Change of guard in *Eurosurveillance*

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In March 2007, *Eurosurveillance* moved to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) from its two previous hosts, the Institut de Veille Sanitaire in Paris, France (*Eurosurveillance Monthly*) and the Health Protection Agency in London (*Eurosurveillance Weekly*) [1]. This marked an important date for the then young ECDC, as this was the first major European Union funded public health project moving to the Centre [2] and I was proud to become the journal's Editor-in-chief.

From the start, my aim was to build on the successful work of my predecessors in Paris and London and to continue to provide and further develop a platform for the exchange of scientific information for all those engaged in the surveillance, prevention and control of communicable diseases [1]. Moreover, I was convinced that the opportunity to have the editorial team for both publications physically in the same place for the first time would open new possibilities such as merging the two formats into one. It would allow *Eurosurveillance* to be strengthened and established as a prime European source of scientific information in its field, in other words to become Europe's journal on infectious disease surveillance, prevention and control.

In fact, relying on a strong network of dedicated experts across Europe and a committed team of editors and with the editorial independence guaranteed by two consecutive ECDC Directors and the ECDC Management Board, *Eurosurveillance* is now firmly established. In 2009, the journal applied for and was accepted to receive an impact factor [3] and during the 2009 influenza A(H1N1) pandemic much attention was paid worldwide to the timely publication of peer-reviewed papers in our journal [4,5]. Timeliness has been and will remain a strength and key distinctive feature of the journal. The rapid sharing of information has on several occasions contributed to linking and detecting similar outbreaks and to controlling them [6-9]. Moreover, a recent reader survey has demonstrated a high level of satisfaction and much support for our journal.

After four exciting years as Editor-in-chief of *Eurosurveillance*, I take over new responsibilities at ECDC where I will build up the new *Public Health Capacity and Communication Unit* [10]. Therefore I

am now handing over the full leadership of the journal to Dr Ines Steffens. Ines has since the transfer of the journal to ECDC in 2007 been Managing Editor of *Eurosurveillance*, leading the day-to-day work of the Editorial Office. In this position she has been instrumental in the successful development of the journal, not least broadening the group of authors and readers to a truly global one.

Ines has a firm public health and communicable disease knowledge and passion for quality. Together with an enthusiastic editorial team, her vision is that of a strong journal, which provides knowledge and evidence for decisions that help to prevent and control infectious diseases thus contributes to the many efforts in improving health overall. I am therefore convinced that *Eurosurveillance* will continue to thrive, and although with a sad eye the heart is light when now stepping down from the lead of the journal. I will continue to follow the development of the journal and support it as Associate Editor in the future.

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