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Title: Risk factors for pulmonary tuberculosis in Croatia

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Body: Introduction: Mycobacterium tuberculosis is necessary but not a sufficient cause of tuberculosis. Various risk factors for tuberculosis development have been identified. Aim and objectives: To evaluate potential demographic, socioeconomic, behavioural and biological risk factors for tuberculosis in Croatia, a country with an intermediate burden. Methods: A total of 300 adult patients with culture-confirmed pulmonary tuberculosis were matched for age, sex and county of residence to 300 controls randomly selected from general population. They were interviewed for variables broadly described potential risk factors. Results: In multiple logistic regression parents born in Bosnia and Herzegovina (OR= 3.90, 95%CI 2.01-7.58), the lowest level of education (OR=3.44, 95%CI 1.39-8.50), poor household equipment (OR= 4.72, 95%CI 1.51-14.76), unemployment (OR= 2.69, 95%CI 1.18-6.16), the contact with tuberculosis (OR=2.19, 95%CI 1.27-3.77), former (OR=2.27, 95%CI 1.19-4.33) and current smoking habits (OR=2.35, 95%CI 1.27-4.36), diabetes (OR=2.38, 95%CI 1.05-5.38), a malignant disease (OR=5.79, 95%CI 1.49-22.42), underweight in the previous year (OR=13.57, 95%CI 1.21-152.38) were significant. Conclusion: In our study, the identified risk groups for tuberculosis reflect the complex interaction between socioeconomic conditions, life-style and non-communicable diseases. Tuberculosis control in Croatia would benefit from the combination of broad public health activities aimed at prevention and the control of risky

lifestyles and non-communicable diseases, interventions outside the health sector to combat poverty and efforts to constantly improve Croatian national tuberculosis programme.