

Acknowledgements

More than 40 years of research in the Seven Countries Study has depended on many people. In the first phase of the study, 12,763 men aged 40-59 were examined at baseline from 1958 to 1964. Repeat examinations took place after 5 and 10 years and mortality data were collected up to 25 years. Thereafter, repeat examinations in elderly men were carried out in Finland, The Netherlands, rural Italy, Serbia and Crete and mortality follow-up was continued in 13 of the 16 cohorts. To all participants we are most grateful. They were examined repeatedly, in some cases up to 20 visits. Without their interest and patience this study would not have succeeded.

The 40-year research period started with the "classic period," 1958-1985, carried out under the leadership of Ancel Keys from the Laboratory of Physiological Hygiene, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota. The surveys at baseline, 5 and 10 years follow-up were carried out by local teams of clinical and diet investigators in close collaboration with Minneapolis. Ancel Keys, Henry Blackburn and Alessandro Menotti did the central coordination in this critical phase.

The principal investigators in the different countries were:

U.S.A.: Ancel Keys, Henry Taylor, Henry Blackburn (direction and medical examinations)

Ancel Keys, Joseph Anderson, David Jacobs (dietary surveys),
Rose Hilk, John Vilandre, David Jacobs (data processing and statistical analyses)
Finland; Martti Karvonen, Sven Punsar (direction and medical examinations),
Paavo Roine, Maija Pekkarinen (dietary surveys).

Netherlands: Frans van Buchem, Louise Dalderup, Edward Bosschieter (direction and medical examinations),
Cees den Hartog, Theodora van Schaik (dietary surveys)

Italy: Flaminio Fidanza, Alessandro Menotti, Vittorio Puddu (direction and medical examinations),
Flaminio Fidanza (dietary surveys)

Greece: Christ Aravanis, Andy Dontas (direction and medical examinations),
Christ Aravanis, Helen Sdrin (dietary surveys)

Croatia: Ratko Buzina, Ivan Mohacek (direction and medical examinations),
Ratko Buzina, Anna Brodarec (dietary surveys)

Serbia: Bozidar Djordjevic, Srecko Nedeljkovic (direction and medical examinations),

Bozidar Simic, Srecko Nedeljkovic (dietary surveys)

Japan: Noburu Kimura, Hironori Toshima (direction and medical examinations),
Noburu Kimura (dietary surveys)

Fieldworkers for the baseline, 5 and 10 year follow-up survey were acknowledged in the 1967, 1970 and 1980 monographs as were the sources of financial support from both the USA and local funds.

In the second phase of the Seven Countries Study, about 1985 to the present, repeated field surveys in the elderly were carried out in Finland, The Netherlands, and rural Italy, and formed the Finland, Italy, Netherlands, Elderly (FINE) Study. Similar surveys in the elderly were carried out in Serbia and Crete. Mortality follow-up was continued in the USA, Corfu, and Japan. The fieldwork activities were coordinated by Daan Kromhout, The Netherlands and the mortality follow-up by Alessandro Menotti.

The responsible investigators of the FINE Study are:

Finland: Aulikki Nissinen (direction), Juha Pekkanen, Paula Kivinen (medical examinations).

Leena Räsänen (dietary surveys).

The Netherlands: Daan Kromhout, Bennie Bloemberg, Edith Feskens, Sandra Kalmijn (fieldwork coordinators),

Edward Bosschieter, Ans Thomassen-Gijsbers, Janny Willemsen-ten Arve (medical examinations),

Marianne Bouterse-Van Haaren, Hester Goddijn, Annemarie Jansen, Lucie Viet (coordinators dietary surveys),

Bennie Bloemberg (coordinator data processing)

Italy: Simona Giampaoli (fieldwork coordinator)

Alessandro Menotti (medical examinations),

Flaminio Fidanza (dietary surveys)

The responsible investigators of the surveys in the elderly in Serbia and Crete are:

Serbia: Srecko Nedeljkovic (direction), Miodrag Ostojic, Miodrag Grujic, Nikola Vojvodic, Slobodan Imshiragic (medical examinations),

Crete: Anthony Kafatos, Andy Dontas (medical examinations)

Anthony Kafatos (dietary surveys).

The 40-year mortality follow-up of baseline cohorts not receiving repeated examinations was carried out by:

U.S.A.: Henry Blackburn, Alessandro Menotti, Rose Hilk

Corfu: Andy Dontas, Cleo Dontas

Japan: Hironori Toshima, Yoshinori Koga, Tsutomu Imaizumi, Hisashi Adachi

Data analyses were carried out by investigators in several countries. Ph.D. students used data from each national study and from the Seven Countries Study for their theses.

This overview of collaborators during 40 years indicates that an enormous network was built over the years to carry out these population-based, multidisciplinary, cross-cultural studies. It was a pleasure and stimulus to work with so many fine colleagues from the different countries.

This book provides an overview of the main results from the Seven Countries Study, published earlier in different monographs and peer-reviewed journals. The editors took the initiative and take responsibility for this book and its conclusions. Chapters were prepared by one or two of the editors, sometimes in collaboration with a colleague, and were critically reviewed by all editors and other colleagues from The Netherlands and Belgium. We are particularly grateful to Prof. Hugo Kesteloot, Prof. Wim Saris, Prof. Evert Schouten, Prof. Jaap Seidell, Dr. Edith Feskens, Dr. Volkert Manger Cats, Dr. Jantine Schuit, Dr. Tommy Visscher, and Dr. Peter Zock for their critical comments and thoughtful remarks.

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