



Letter to the Editor

Comments on 'Newborn screening in southeastern Europe' published in *Molecular Genetics and Metabolism*, 2014 Sept–Oct;113(1–2):42–45 by U. Groselj, M. ZerjavTansek, A. Smon, N. Angelkova, D. Anton, I. Baric, M. Djordjevic, L. Grimci, M. Ivanova, A. Kadam, V. Mulliqi Kotori, H. Maksic, O. Marginean, O. Margineanu, O. Milijanovic, F. Moldovanu, M. Muresan, S. Murko, M. Nanu, B. Repic Lampert, M. Samardzic, V. Sarnavka, A. Savov, M. Stojiljkovic, B. Suzic, R. Tincheva, H. Tahirovic, A. Toromanovic, N. Usurela, T. Battelino

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One year ago, a study for assessment of the current state of newborn screening (NBS) in the region of southeastern Europe, focusing also on the future plans, was published [1]. We would like to correct data for the NBS program, future plans, and also GDP per capita in Macedonia. Methodology of data collection is questionable since ISNS (International Society for Neonatal Screening) has not been included as a data resource. The authors claimed that PKU newborn screening was not introduced in 4 of 11 countries: Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Montenegro, and that in the Macedonia there aren't plans to expand NBS in the next 5 years [1]. However, in Macedonia a selective newborn screening for inborn errors of metabolism, including PKU, by tandem mass spectrometry, has been implemented. In 2012, a total of 4072 newborns from six bigger nurseries, were screened (17.14%) and two newborns with inborn errors of metabolism (phenylketonuria and hypermethioninemia) were detected. Metabolic newborn screening is performed under an external independent quality control by CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov) Atlanta, USA. On the other side, the experience with the newborn screening for congenital hypothyroidism in Macedonia has been reported previously [2].

In the paper of Groselj et al. [1], the economic backgrounds responses from participating countries showed that Macedonia had GDP

11,834 USD per capita for 2012. These data correspond to GDP in International dollars (Int\$) and are significantly higher than GDP in USD. However, all given GDP values in the paper are in International dollars but are discussed as USD. Macedonian GDP per capita for 2012 was 3680 EUR (4127 USD) [3].

In conclusion, in Macedonia, as a country with the low GDP per capita, selective neonatal screening has been introduced for more than 30 inherited metabolic disorders, by tandem mass spectrometry, since 2011. Activities to cover all newborns are underway.

Conflict of interest

The authors do not have any conflict of interest.

References

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