

Editorial address for communications: Marlies Oenning (oenninm@uni-muenster.de)

Contents:

Letter from the Chair	1
Note from the Editorial Office.....	3
European Congress of Epidemiology 2006.....	3
EYE at Euroepi2006.....	4
IEA Council Meeting, August 17-18, 2006	5
Alexandria, Egypt	5
From the National Societies	6
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Epidemiologie (DGEpi) - German Society for Epidemiology	6
Finnish Epidemiological Society	6
UK news	7
CORESE.....	7
Combined initiative on European regulation of epidemiological research.....	7
Background	7
The proposal	8
Call for abstracts for the joint meeting of.....	9
the UK Society for Social Medicine &.....	9
The IEA (European Federation)	9
Courses & Programs	10

Most importantly, the former Chair of the Board of IEA EEF, Anne-Marie Nybo Andersen resigned from the Board due to unforeseen personal reasons. The Board expressed its special gratefulness to Anne-Marie who had managed to breathe new life into EEF and to get a number of initiatives off the ground during the fairly short period of her chairmanship. Her resignation was therefore deeply regretted by all representatives.

On June 28, 2006, during the last meeting of the Board of IEA EEF in Utrecht, I - as the former vice-chairperson - was nominated and elected as the new Chair of IEA EEF. Going with it was the official replacement of Anne-Marie as IEA Councillor for Europe, that is, as the representative of European epidemiologists in the IEA Council. Ana Azevedo was elected as the Vice-Chair of IEA EEF.

SSM / IEA-EEF Joint Meeting 2007

Hosted by University College Cork, Ireland

12th to 14th September 2007

<http://www.ucc.ie/academic/pubh/ssmiea/>



Letter from the Chair

Quite a number of months have passed since you received the last IEA EEF Newsletter. And accordingly, quite a few things have happened that I would like to brief you on - in particular those of you who have not attended our European Epidemiology Congress 2006 in Utrecht (special report inside).



Utrecht 2006 -
it was all fun (at least for the Danish delegates....)

After a protracted handing-over period and with several changes in the composition of its national representatives the new Board is now ready for 2007. For details please see our homepage (www.IEAWeb.org/Europe.htm).

We are particularly happy that the recently established EYE group (European Young Epidemiologists) seems to be flourishing under the leadership of Ana Azevedo from Porto and Mirjam Knol from Utrecht. This group was highly prevalent and productive during our European Congress of Epidemiology in Utrecht (see special report inside) and they seem to enjoy themselves – and epidemiology. We are truly lucky to have them in the EEF.

Anne-Marie Nybo Andersen, in her last Letter of the Chair, introduced you to a new concept which tries to establish IEA EEF as a non-governmental organisation which is accredited with the EU. This was approved in the meantime. To further strengthen the role of the EEF for epidemiologic research and public health in Europe we are presently trying to create a network called CORESE. Several of the EEF societies have agreed to financially support a trial phase of this new network (See inside for more).



Board Meeting of the EEF in Utrecht 2006

This brings me to the most important activity of the IEA EEF – traditionally as well as intellectually: the European Congress of Epidemiology 2007 will be hosted by the UK Society of Social Medicine in Cork (Ireland). We can look forward to a meeting that promises to be all that you may possibly search for in epidemiology: it will be attractive, inspiring, challenging and controversial. The perfect thing to spend mid-Septembers with... (See inside for more).

Finally, Europe is active in training and educating young (and less young but equally eager) students of epidemiology. This Newsletter provides a notice board and forum for the announcement of all these activities – please address to oenninm@uni-muenster.de.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Hense'.

Professor Hans-Werner Hense
Chair,
IEA European Epidemiology Federation (IEA EEF)
European Councillor,
International Epidemiological Association (IEA)

Note from the Editorial Office

The editor's office has again changed, that is, it moved back to where it started in 2003. Please send us any material you think (hope) will be of general interest to epidemiologists working across Europe. We are particularly interested in news from national societies, the announcement of international training courses (both short and long term), and any other work or paper related to epidemiologic research. You can reach me at the editorial office:

Marlies Oenning
Institute of Epidemiology and Social Medicine
University of Muenster, Germany
Email: oenningm@uni-muenster.de

European Congress of Epidemiology 2006

From June 28 until July 1, 2006 the IEA-EEF European Congress of Epidemiology took place in Utrecht, The Netherlands. The congress was organised by epidemiologists of Utrecht University, under the auspices of the IEA-EEF, and in collaboration with the Netherlands Epidemiological Association.



The congress opened in the University Hall, a beautiful location in the centre of Utrecht. The keynote lecture was given by Professor Jerome Kassirer, the former editor-in-chief of the New England Journal of Medicine, about financial conflicts of interest and how they can have an impact on scientific publications. After this fascinating lecture a beautiful summer day came to a close with a reception in the nice garden of the University Hall.

The next day the congress was continued in the new and modern Educatorium of the university.



The morning started with workshops and key note lectures spanning the wide scope from proteomics and genomics to epidemiology. For more details of the program you can have a closer look at

<http://www.juliuscenter.nl/euroepi2006/>.

For the first time, the European Young Epidemiologists (EYE) had their own session in the afternoon of the second day of the congress. EYE is a newly established network of European Young Epidemiologists who are mostly still in training. This was the first scientific session of EYE to be organized at an epidemiology congress and there were three presentations of EYE members from the Netherlands and Denmark.



The presenters had been instructed to only present design and methods of their research and no (or only preliminary) results. The session was aimed to present difficulties and questions to the audience to improve the design or data collection of the research. This concept proved to be nice and interesting concept and many participants thought that it should be continued in future epidemiology congresses.

The Friday and Saturday were also filled with highly interesting key note lectures ranging from

infectious disease impact to evidence-based medicine. Workshops provided insight into special statistical problems as well as the procedures and processes necessary to successfully apply for grants in the next round of the 7th EU framework.

In the afternoon of July 1 the congress was closed by presenting the award winners, and also the venue of the next European Congress of Epidemiology 2007 in Cork / Ireland and the 2008 World Congress of Epidemiology in Porto Alegre in Brasil (for details have a look at the IEA web site: www.IEAweb.org)

EYE at Euroepi2006

(Correspondent: Ana Azevedo, Porto)

During the EYE business meeting on June 30th 2006 there were approximately 30 members. The following summarises the minutes:

- Everybody agreed with the new eligibility criteria: PhD students can be members of EYE until 3 years after their PhD graduation
- Personal information of EYE members on website
- We will put up personal information about each EYE member on the website: name, institution, contacts, research areas of interest, ongoing projects
- Current EYE members will be e-mailed to ask if information about their project and email address can be displayed at the website
- New members can opt out by ticking a box on the registration form
- The concept of an EYE session "Work in progress" should be continued at other European Epidemiology congresses
- National epidemiology societies should also be encouraged to arrange an EYE session "Work in progress" at their meetings
- Everybody agreed that people from outside of Europe can be members as well
- Collaboration with other young scientists groups should be encouraged
- The main reason for EYE members not being IEA individual members is lack of information. IEA will send an email to all EYE members with useful information to promote itself.



EYE social programme - June 29th 2006

EYE members went canoeing in the canals on thursday evening, after the scientific session. The weather was wonderful! The barbecue was great! Check a sample of the photos here:



IEA Council Meeting, August 17-18, 2006
Alexandria, Egypt
(Correspondent: Hans-Werner Hense)

The Council of IEA met for two days in Alexandria on the Mediterranean coast of Egypt. The IEA has 1,184 members worldwide, with 336 residing in Europe which makes the European region the strongest within the IEA. These numbers show on one hand the - in relative terms - great interest that European epidemiologists seem to take in the international cooperation (and the International Journal of Epidemiology, of course!) but it demonstrates on the other, how low - in absolute terms - the number of IEA members still is on a global scale. Thus, in the centre of this meeting were detailed discussions about the mission and perspective of the International Epidemiological Association. Ample time was used discussing the procedures of selecting venues and supporting the planning and conduct of the triennial World Congresses of Epidemiology, and the involvement of IEA in the future.

Financial as well as intellectual support will be provided to societies and/or institutions bidding to host future WCE's, and details are to be specified in an IEA policy document early this year. The role of Professor Rodolfo Saracci, on behalf of IEA, with the revision of the International Ethical Guidelines for Biomedical Research Involving Human Subjects, prepared by the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences (CIOMS) in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO), was gratefully acknowledged. It was emphasised that epidemiological research, and its specific requirements, need to be more appropriately reflected in these guidelines and that the IEA may have to play a prominent role in this process. A revision of the layout of the IEA website was discussed and has recently been put into action by Prof. Charles Florey (<http://www.dundee.ac.uk/iea/>). The site for the IEA EEF is presently also under revision and will soon be relaunched.

For the minutes of the IEA Council Meeting see <http://www.IEAweb.org>



The IEA Council during Meeting in Alexandria, Egypt:

From left to right: (upper row) Jørn Olsen (President), Rodolfo Saracci (WHO Liaison officer), Mauricio L Barreto (Latin America & Carribaen)), Ahmed Mandil (Secretary), Babu L Verma (South East Asia)- (lower row) CC Jinabhai (Africa), Yosikazu Nakamura (Western Pacific), Neil Pearce (President Elect), Eman Hammam (Assistant to Secretary), Hans-Werner Hense (Europe), Hassan E El-Bushra (Eastern Mediterranean). Not on photo: Patricia Buffler (North America)

From the National Societies



Deutsche Gesellschaft für Epidemiologie (DGEpi) - German Society for Epidemiology

(Correspondent: Heiko Becher)

In autumn 2005, the new German Society for Epidemiology (DGEpi) was founded. As mentioned previously, it succeeds the former German Association of Epidemiology (DAE) which had been a juristically complex construct carried by three independent scientific societies. The DGEpi is an independent scientific society which aims to promote epidemiological research, professional training and good epidemiological practice. The first president is Heiko Becher, Heidelberg. The DGEpi is devoted to the promotion of quality, freedom and honesty in epidemiological research independent from any group interests. In September 2006, the first annual meeting in Greifswald took place, organised by Wolfgang Hoffmann, Greifswald, and Torsten Schäfer, Lübeck. With more than 300 participants, presentations of high scientific quality and framed with an excellent social program it was a big success. As of January 1st, 2007, the DGEpi has 317 full members, with rising tendency. The DGEpi is already, after only a little more than one year, the home society for the vast majority of all epidemiologists in Germany. For details see the website: www.dgepi.de

The next scientific meeting of the DGEpi will take place in Augsburg, Bavaria, and will be a joint meeting embedded into a full conference week with four other societies. The main theme for the meeting is "Medizin und Gesellschaft. Prävention und Versorgung: innovativ - qualitätsgesichert - sozial". The deadline for call of abstracts is March 1st, 2007. or more details see: <http://www.med-ges-2007.de/>

Finnish Epidemiological Society

(Correspondent: Tapio Luostarinen)

Finnish Epidemiological Society has more than 120 members at the end of year 2006. Veterinarian epidemiologists were welcomed to the Society in the beginning of the year. The Society has a new Chairman: Professor Markku Koskenvuo. The current and forthcoming Boards consist of the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, three Members and four Deputy Members, one member less than the previous Boards. The Deputy Members are expected to participate in the functioning of the Board as actively as the other Members.

The Society organized three half-day seminars in 2006. The seminar on Finnish terminology in epidemiology and statistics organized with the Department of Public Health at the University of Helsinki attracted so many that the lecture hall had to be changed to the most spacious one. Veterinarian epidemiologists were active since the very beginning and organized a seminar on a topical theme: the zoonoses. A seminar on pharmacoepidemiology was organized with the Finnish Information Centre for Register Research. The Society has announced the third research contest for young Finnish epidemiologists or epidemiologists working in Finland.

The working group preparing Finnish glossary of epidemiology has almost gone through Finnish translations of the terms in the fourth edition of A Dictionary of Epidemiology. The Society appointed Dr. Timo Hakulinen the Epidemiologist of the Year 2006. The Society commented with the Society for Social Medicine in Finland the CIOMS supplement, "Special ethical considerations for epidemiological research". The website of the Society is <http://www.finepi.org/>.

UK news

(Correspondent: Robert West)

2006 marked the 50th anniversary of the formation of both the 'international corresponding club', which became the International Epidemiological Association, and the Society for Social Medicine. To mark this anniversary honorary life members of SSM were invited to the annual conference in Leeds in September; fourteen attended. Professor Alwyn Smith, a founder member spoke at the civic reception on 'the first half century' and wished the society well for the next half. (There may be a copy of his speech on the website.) We then nibbled birthday cake and sipped champagne, kindly donated by an American honorary member. [Note; the joint IEA EEF / SSM conference this year in Cork will mark the 50th anniversary of the first SSM meeting (in Birmingham in 1957)]. The Cochrane lecture was delivered by Professor Martin McKee on 'Cochrane and communism'. One day meetings were held in November on 'Improving use of ethnicity in analytical research' and on 'Evaluating public health interventions; alternatives to RCTs.'

CORESE

Combined initiative on European regulation of epidemiological research

Background

Much legislation or 'quasi-legislation' (i.e., recommendations, guidelines etc) relevant for epidemiologic research is being enacted at the level of the European Union (EU, Brussels) or The Council of Europe (CE, Strasbourg). Examples are the Data Protection Directive (EU, 1994), the Clinical Trials Directive (EU, 2002), the Biomedicine Convention (EC, 1997) and the draft Declaration on Biobanking and Use of Human Tissue for Research (EC, 2006). Existing regulations will be evaluated and updated, new regulations will show up.

So far, IEA/EEF is not involved in this process, nor is any other epidemiological association, except in certain Scandinavian societies, where government policy aims to involve experts in European affairs. Otherwise epidemiologists are consulted on an individual basis, without back up from the epidemiological community. In these circumstances, the more restrictive approach from ethicists and lawyers prevail over the epidemiological approach. Early involvement of IEA/EEF in the drafting and evaluation of international regulations would at least inform the epidemiologic community about issues that are likely to become important. It would facilitate the debate within EU and CE and would eventually benefit epidemiologic practice in Europe.

Dutch medical scientific societies, including the Netherlands Epidemiologic Society, have joined forces in a committee for regulatory affairs in medical research (COREON). This committee has ample experience with active involvement in (quasi-)regulation at the national level. The committee, for instance, has been successful in amending Dutch law about the use of medical data for research (1994) and the use of national statistics on causes of death for follow-up studies (2005). In addition, two codes of conduct were produced which serve as standards for studies with medical data and human tissue respectively (see www.fmwv.nl). COREON is initiated and chaired by Prof Jan Willem Coebergh, cancer-epidemiologist, and represents about 30 research institutes. The active committee comprises 15-20 professional medical researchers (most of them epidemiologists) from different institutes and meets 3 times a year in well prepared meetings. The annual budget of COREON is about 40,000 Euro. Part of the success of COREON is due to a formal and longstanding liaison with Mr EB van Veen, a lawyer specialised in these matters and owner of a small company called Medlaw-consult. (see www.medlaw.nl).

COREON plans to extend its domain of activity to European (quasi-)legislation relevant to epidemiologic research, for reasons mentioned above, and proposes IEA/EEF as a partner in this enterprise. Ideally other medico-scientific societies such as pathologists, immunologists, geneticists should also get involved and participate.

A recent example of this already ongoing work is the current work program of the art. 29 Working Party ex Directive 95/46 EC (the data protection Directive). One of the aims of this working party is to 'harmonise' the meaning of "personal data". Depending on the national legislation, much epidemiological research would become impossible if certain data were too readily assumed to be personal data. This process should therefore be influenced.

For another example see article below.



The proposal

1. IEA/EEF applies for NGO status at the level of EU (already approved in 2005) and the CE. These are necessary but yet insufficient steps in the process.
2. All IEA/EEF national epidemiological societies with interest in participation in a network on European regulatory affairs related to epidemiologic research, appoint a dedicated epidemiologist to represent their society and somebody who replaces him or her in his absence for whatever reason. Together, these representatives form a platform for exchange of information, mutual discussion and active lobby. Prof dr Jan Willem Coebergh is willing to chair this platform for the first three years and Medlawconsult will actively support the process at an agreed annual budget of 8000 euro max (accountable to the members of the network). A regular flow of information will be upheld, with a purpose to be interactive. A proposed name of this network could be something like: **CORESE** (COMmittee on Regulation of Epidemiological RESearch in Europe)

3. COREON/Medlaw serves as the address for (electronic) mail from EU, CE (or any other European organisation of interest to the network) concerning upcoming legislative initiatives related to epidemiologic research. In addition COREON/Medlaw will actively scan websites and other material from EU/CE to expand the information-input.

4. Participating societies contribute to the network with an annual fee of 1000 euro (for societies 500 members or more) or 500 euro (for smaller societies). The

resulting budget will only be used to cover the declaration of Medlaw. Members of the network will not be compensated unless for travel

expenses in case of agreed lobby activities.

5. The network will start formally in November 2006 for a trial period of 12 months. After that period the IEA/EEF board will evaluate continuation. If positive, all participating societies will have the opportunity for renewal of their membership for another period of 3 years. New participants may enter the network by then, also for a period of 3 years.

Present state

To date, the national societies from the following countries have shown their interest in supporting the above proposal including the formal agreement to provide some financial funds to organise a first trial period of 12 months:

Finland, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the UK. Decisions from Denmark, Italy and Portugal are still pending.

A Subcommittee of the IEA-EEF is presently negotiating the details of a formal agreement between the CORESE partners to establish a clearly defined basis from which the new initiative is to operate in the future.



CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

For the joint meeting of
The UK Society for Social Medicine &
The International Epidemiological Association (European Federation)

Hosted by University College Cork, Ireland

12-14th September 2007



DEADLINE 16TH MARCH 2007

Abstracts are invited for this joint meeting of two leading epidemiological societies, which will include oral and poster presentations on all aspects of epidemiology, public health and social medicine.

Submission of abstracts

To be considered, abstracts must be no more than 400 words, contain no references or tables, and be presented in a structured format. All abstracts must be received by **Friday 16th March 2007**.

Details on how to submit your abstract will be available on the conference website from January 2007 (<http://www.ucc.ie/academic/pubh/events.htm>).

For further information about the conference contact the Honorary Secretary, Dr Amy Downing (admin@socsocmed.org.uk).

INVITATION TO BUSINESS MEETING

According to the constitution, the European Epidemiology Federation should arrange a Member's Meeting (Business Meeting) during the EuroEpi Congresses. All members of IEA in Europe are hereby invited to the business meeting to be held during the Cork Meeting. Suggestions for the agenda should be mailed to oenninm@uni-muenster.de and a final agenda will be mailed to all members three weeks before the meeting.

Hans-Werner Hense, Chair of EEF, IEA Councillor for Europe

COURSES AND PROGRAMS

Title	Time	Place	For More Information	Organizer
The merged 4th Nordic congress on epidemiology, and the 2nd Nordic congress on registry epidemiology.	June 18 to 19, 2007	Gothenburg, Sweden	http://www.nordreg2007.se	SVEP (Swedish Epidemiology Society) and Nordic Cancer Union, Centre for Epidemiology, National Board of Health and Welfare, Sweden and Nordic School of Public Health
The 2007 Edition of the Summer School on Modern Methods in Epidemiology and Biostatistics.	June 11 to 23, 2007	At CastelBrando , in Cison Di Valmarino, Treviso, Italy	http://www.bioepi.org	Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden
22 nd International Epidemiology Summer School Münster	July 2 to 7, 2007	Münster, Germany	http://epi.klinikum.uni-muenster.de/download/Programm_2007.pdf	Institute of Epidemiology and Social Medicine, Münster, Germany
18 th International Summer School of Epidemiology	July 23 to 27, 2007	Ulm, Germany	http://www.uni-ulm.de/epidemiologie/index.html	Institute of Epidemiology, Ulm, Germany
Course in Modern Methods in Epidemiology and Biostatistics	November 12 to December 6, 2007	Rome, Italy	http://www.rm.unicatt.it/igiene/epidemiology	Institute of Hygiene, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore - Rome, Italy