

of the sampling routine, medical history and exposure-relevant behavior of each volunteer gets documented using a standardized and self-administered on-line-questionnaire. In addition, all human samples are analyzed for a defined set of pollutants before being archived. Analytical results and questionnaire data are statistically evaluated and interpreted by UBA, IBMT and IPASUM and reported to the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) on a regular basis.

Hence, the German ESB generates important information on internal exposures of humans and respective environmental samples and provides a scientific basis for taking appropriate policy measures concerning human health, environment and nature conservation as well as to evaluate their success. The German ESB is financed by BMUB, and scientifically coordinated and supervised by UBA.

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## Self-evaluation of biobanks: a tool to identify quality oriented biobanks in Europe

**Parodi, B.<sup>1</sup>, Daidone, M.G.<sup>2</sup>, Filocamo, M.<sup>3</sup>, Bravo, E.<sup>4</sup>, Cantaloni, C.<sup>5</sup>, Marcon, G.<sup>6</sup>, Paradiso, A.<sup>7</sup>, Milanese, M.<sup>8</sup>, Stanta, G.<sup>9</sup>, Sangiorgi, L.<sup>10</sup>, Lavitrano, M.<sup>11</sup>**

<sup>(1)</sup> IRCCS AOU San Martino-IST, Genoa;

<sup>(2)</sup> Istituto Nazionale Tumori, Milan;

<sup>(3)</sup> Istituto G. Gaslini, Genoa;

<sup>(4)</sup> ISS, Rome;

<sup>(5)</sup> Ospedale S. Chiara, Trento;

<sup>(6)</sup> Fiorgen Foundation, Sesto Fiorentino, Florence;

<sup>(7)</sup> IRCCS Giovanni Paolo II, Bari;

<sup>(8)</sup> CNR-ITB, Segrate, Milan;

<sup>(9)</sup> University of Trieste;

<sup>(10)</sup> IOR, Bologna;

<sup>(11)</sup> University Milano-Bicocca, Milan, Italy

In order to identify quality oriented European biobanks, complying with the BBMRI-ERIC principles and able to provide high quality samples and data to the European and international research community, an on-line self-evaluation tool has been developed by the Italian Node of BBMRI (BBMRI.it). The on-line questionnaire developed takes into account all parameters for their compliance with the BBMRI-ERIC Partner Charter (primacy, access policy, data protection and management policy, informed consent, infrastructure and management, quality management, charges). The criteria used by both the BRIF initiative and the “ESBB Biobank of the Year” competition have also been taken into account in designing the questionnaire and in defining the method of evaluation. Direct contacts have been established to obtain more detailed information, and on-site audits on selected biobanks have been planned to randomly assess the efficacy of the evaluation system. This tool will allow to: (i) identify biobanks who give assurance of service to the scientific community, interoperability, compliance with ethical and legal standards and International best practices; (ii) help biobanks and their host institutions in identifying strengths and weaknesses in their Quality Systems; (iii) provide the National Nodes with data for developing services and tools aimed at improving quality and efficiency of their networks; (iv) support the BBMRI-ERIC Member States in allocating financial resources for the development of biobanks; (v) sustain the development of the European biobanking infrastructure.