



The Burden of Disease Due to COVID-19

BoCO-19

Towards a Harmonization of Population Health Metrics for the Surveillance of Dynamic Outbreaks

Duration

2021 – 2023

Budget

approx. 650,000 EUR

Partner countries

Albania
Azerbaijan
Belgium
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Georgia
Kazakhstan
Kosovo*
Kyrgyzstan
Mongolia
Montenegro
Serbia
Turkey
Ukraine
Uzbekistan

Challenges addressed by the project

Both directly and indirectly, COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the health of the general population, showing that reliable and timely epidemiological information is vital. The burden of disease (BoD) methodology is a suitable instrument to monitor the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on population health. However, while illness and death have a considerable impact, to date the implementation of BoD methods has faced unsolved challenges, limiting its usability for the surveillance of the pandemic.

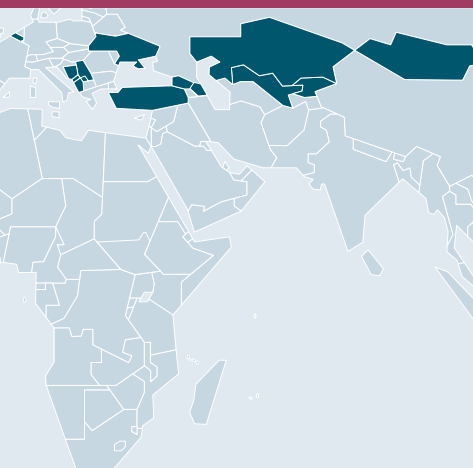
Objectives

The overall aim of BoCO-19 is the development and implementation of a harmonized methodology for the timely provision of information on the BoD due to COVID-19:

- » International scientific networking with fourteen participating international partners, linked to the EU-funded COST Action CA18218 European Burden of Disease Network
- » Overview and assessment of existing data sources
- » Development of a harmonized methodology via workshops to consolidate and synthesize applied methods
- » Implementation of BoD indicators by calculating the Burden of Disease due to COVID-19 for all partners
- » Consensual methodology for the integration of BoD-indicators into the surveillance of dynamic outbreaks that may serve as a blueprint for future pandemics
- » Dissemination of methodology and results

Overview of activities

The project will include online meetings and a total of four workshops in order to create an inventory of the available data sources in each country, and to calculate BoD indicators for COVID-19 for all partners. In addition to assessing the disease burden for an entire calendar year, the example of COVID-19 will also be used to explore ways of making the method usable for timely surveillance. BoD methods for Germany have been developed at the Robert Koch Institute within the BURDEN 2020 project. First steps have also been taken to measure the BoD due to COVID-19 in Germany and are currently discussed within the European Burden of Disease network (burden-eu COST Action). BoCO-19, which is a trilateral cooperation



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between Germany, 14 partners and the burden-eu COST Action goes into much greater depth and tackles the main methodological challenges via four work packages (WPs): WP 1 creates and sets working priorities for the network, clarifies country specific needs, and assesses available data sources. WP 2 develops a methodology for calculation of BoD indicators, including a case definition. WP 3 prepares the available data, applies the methods to the data and consolidates the results. WP 4 finalizes a manual, prepares scientific publications and provides a visualization of the findings. Next to partners from the burden-EU COST action, the partner institutions from Serbia and Kazakhstan will also act as regional contact points for the partner organizations.

Partner institutions/Contact

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- » Institute of Public Health of Albania
- » Public health and reforms center, Ministry of Health, Azerbaijan
- » Institute of Public Health Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- » Public Health Institute of Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina
- » National Center for Disease Control & Public Health (NCDC & PH), Georgia
- » Public Association “Healthy Future”, Kyrgyzstan
- » Institute of Public Health of Kosovo
- » School of Public Health, Mongolian National University of Medical Sciences, Mongolia
- » Institute of Public Health of Montenegro
- » Ministry of Health, Turkey
- » Ukrainian Institute on Public Health Policy & Public Health Center of Ukraine
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* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.