

## P R E S S   R E L E A S E

Rome, 25 January 2011

For immediate release

### EPISOUTH PLUS

**The first Steering Committee Meeting of the EpiSouth Plus Project will be held in Luxembourg on February 3, 2011 to revise the Network organization and to agree the work plan for the first year.**

The activities of the [EpiSouth](#) Network started in October 2006 with the involvement of 9 EU . It worked for the past four years in enhancing communicable disease surveillance in the Mediterranean region and includes now 27 countries (9 EU and 17 non-EU, plus one candidate country). It is therefore the biggest inter-country collaborative effort of this kind in the region.

A new phase of the Network activities was approved and started on October 2010. Building on the knowledge of regional gaps and needs identified during the first EpiSouth implementation, the new **EpiSouth Plus Project** aims at increasing the health security in the Mediterranean Area and South-East Europe by enhancing and strengthening the preparedness to common health threats and bio-security risks at national and regional levels in the countries of the EpiSouth Network.

Seven Work Packages, jointly co-lead by EU and non-EU countries, will ensure the following strategic objectives:

1. To support common threat detection by developing a Regional Laboratories Network based on available resources in Mediterranean and South-East Europe.
2. To enhance Mediterranean Early Warning functions allowing alerts and epidemic intelligence information sharing among EpiSouth countries through the development of interoperability with other Early Warning Platform and especially the European Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) as forecasted by the current EU legislation.
3. To promote common procedures in interoperable Generic Preparedness and Risk management.
4. To facilitate IHR implementation through assessments and surveys on national procedural and legislative aspects.

EpiSouth Plus is co-financed by the EU DG-SANCO and EU DG-EuropeAid for an amount of 3.9 million Euro together with the involved Public Health Institutes and Ministries of Health. The financial support of the Italian Ministry of Health and ECDC is also acknowledged.



A project implemented  
by the Italian National Institute of  
Health (ISS)

Address: Viale Regina Elena, 299  
Rome 00161  
Italy  
Tel: +39 06 49904266  
Fax: +39 06 49904267  
E-mail: [episouth@iss.it](mailto:episouth@iss.it)

This project is co-funded  
by the European Union  
DG-SANCO and DG-EuropeAid  
together with the involved PHIs  
and MOHs

The financial support of the  
Italian Ministry of Health and  
ECDC is also acknowledged

The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

“The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders”.