

TREATMENT AND TRANSMISSION FACTORS AFFECTING TUBERCULOSIS INCIDENCE IN THE EMERGING ECONOMIES OF THE POST-SOVIET BALTIC REPUBLICS, 1989-2009

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ABSTRACT

Tuberculosis (TB) has re-emerged as a global public threat since the 1980s, rising in incidence throughout the world, coinciding with the rise of HIV. Political instability and economic depression exacerbate the effects of a communicable disease epidemic, which poses a threat to current developing countries as well as faltering industrialized nations. Tracking the emergence of tuberculosis in the Baltic republics (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) from their split from the Soviet Union to their current state allows patterns affecting TB's incidence and mortality rates to be delineated. TB in the Baltic region does not have a linear correlation with HIV incidence, but it is significantly correlated with the presence of physicians. Healthcare workers properly trained in the WHO's DOTS strategy for controlling TB have a significant effect on controlling the spread of the disease. Many types of data that would further describe the epidemic in the Baltic region are not available. Social and behavioral information is notably absent, and it is recommended that data collection in these areas for developing countries be the focus for future infectious disease epidemiology and control.