European Committee on Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing (EUCAST) 2015-2016

EUCAST objectives

- To form under the auspices of ESCMID and ECDC an expert network on antimicrobial breakpoints and susceptibility testing.
- To determine, review and revise European breakpoints and epidemiological cut-off values (ECOFFs) for clinical susceptibility and surveillance of antimicrobial resistance in collaboration with the EMA and ECDC.
- To develop and standardize methods, to promote quality assurance, education and training, and to advise and collaborate with other groups on issues related to antimicrobial susceptibility testing.
- To work towards international harmonization of antimicrobial breakpoints and susceptibility testing.

EUCAST organization

A General Committee with representatives from all European Union and some non-European Union countries is led by a Steering Committee. Decisions are made by the Steering Committee after consultation with the General Committee, expert groups and more widely in open consultations.

Subcommittees

EUCAST subcommittees are set up to deal with specific issues or areas requiring particular expertise. Current subcommittees are:

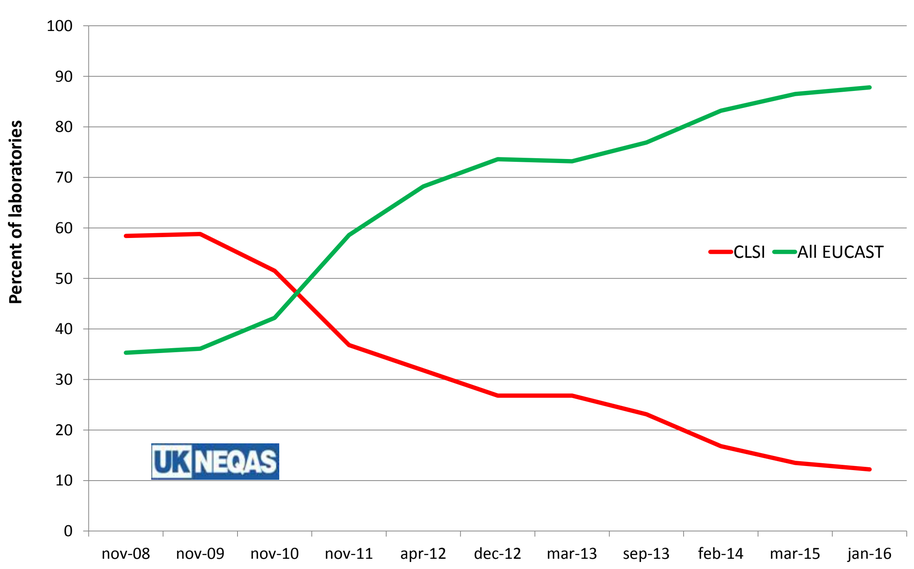
- Antifungal Susceptibility Testing (AFST).
- Veterinary committee on antimicrobial susceptibility testing (VetCAST).
- Subcommittee on the role of whole genome sequencing in antimicrobial susceptibility testing of bacteria.
- Subcommittee on MIC distributions and ECOFFs
- Subcommittee on antimicrobial susceptibility testing of mycobacteria

National Antimicrobial Susceptibility Testing Committees (NACs)

EUCAST recommends that all countries should have a NAC to support laboratories, organize training activities and give a national opinion on antimicrobial susceptibility testing issues.

Uptake of EUCAST guidelines

EUCAST guidelines are increasingly implemented in European laboratories and beyond, as indicated by the UK NEQAS External Quality Assessment (630-750 participants per year from 40 countries).



Development Laboratories

There are two EUCAST development laboratories (EDL) responsible for the development of methods for antimicrobial susceptibility testing of bacteria (Växjö, Sweden) and fungi (Copenhagen, Denmark) respectively.

Network Laboratories

Two separate networks of microbiology laboratories with particular expertise and training in EUCAST antimicrobial susceptibility testing methods for bacteria and fungi, respectively, have been established.

News 2015-2016

- Several new NACs formed.
- New breakpoint tables v.6.0 for bacteria and v.8.0 for fungi published, together with updated QC tables.
- Breakpoints set for new agents, ceftolozane-tazobactam, dalbavancin, oritavancin, tedizolid and isavuconazole, and in process for some others.
- Breakpoints set (nitroxoline) or in process (temocillin) for older agents without breakpoints.
- Established breakpoints for colistin (in collaboration with CLSI) carbapenems, fluoroquinolones, aminoglycosides, and tigecycline are under review.
- Breakpoints being developed for less common organisms, e.g. *Aerococcus* spp. and *Kingella kingae*.
- Several documents updated, including those on the disk diffusion method, antifungal susceptibility testing methods and “Frequently Asked Questions”.
- Intrinsic resistance tables and expert rules under review.
- An educational video on the EUCAST disk diffusion method in preparation for the WHO.
- Two articles published in *J Antimicrob Chemother* on development of EUCAST.

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EUCAST EUROPEAN COMMITTEE ON ANTIMICROBIAL SUSCEPTIBILITY TESTING
European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases

For detailed information on all aspects of EUCAST see www.eucast.org