

WHO/Europe TB and MDR-TB quarterly newsletter – March 2012

Dear reader,

On the occasion of World Tuberculosis (TB) Day 2012, it is my pleasure to introduce the new quarterly WHO/Europe TB and MDR-TB newsletter. The aim of this newsletter is to provide you with the latest information on TB and M/XDR-TB in the WHO European Region and a snapshot of our work in support of health authorities and partners to prevent and control TB in the Region. In order to save your time, we decided to present you with short introductory notes and links to more in-depth information.

With an unprecedented engagement of the Member States, civil society organizations, communities and key stakeholders, WHO/Europe finalized the consolidated action plan to prevent and combat M/XDR-TB 2011–2015. The plan was unanimously endorsed at the sixty-first WHO Regional Committee for Europe in September 2011. Through this newsletter, we also aim to share with you follow-up activities and progress toward achievement of the plan's ambitious goals.

The target audience of this newsletter is all individuals, authorities and stakeholders interested in TB prevention and control in the WHO European Region. Please feel free to share this link with others as you deem appropriate. We value your input – and therefore welcome your comments and suggestions for future issues.

Warm regards from Copenhagen,
Dr Masoud Dara and the WHO/Europe TB and M/XDR-TB team

[Review the Consolidated Action Plan to Prevent and Combat M/XDR-TB in the WHO European Region 2011–2015](#)

FEATURE

World TB Day 2012 – Stop TB in my lifetime!

Exactly 130 years ago, in March 1882, Robert Koch discovered the bacteria responsible for tuberculosis. Despite more than a century of advances in technology and health care, the battle to control the disease is far from over. With the emergence of drug-resistant forms, TB is becoming more difficult to treat and therefore turning into an even greater public health threat. The World TB Day Campaign 2012 will allow people all over the world to make an individual call to stop TB in their lifetimes.

[World TB Day 2012](#)

On the occasion of World TB day, WHO/Europe and ECDC organized a live Twitter chat on 20 March 2012
[Read a summary of the live chat with tuberculosis experts from WHO/Europe and ECDC](#)

WHO/Europe has updated the TB Fact sheet with the latest epidemiologic data
[Tuberculosis in the WHO European Region: Fact sheet 2012](#)

NEWS

[New European initiative to strengthen TB laboratory capacity across 18 high-priority countries](#)

22-03-2012

In line with the Consolidated Action Plan to Prevent and Combat M/XDR-TB, WHO/Europe is establishing a European TB Laboratory Initiative (ELI) which will focus on strengthening laboratory capacity in the Region, particularly in 18 high-priority countries for TB.

[Call for applications for core group membership of the European TB Laboratory Initiative, 2012–2014](#)

22-03-2012

[High-level visit to the European Commission draws attention to the spread of tuberculosis in Europe](#)

22-03-2012

To draw greater attention to TB within the European Region, WHO/Europe together with the StopTB partnership and WHO headquarters organized a visit by President Sampaio, former President of Portugal and the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Stop TB, to the European Commission on 22 February 2012.

[WHO updates policy on collaborative TB/HIV activities](#)

07-03-2012

Based on new evidence, WHO/Europe has revised its guidelines on the management of TB/HIV co-infection.

COUNTRY IN FOCUS: BELARUS

[Record rates of MDR–TB investigated during external review of the national TB programme in Belarus](#)

22-03-2012

A comprehensive external review of the national TB programme of Belarus carried out in October 2011 sought to find the cause of record rates of MDR-TB among new and previously treated patients.

[TB country profile: Belarus](#)

RECENTLY PUBLISHED

[Tuberculosis surveillance and monitoring in Europe 2010](#)

Joint report by WHO/Europe and ECDC to mark World Tuberculosis Day 2012

[Russian version of Roadmap to prevent and combat drug-resistant tuberculosis \(MDR-TB Action Plan\)](#)

22-03-2012

[Mission report: extensive review of TB prevention, care and control services in Armenia](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Programme review to Kazakhstan

10–18 May 2012

Programme review to Hungary and Latvia in collaboration with ECDC

June 2012

National TB programme managers meeting

London, 3 July 2012

Surveillance meeting

Stockholm, Sweden, 12–13 June 2012

[Calendar of events 2012](#)

RECENT EVENTS

[Subregional training to facilitate rapid diagnosis of tuberculosis and multidrug resistance](#)

22-03-2012

With the latest WHO-endorsed technologies (Xpert MTB/RIF assay), it is now possible to diagnose TB and rifampicin resistance (an indicator of multidrug resistance) within two hours. The test has been proven to be highly sensitive and specific. The assay is very easy to use and requires only basic laboratory facilities and training. To facilitate introduction of the Xpert MTB/RIF assay in the central Asian region, WHO/Europe in collaboration with KNCV Tuberculosis Foundation held a subregional workshop in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on 15–16 November 2011.

Team retreat at the WHO Country Office in the Russian Federation

7–9 February 2012

The tuberculosis team in Copenhagen joined the staff of the WHO Country Office in the Russian Federation to carry out strategic discussions and operational planning of WHO TB control activities for the 2012–2013 biennium. A workplan for 2012 was also jointly developed.

QUICK FACT

Out of 7500 extensively drug-resistant TB (XDR-TB) cases that are estimated to occur annually in the WHO European Region, only about 212 cases were detected in 2010, because of low coverage with the appropriate diagnostic tools.

Source: [European Health for All database](#)

CONTACT US

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