Assessment of the economic losses caused by trichinellosis in Croatia
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Trichinellosis is a zoonotic disease which can have a high health, social and economic impact. The goal of this study was to assess the direct or indirect costs associated with human and animal trichinellosis in Croatia. Since it is difficult to measure all the costs, especially indirect ones, the aim was to measure as many costs as possible, arising as an economic consequence of the disease in Croatia. These costs fall into two groups: (1) costs related to human trichinellosis (losses due to illness and sick leave: costs of treatment, diagnostics and hospitalisation of patients; employer costs for sick leave; costs during sick period met by the Croatian Institute for Health Insurance (HZZO), costs related to employees’ income losses due to sick leave); and (2) costs caused by animal trichinellosis (the reimbursement of costs to the owners of infected animals; costs of safe disposal of animals; costs of diagnostic procedures and preventive treatments). The study was conducted for the period 1998-2006. In this period 1,527 diseased persons were registered. Out of 6.3 million examined meat samples from households and 7.1 million examined meat samples from slaughterhouses, positive were 0.22% and 0.032%, respectively. The total cost for this nine-year period amounts to 45.8 million EUR. The costs related to human trichinellosis amount to 4.2 million EUR. Economic losses caused by animal trichinellosis are estimated at 41.6 million EUR. Enormous losses caused by trichinellosis have a great impact on national budget and this zoonotic disease constitutes a great public health problem as well. Therefore, continuing implementation of control and preventive measures that could decrease losses is of great importance.