

## Current major event

### Travel-associated cases of Legionnaires' disease on the rise

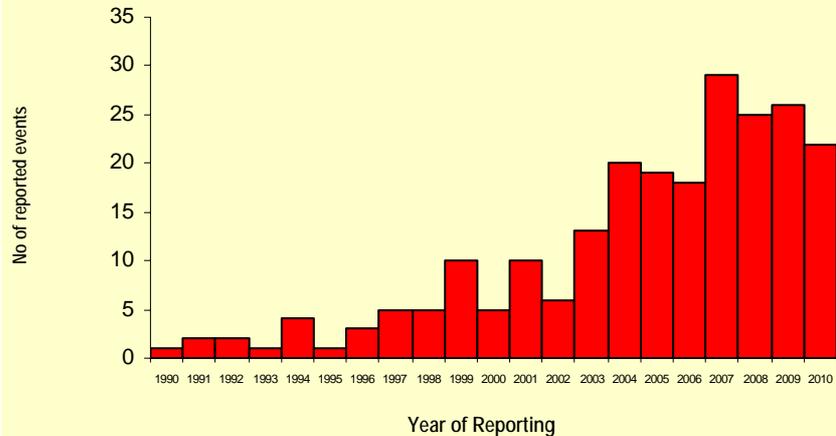
The number of Legionnaires' diseases cases reported to the European Working Group for Legionella Infection Network (EWGLINET) with travel history to countries in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) continues to rise. From January to November 2010, twenty-two (22) laboratory-confirmed cases of legionnaires' disease have been reported amongst European citizens with travel history to countries in the Eastern Mediterranean Region.

### Editorial note

Countries in Europe routinely report cases of legionnaires' disease to EWGLINET. These reports are shared with WHO if they are associated with travel to a particular country and WHO in turn notifies the source countries if the causes of illness are presumed to be associated with travel to that country. Since 1990, EWGLINET has recorded a total of 229 laboratory-confirmed cases of legionnaires' disease whose illnesses were associated with travel to nine (9) countries in the EMR. In 2010, all the 22 cases of legionnaires' disease reported to EWGLINET, whose illness may be associated with travel to the EMR, have been reported in connection with stay in hotels in some of the popular holiday destinations and resorts in Egypt, Kuwait, Lebanon, Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates (*Please see the table*)

Travel-associated Legionnaires' disease linked to countries in the EMR is continuing to rise as is the proportion of tourists visiting these countries. In the event that legionella control and preventive programmes are not effective in these countries, the risk of infection due to legionnaires' disease will continue to pose a persistent public health threat in these countries. The purpose of notification from WHO to the concerned countries is to encourage the appropriate health authorities to conduct an investigation and institute necessary control and remedial measures. WHO/EMRO, has not received any feedback on the

**Number of Legionnaires' disease cases reported to EWGLINET, 1990-2010 with travel history to EMR countries**



**Legionnaires' disease reported to EWGLINET with travel history to EMR 2010**

Country	No of cases whose illness may be associated with travel to this country
Egypt	1
Kuwait	1
Lebanon	1
Tunisia	7
United Arab Emirates	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>

extent to which the reported countries used these information to initiate investigation and what appropriate preventive and control measures were undertaken if any. Unfortunately, some hotels in the same countries have been associated with repeated cluster of cases over many years. The publicity surrounding cluster of these reported cases can be harmful to tourism with adverse effects on local economies.

Most of the travel-associated cases occur due to contaminated water systems in hotels or other public accommodation sites where the visitors or the tourists stay overnight. In order to avoid any adverse impact on travel and tourism, it is important that the source countries take this issue heads on, investigate all reported cases and implement control measures as needed in order to minimize the risk of legionella infections. It is in the best interest of these countries that they make the best use of these information to control legionellosis.

## Update on outbreaks

### in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

CCHF and Dengue fever in Pakistan; Dengue fever in Yemen; and Kala-azar in southern Sudan

### Current public health events of international concern

[cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

#### Avian influenza

Egypt	[112 (36), 32.1%]
Indonesia	[170 (141), 82.9 %]
Viet Nam	[119(59), 49.6%]
China	[40(26), 65%]
Global total	[508(302), 59.4%]

#### Crimean-congo haemorrhagic fever

Pakistan	[26(3), 11.5%]
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#### Cholera

Haiti	[72017(1648), 2.2%]
Chad	[2508 (111), 4.4%]
Nigeria	[ 29115(1191),4%]

#### Kala-Azar (Visceral Leishmaniasis)

S. Sudan	[6363( 303). 4.7%]
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#### Dengue fever

Pakistan	[2062(15), 0.7 %]#
Yemen	[1903(12), 0.6 %]#

#### Polio

Congo	[184(85), 46.1 %]
Pakistan	[113(0)]

CFR=Case-Fatality Rate  
# Laboratory-confirmed cases only