

Abstract

Leishmaniasis are parasitic diseases transmitted by bloodsucking sand flies, which are distributed worldwide. Besides America, Africa and Asia, they are also present in southern Europe, mostly in the Mediterranean area, where *L. infantum* causes mainly visceral, rarely also cutaneous form of the disease. Balkan Peninsula is also one of endemic regions. Here, thanks to huge malaria eradication campaign in the 1950's, number of cases declined massively. Nevertheless, leishmaniasis has been reemerging since then. The main vectors of human leishmaniasis are sand flies of the subgenus *Larrousius*, mainly *P. neglectus*, *P. perfiliewi* and *P. tobbi*. The main reservoir animal is a domestic dog. Currently, the epidemiological significance of domestic cats and wild animals (hare, jackal, fox) is also studied. Most cases of human leishmaniasis are reported from Albania and Greece, where *L. tropica* is also present, causing cutaneous form of the disease. The aim of this thesis is to summarize the occurrence of leishmaniasis and its vectors in individual Balkan countries.

Key words: leishmaniasis, Europe, Balkan, *L. infantum*, sand flies