

Changes to Eurosurveillance in 2010

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Citation style for this article:

Citation style for this article: Eurosurveillance editorial team. Changes to Eurosurveillance in 2010. *Euro Surveill.* 2010;15(3):pii=19470. Available online: <http://www.eurosurveillance.org/ViewArticle.aspx?ArticleId=19470>

This article has been published on 21 January 2010

With the beginning of the new year we have reviewed our editorial policy and some of our procedures. Therefore, we take the opportunity to introduce several new features to our readers and authors and to remind them of old but maybe forgotten ones.

In the past, our print compilation contained all long articles and most of the rapid communications published in each quarter of the year. In view of the widespread availability and use of the internet and the online version of *Eurosurveillance* being the reference publication, we have decided to discontinue the regular print version. Instead, we will distribute hard copies of our special issues and further develop the print production of thematic compilations such as our recent collection of articles on the 2009 influenza A(H1N1) pandemic for which we have received very encouraging feedback. At the same time, we want to improve the appearance of the printed issues by replacing the old *Eurosurveillance* cover page with a picture or photograph illustrating the topic at hand. We encourage authors and readers who want to contribute potential cover images for such topical editions to contact the Editorial team.

One of the documents that have been updated is our copyright form, which we require all authors to sign before their article can be published. The form contains issues related directly to originality and copyright of the submitted material and statements on the appropriateness of the text and possible conflict of interest. Of particular importance for us was the addition of a passage on patient confidentiality. Our authors are asked to obtain informed consent from persons (or their legal representatives) whose details are described in a fashion that may lead to the identification of an individual. In exceptional circumstances where the importance for public health might override the need for protecting the individual will we accept the data without such consent. In those cases we will do our utmost to ensure that the data are anonymised as much as possible to prevent identification of the individual.

In addition, we would like to remind our authors that the article category “rapid communications” is intended for timely reports on ongoing outbreaks and significant findings in the area of communicable diseases where rapid dissemination of the information facilitates

rapid public health action and could potentially lead to immediate change in an ongoing public health situation. These articles are generally peer-reviewed and edited within a few days of submission, sometimes within hours. To allow for such rapid processing it is important that a word limit of around 1,000 words is observed.

All supplementary material is subject to peer review. We therefore want to emphasise, as is now also stated clearly in our ‘For authors’ pages, that *Eurosurveillance* usually does not publish supplementary material. All necessary information should be integrated in the article, while observing the word limit. In exceptional cases, where compelling reasons preclude the inclusion of certain information within the body of the article, we can give the authors the option to make such material available on an independent website and to provide a link to this website in the article. Such material, however, is not edited by *Eurosurveillance* and *Eurosurveillance* is not responsible for the correctness of the content.

Last but not least, *Eurosurveillance* has been accredited by the Health on the Net (HON) Foundation (<http://www.hon.ch>) as adhering to the HON code of conduct (HONcode©). HON is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation with the purpose of supporting users to identify sound, reliable and trustworthy health information on the internet since 1995.

With all updates and changes described, we aim at further improving transparency and our editorial standards for the benefit of our readers and contributors.