

## WHO PROTECTS THE TRAVELLERS ?

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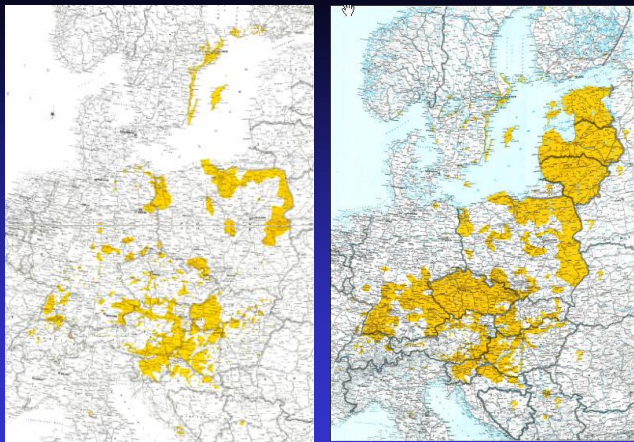
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## TBE Endemic Map 1995 vs 2005

Pamela Rendi-Wagner, 2006



Two important observations should initially be pointed out: first, over the past 10 years, the incidence of TBE infection has significantly increased with a multiplying factor of 10 for Lithuania, 8 for Poland, 8 for Finland, 6 for Germany and 5 for Estonia. Between 2004 and 2005 the increase rates are even stronger in countries like Germany with 56%, Switzerland with 49%, the Czech Republic with 24%.

## No. of EU travel to TBE endemic countries

(1+ Nächte)	Reiseziele	CH	DE	AT	SI	HU	SK	CZ	PL	LT	LV	EE	SE	RU	UA	Balkan	Summe > als:
<b>Quellmärkte</b>																	
UK	Großbritannien	391	499	455	76	61	4	416	40				93	177	36	?	2.257
IE	Irland	15	49	40	12	8	2	32	3				11	12	?	?	184
NL	Niederlande	351	2.322	901	56	129	14	317	43				100	68	15	?	4.316
BE	Belgien	143	470	249		21	5	85	31				23	26		?	1.053
LU	Luxemburg	45	166	45		6	1	5	4				8	3		?	283
FR	Frankreich	717	1.182	458	50	136	23	297	166				101	198	27	?	3.355
ES	Spanien	32	210	54		17		71	30				9	52	?	?	475
PT	Portugal	37	20	7		8		7					3	11	?	?	93
IT	Italien	485	511	420	313	128	169	169	112				30	170	36	?	2.543
CH	Schweiz		1.370	419	24									38	?	?	1.851
AT	Österreich	75	391		206	132	57						47	14	?	?	923
DE	Deutschland	2.763	8.450	10.835	238	1.823		1.685	1.916				516	142	?	?	28.368
DK	Dänemark	14	336	157		39	1	120	70				506	33	?	?	1.347
NO	Norwegen													45	?	?	45
SE	Schweden	20	561	132		56	16	67	80				63	?	?	?	995
FI	Finnland	20	125	29		41	4	32	19			1.335	1.154	?	?	?	2.759
EE	Estland													405	?	?	405
LV	Lettland	1	26	15		3	6	5	7				35	345	20	?	463
LT	Litauen	2	123	4		1	3	11	96				39	874	33	?	1.185
PL	Polen	47	1.407	197		81	385	378					84	1.232	1.793	?	5.604
CZ	Tschechische Rep.	80	388	536		142	854		122				29	30	22	?	2.203
SK	Slowakei	6	54	118		223		382	45				6	15	183	?	1.012
HU	Ungarn				38									17	34	?	89
SI	Slowenien	12	50	114		17		14						29	60	?	207
GR	Griechenland													1	18	?	89
CY	Zypern	3	10	4		6	1	6	2					1	18	?	53
TR	Türkei													140	43	?	183
																	62.342

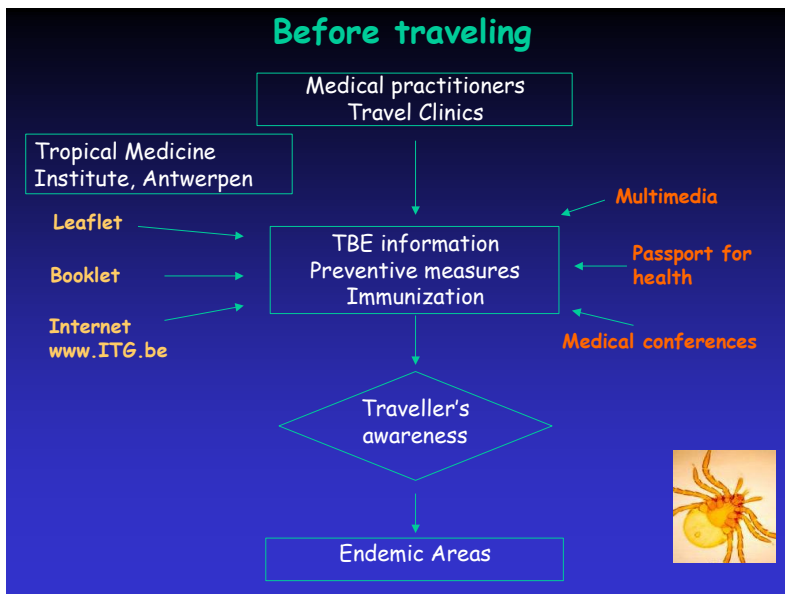
Eurostat 2004 Eurostat 2003 lokale Daten keine Daten verfügbar

"A second important observation: the number of travellers in the endemic countries is in full growth: Every year, over 60 million times, people from EU member states travel into TBE endemic countries. Since the latest extension of the EU borders the number of tourists from Western Europe and Germany traveling into these countries has substantially risen.

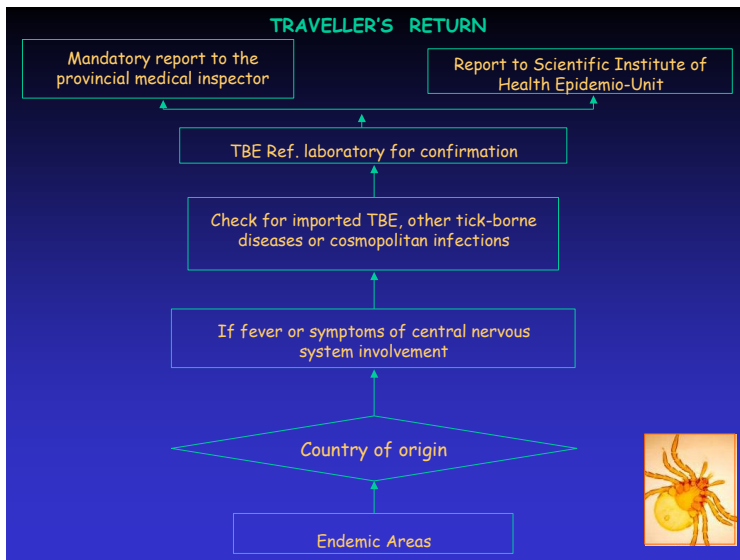
With 365 Mio travellers in 2004, today Europe generates more than half of total international tourist arrivals, with as major source markets Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation, Belgium, Austria, Switzerland, Spain and the Nordic countries.

Based on estimated risk of TBE illness of 1/10.000 for a 4-week's stay in the TBE endemic province of Styria in Austria, the predicted number of travel-associated TBE cases was 6 per year over that county and 60 per year over the whole country of Austria.

The question is: where are they? Are they perhaps missing the right diagnosis after having returned to their home countries? So far nobody knows."



This makes the information delivered to the traveller upstream and protection by vaccination prior to travel a step of a paramount interest. This strategy is ensured in Belgium by a network including the Institute of Tropical Medicine, the centers of vaccinations and the medical profession as a whole. Apart from the usual visit to doctor, the traveller is able to find various sources of information such as booklets, leaflets and passport of health and he has also the opportunity to visit the internet site of the Institute of Tropical Medicine: [www.itg.be](http://www.itg.be). A new leaflet on TBE under preparation will be available on the web site of the Epidemiology Unit, Scientific Institute of Public Health: [www.iph.fgov.be/epidemiolabo](http://www.iph.fgov.be/epidemiolabo).



A capital rule that must observe the non-vaccinated traveller on his return in the country of origin is that once a fever or a neurological problem has occurred, he must request a help of a doctor for investigation of pathologies which can be linked to his stay in the endemic area. The clinician will have to think not only of the TBE but also of the other potential tick-borne diseases such as Lyme borreliosis and anaplasmosis. Assistance and expertise of a reference laboratory will be needed to confirm or to rule out the diagnosis of a travel-related TBE infection. In Belgium, although the cases are rare, TBE is subjected to a mandatory report to the competent authorities.

## Conclusions

- *Main destination for Europeans is Europe*
- *Increasing travel to TBE endemic regions*
- *High travel season corresponds with main tick-activity time. Thus, high risk of exposure for travellers*
- *TBE vaccination should be recommended for travellers to endemic regions*

In conclusion, Europe remains the first destination appreciated by the Europeans themselves. Overall, the endemic zones of TBE welcome each year thousands of travellers who expose themselves to the risk of contamination and of development of severe TBE infection. Thus, the travellers should rely on the first line efficient measure, which happens to be vaccination, to ensure both the comfort and the protection of their health.