



Joint BBMRI.at & BBMRI-ERIC national node meeting:
Short summary on the discussed topic "quality management"

by Helmut Haslacher, BBMRI.at quality coordinator and quality manager of Biobank Wien

While outside in the picturesque village of Obergurgl (Tyrol, Austria) icy temperatures drove people either to their homes or to the ski slopes, the *Universitätszentrum Obergurgl's* seminar room was warmed up by heated discussions on quality management. The participants of the *Joint BBMRI.at and National Nodes Meeting* were once again confronted with the important fact that the pre-analytical process, to which most of the biobank's workflows belong, accounts for the vast majority of errors within the analytical process. To top it all, these errors are usually very expensive. However, biobanks started to strike back. The best means against high analytical variability are evidence-based, standardized pre-analytical workflows. Thus, the *European Committee for Standardization (CEN)* is currently preparing Technical Specifications to the ISO standard *15189 – Medical Laboratories* on an international level. After this, it would be the biobanks' task to adapt their workflows in order to enhance quality and comparability of samples. This of course will require a close collaboration between BBMRI-national nodes.

Concludingly, the conference members agreed that successful biobanks have to strive for nothing less than top quality. Thus, on the long run pre-analytical workflows should be accredited. For this, well-functioning quality management systems, f.e. according to the ISO 9001 standard, will serve as a solid fundament.