



# Sero-B

## Preparation of Serosurveys to Evaluate the Hepatitis B Vaccination Impact in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

### Duration

2021 – 2022

### Budget

approx. 97,000 EUR

### Partner countries

Belarus  
Kyrgyzstan  
Republic of Moldova  
Turkmenistan

### Challenges addressed by the project

In the European Vaccine Action Plan, hepatitis B control through immunization is one of the major goals. The WHO European Action Plan for response to viral hepatitis sets the goal of elimination of viral hepatitis as a public health threat by 2030. It also sets hepatitis B control targets, including reaching very low prevalence ( $\leq 0.5\%$ ) of hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg) in cohorts born after introduction of universal hepatitis B vaccination. The WHO Regional Office for Europe supports countries in implementing the Regional Action Plan strategies. Every country should undertake at least one HBsAg seroprevalence survey in a representative sample of population cohorts born after the nationwide implementation of the hepatitis B immunization programme.

### Objectives

- » Provide technical expertise for designing and implementation of the hepatitis B serosurveys in countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia in close collaboration with WHO Regional Office for Europe
- » Conduct serosurveys to estimate the seroprevalence of HBsAg in children from vaccinated cohorts on the national and regional level
- » Strengthen national public health institutions in the target countries and viral hepatitis elimination monitoring by working together with national public health institutes

### Overview of activities

The Ministries of Health of Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, and Turkmenistan asked WHO Regional Office for Europe for support in conducting hepatitis B seroprevalence studies to document hepatitis B vaccine impact and validate the achievement of regional hepatitis B control goals. The project will generate evidence of hepatitis B vaccination impact in the region and thus provide evidence of achievement of hepatitis B elimination targets. In general, the serosurveys in the countries will apply probability-based sampling using a stratified multi-stage cluster design. A school-based or polyclinic-based approach will be used, where the schools or polyclinics will act as clusters. Prior to implementation, the surveys will be submitted for ethical committee approval in the respective countries. The project will include two work-packages (WP):

WP1: Together with WHO, prioritization of two countries for technical support in 2021 and assessment of country needs for technical advice.



Supported by:



on the basis of a decision  
by the German Bundestag



Meeting of WHO, RKI and the Ministry of Health  
in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (© RKI)



Vaccination records in a school nursery in  
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (© RKI)



Visit of the scientific and practical centre for  
quality control of laboratory diagnostics of  
infectious diseases, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (© WHO)



Department of Epidemiological Surveillance  
(SES) in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (© WHO)

WP2: Provision of respective technical advice, including:

- » Advising on study methodology and documentation;
- » Advising on development and piloting of the study material, data and sample collection;
- » Advising on laboratory testing methods;
- » Sampling of the study participants;
- » Technical support in monitoring of the survey;
- » Development of the data analysis plan.

In WP2 a (virtual) country mission together with WHO staff is planned in order to meet with stakeholders and discuss the respective topics. Continuous support for the selected countries, follow-up activities and support for other Eastern European and Central Asian countries is planned from 2022 onwards.

### Partner institutions

- » WHO Regional Office for Europe

### Supporting institution in Germany/Contact

Robert Koch Institute

HIV/AIDS, STI and Blood-borne Infections

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