord**, we plan to continuously improve it and we strongly encourage everyone to use and maybe slowly transition from WhatsApp to Discord. On the other hand, connections with inactive alumni and EAN friends are always in place and encouraged, so the Newsletters and the Discord link will be shared broadly and all are welcome of course to our social events! We will always keep some spots for the EAN mini-modules, however the reduced prices do not apply to inactive (i.e. non-paying members).



We are also taking actions to improve the EAN website, planning to create a more interactive interface, a member profile space and a forum where the connections within the network will be much easier.

Volunteers follow-up

In the 2021 EAN member survey, several members indicated interest in supporting the EAN board as volunteers for various EAN activities (such as the Newsletters, organising mini-modules or webinars, D&Ds, ESCAIDE activities, etc). So, we have already started contacting some for the upcoming events. If you also feel like contributing to the EAN activities e.g. by writing a piece for the quarterly newsletter, then do not be shy and drop us an email. Suggestions and comments are very appreciated.

EAN finances

Thanks to active (paying membership fees) members' contributions and because it has not been possible to organise any F2F events in 2020 and 2021, the EAN finance situation is currently very good and allows us to organise and promote several activities. All mini-modules and professional development activities will continue to be offered to the active (paying) members and current fellows with a substantial discount.

For any suggestions or if you need additional information, write to eanboard@gmail.com

Dinner & Drinks past events

12 February 2022, Palma de Mallorca, Spain

During the EAN F2F meeting, we were able to explore the old town of Palma and to meet with Marga Riera, who lives in Mallorca and who is the COO of P95.



26 February 2022, London, UK

In late February, the EAN family met at the Spitalfields Market in London, it was a lovely event with people from 6 different cohorts!



28 February 2022, Copenhagen, Denmark

There was also an after-work meet-up for current fellows and alumni in Copenhagen with about 15 people joining.

9 April 2022, Rome, Italy

Not only did we have a lot of fun at the GIS mini module in Rome, but we could also use this opportunity to connect with the participants as well as current/former fellows based in Rome.



12 May 2022, Brussels, Belgium

In a sunny evening, a lovely post-COVID gathering of the Belgian alumni took place in Central Brussels to catch up on where we are, discuss possible EAN activities and have some drinks among new and old friends!



EAN noticeboard - upcoming events

25+ years of EPIET, 26-27 November 2022 – SAVE THE DATE

We are finally able to plan a celebration of more than 25 years of EPIET, save the date! We hope this event will be taking place on the weekend 26-27 November 2022 in Stockholm, Sweden, after ESCAIDE.

Social events

EAN dinner and drinks in Stockholm Tuesday 7 June from 18.45 in Vapiano (Gamla stan)

Taking advantage of the RAS module for C2020 happening in Stockholm from 6-10 June - come and meet current fellows, facilitators involved in the module and alumni based in Stockholm. Contact kostas.danis@ecdc.europa.eu for more information.

EAN dinner and drinks in Lisbon Saturday 3rd September- Location TBC

Taking advantage of the Project review module and the upcoming EAN F2F meeting, we are organising a D&D to meet up with current fellows and alumni living in the area of Lisbon. Contact eanboard@gmail.com for more information.

Online social activity: "EAN lunch bunch" - every-last-Wednesday-of-the-month

Every last Wednesday of the month, some of us were meeting for the "EAN lunch bunch"! We totally understand that another virtual meeting – especially with the weather improving – is not very charming. However, we will keep it going, so that people from the EAN family can connect, share their ideas and thoughts with us and each other, ask questions to the network or just talk about their week... (no recordings will be allowed ;-)). All **EAN & friends** are invited to participate monthly, every **last Wednesday of the month at 12.30 CET** to the shared lunch using a permanent [zoom link](#). The next lunch will take place on **25 May 2022**, save the date!

Upcoming conferences - SAVE THE DATE

- **9 June 2022** [The epicentre 32nd Scientific Day](#) will take place at the Espace Niemeyer (2 Pl. du Colonel Fabien, 75019 Paris) or live on the web.
- **9-12 November 2022:** 15th European Public Health Conference, Berlin, Germany, organised by EUPHA. Strengthening health systems: improving population health and being prepared for the unexpected. Abstract submission opens 1 February. Find out more [here](#).

EAN Communication channels (Discord, WhatsApp, etc.)

Since the beginning of the pandemic, EAN's WhatsApp group was activated to share and facilitate the communication between EAN members, allowing a more rapid and effective response. However, the group grew and another platform was launched to allow smoother communication and interaction.

EAN's new Discord server is a better structured forum to connect, exchange and discuss information within the network. On [EAN's Discord](#), you will get the latest EAN-related information and news as well as be able to find and share resources on analytics, surveillance or outbreak investigations, public health microbiology or discuss the latest news and developments in the field of infectious diseases. Therefore, we are inviting members and friends to switch to Discord considering the WhatsApp group is close to the maximum limit of many participants can be in a group. The easiest way to use Discord is

by installing the Discord app on your phone and/or Desktop and then clicking that link. After joining the server, you will be directed to the welcome-and-rules channel where you can read more about all the different features and learn how to use the server. Once you are done with that, please come and tell us a few words about you in the [#introducing-yourself](#) channel!

On the weekly bulletin you can always find the link to Discord group and updates on the use of WhatsApp.

EAN has an up-to-date website where you can find several resources and a dedicated member's only area with posts on jobs, courses and conferences, internal news and updates, webinar recordings, and many more!

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [twitter](#)!

In the next edition!

- ✓ Updates on EAN projects
- ✓ Meet the new EPIET Coordinators
- ✓ Information on forthcoming EAN workshops and mini-modules
- ✓ And much more

Update your Membership

The annual membership fee is now €30 / £28.

There is a 10-year membership available at €250 / £230.

Please note that membership year runs from 1st November to 31st October of each calendar year. Make payment now and have your membership extended until 31st October 2022 (or 2032)!

Fellows in their first and second year of training are exempt from paying membership fees, according to the accepted statute changes of the 2012 General Assembly. We have added a new payment option for credit cards to make membership renewal a bit easier. To use this option, please go to our website and follow the instructions there.

The details for how to transfer fees by online banking are also on the [EAN webpage](#); 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 with a copy of the receipt/invoice to inform us about your payment (sometimes names are not correctly transmitted with the transfer). Thank you for your support!

EURO ACCOUNT (€30 per annum)

Bank: TransferWise Europe SA

Bank address: Avenue Louise 54, Room S52, Brussels 1050, BE

Account Holder: E.A.N. (EPIET Alumni Network)

IBAN: BE88 9670 3610 1241

BIC/Swift: TRWIBEB1

GBP ACCOUNT (£28 per annum)

Bank: TransferWise

Address: 56 Shoreditch High Street, London E16JJ, UK

Account holder: E.A.N. (EPIET Alumni Network)

IBAN: GB22 TRWI 2314 7095 5404 40

Account Number: 95540440

Sort code: 23-14-70