
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEM IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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Objective: The project of Establishing the Environmental Health Information System Supporting Policy (ENHIS) in Europe, coordinated by WHO European Centre for Environment and Health and supported by EC, aims to set up and start the operation of a comprehensive information and knowledge system that generate and analyse environmental health information to facilitate relevant policies in Europe, focusing on those addressing children. The EH Information System is based on a set of indicators developed and updated by the project and is using health impact assessment methods. Implementing the EH Information System in European countries on the national levels is one of the goals of these activities. The need of EH information system was reaffirmed on the 4th EH Ministerial conference in Budapest, and it is one of the priorities set in the Biennial Collaborative Agreement between WHO and the Czech Republic.

Material and Methods: Based on the developed methods and tools within the ENHIS project, the countries have facilitated way to establish or improve their EH information systems. In the Czech Republic, the EH Monitoring System producing information on environment and health has been operated since 1994 based on the Resolution of the Czech Government. It is one of the priorities of the

National Environmental Health Action Plan. The data serves for the monitoring the progress in performance of the tasks resulting from the EH policies and action planes, such as Health 21 programme or CEHAP. EH Monitoring System in the Czech Republic is focused on those environmental health issues representing straight health risks from the particular components of environment being the basic exposure pathways of pollutants or adversely acting factors. The EH information system comprises much wider array of EH issues, involving more environmental and life-style factors affecting human health. Therefore, the data are of multisectoral character which implicates great demands on cooperation between various national departments. As the first step, the availability of data from the Core set of indicators developed in ENHIS was tested for CZ. Also informative Fact sheets on selected EH issues have been elaborated.

Results: Within testing the availability of data necessary for the Core set of indicators it was found out that many of indicators proposed for evaluation are generally available in the Czech Republic, due to good tradition of national reporting. At some indicators a slightly distinct methods have been used by collecting, or they are not directly focused on the child population in the free available sources. Based on those issues that are available recently three informative Fact sheets have been elaborated assessing the population exposure to particulate matter, asthma prevalence and blood lead levels in children.

Conclusions: There will be further made efforts to implement the comprehensive Environmental Health Information System in the Czech Republic based on the products acquired in ENHIS mainly through the Steering Committee of NEHAP.