



FOOD-CT-2005-007036

EARNEST

EARly Nutrition programming- long term follow up of Efficacy and Safety Trials and integrated epidemiological, genetic, animal, consumer and economic research

Instrument: Integrated Project

Thematic Priority 5.4.3.1: Food Quality and Safety

Final public report on activity 2.1.4

Title of activity: Final version of searchable website on birth cohorts

Period covered from 15.04.2005 to 14.10.2010

Start date of project: 15.04.2005

Duration: 5,5 Years

Organisation Name of Lead Contractor for this report: FIMIM

There are numerous mother-child cohorts (prospective studies of pregnant mothers and their children) in Europe. Some of them are large such as the Danish National Birth Cohort (DNBC) with around 100.000 mothers participating, others are small such as the RHEA study in Crete with 1,500 mothers participating. Some cohorts evaluate numerous exposures and lifestyle factors, others focus on nutrition and others on environmental exposures. Some collect extensive biological samples from the mother and the child while other are mainly based on questionnaires. Overall, there is a wealth of information in Europe on exposures and patterns of life of pregnant mothers and of the health of their children. However much of this research is done without much connection and it is even difficult to identify what research activities happen in Europe in this field. EARNEST has put together some of the largest available cohorts. As part of the coordination activities, EARNEST has also collected information on as many cohorts as possible in Europe and has participated in the development of a website that includes this information. This activity of EARNEST is described here.

The www.birthcohorts.net is unique in Europe in that it includes the most complete and updated information on mother-child cohorts. At present, it is practically complete for Europe although we have not yet achieved a high level of completeness for cohorts outside Europe. Efforts to recover such information were done together with WHO but information is incomplete. Therefore, at present the website is focused in European cohorts.

The website currently includes information from 41 studies from 17 countries in Europe. These numbers may be modified since new cohorts are initiated and registered.

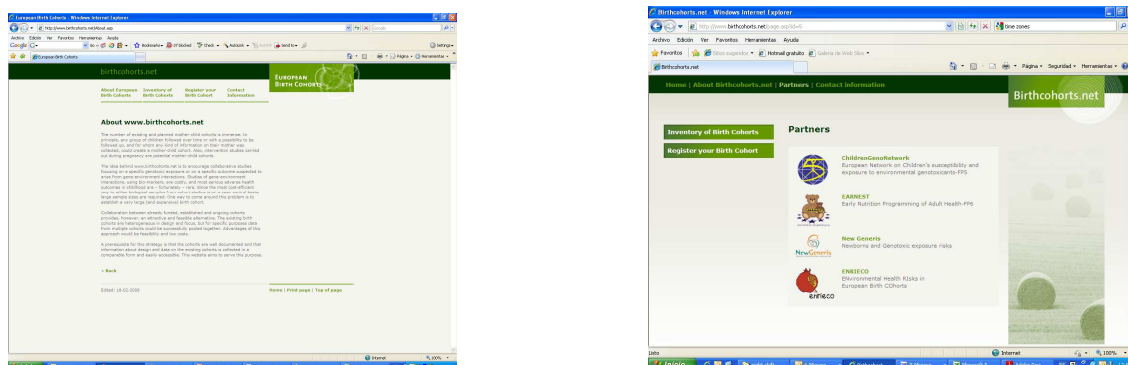
The website includes four main parts:

1. About European Birth Cohorts
2. Inventory of Birth Cohorts
3. Register your Birth Cohort
4. Contact Information

A detailed description of the website follows.

The first page “About European Birth Cohorts” gives basic information about the website, inclusion of cohorts, funding from EU programmes (Figure 1)

Figure 1. First page of the birth cohorts website “About European Birth Cohorts” and page with funding information



The menu “Inventory of Birth Cohorts” allows a listing of all cohorts included in the website (Figure 2), or allows users to search for cohorts using a variety of terms (Figure 3) such as availability of exposure (e.g. diet) or outcome (e.g. neurodevelopment) information

Figure 2. Inventory of all birth cohorts

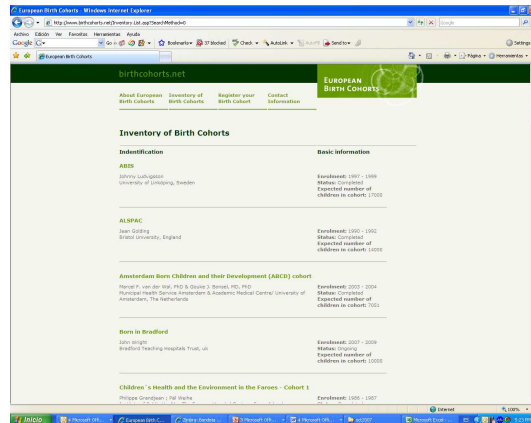
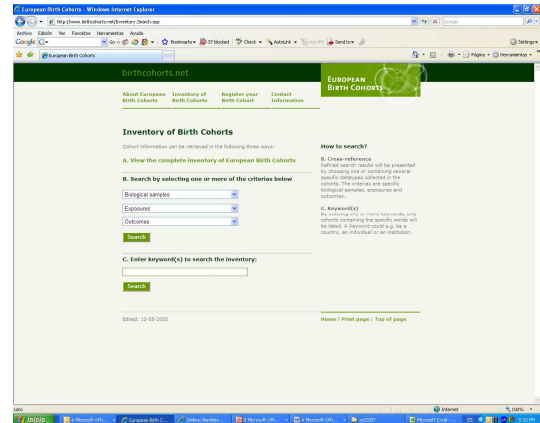
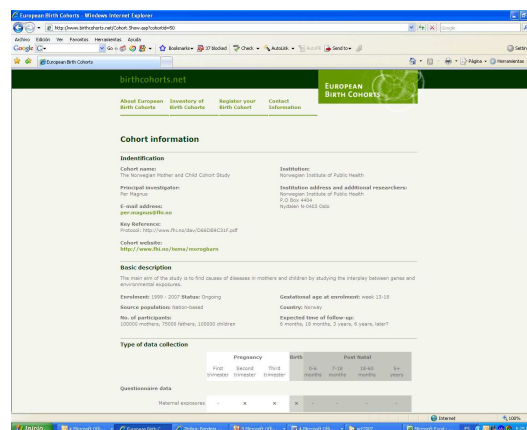


Figure 3. Search Tool, Birth Cohorts



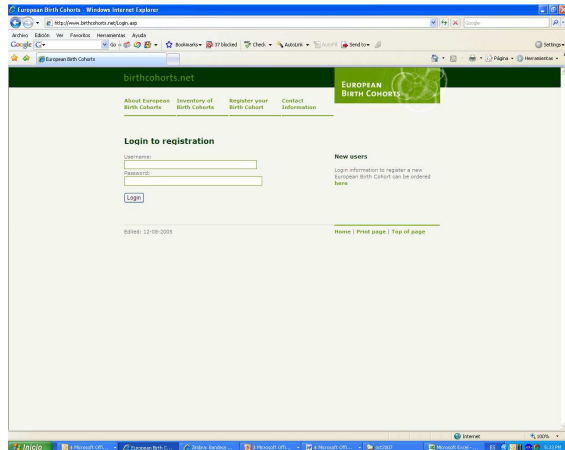
The previous screens link to additional screens with information on individual cohorts. Figure 4 shows the first screen of the information on the Norwegian mother child cohort (MOBA). Where available, links to the main website of each birth cohort are also included.

Figures 4. Detailed information for selected individual cohorts, in this screen MOBA. Norway



A final interactive menu allows the registration of new birth cohorts. After such requests, the basic data for the cohort are examined to ensure that the cohort corresponds to the type of cohorts included in the website, and the cohort is registered.

Figure 5. Menu to register new birth cohorts



The future

Information on each cohort can be updated by the person responsible for the cohort. The coordinators of the birthcohorts.net website have contacted again all cohorts requesting updates. With the end of EARNEST, the future of birthcohorts.net depends on funding from further projects. At present, further funding has been requested and provided by another FP7 project (CHICOS) that will guarantee the functioning and expansion of the website. In addition, another European FP7 project (ENRIECO) that is focused on environmental exposures has collected detailed information on environmental exposures that will become available through a link in the main birthcohorts.net website.

In conclusion, the birth cohorts website is the only available electronic directory of mother-child cohorts in Europe, and allows an easy search for basic information in each cohort or searches using specific keywords on exposures, outcomes or type of data collected. It is the belief of the organisers of this EARNEST activity that the availability of this information will help the coordination of research in Europe in the area of mother-child cohorts.