

European Parliament adopts resolution on the Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative (TBVI)

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On 3 February 2011 the European Parliament adopted a resolution which highlights the role that the European Union (EU) can play in meeting the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) to halt and begin to reverse the incidence of tuberculosis (TB) by 2015. While progress has been made, the disease still causes almost 2 million deaths every year, with mortality especially high in developing countries and among sufferers of HIV/AIDS [1,2].

But TB is still a danger to European citizens as well, because of the worrying emergence of strains of tuberculosis resistant or highly resistant to treatment. In addition, the cost of TB treatment alone in the EU is EUR 2 billion per year [3].

According to the European Parliament, only a vaccination programme involving a large-scale vaccination campaign could have a positive impact in achieving the MDG to reduce prevalence and death rates after 2015, and in particular the elimination of TB by 2050.

MEPs highlight the central role that can be played by Tuberculosis Vaccine Initiative (TBVI), an independent, not-for-profit organisation that develops new vaccines, with the aim of making them globally accessible and affordable. According to the resolution, the TBVI's work should be included in the practical implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy [4] and a much greater pharmaceutical research effort should be put in tackling diseases such as TB.

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