Reviewer's report

Title: Incidence and prevalence of multiple sclerosis in Europe: a systematic review

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Reviewer: Antonio Scalfari

Reviewer's report:

This is a comprehensive review that aims at addressing important aspects of the disease epidemiology. The use of a scoring system for rating the quality of each study is rather innovative. It is a shame that tables (where scores are summarized) are not available to the reviewers. Overall the article has good potential for publications after some improvements.

Introduction is rather concise.

Perhaps definitions of prevalence and incidence would be helpful for those readers not familiar with the topic. Europe is considered a high prevalence area but no reference is provided (beside the atlas). For instance, Kurtzke (2000) exemplified MS distribution in high (>/- 30 cases) medium (5-29 cases) and low (</- 5 cases) prevalence: according to this rating system West Europe is considered a high prevalence area, Centra/East Europe a medium prevalence.

With regards to sex ratio and incidence the introduction misses important reference: Orton 2006, Ramagopalan 2010, Trojano 2012.

Results

In figure 2 it would be helpful to shorten the list by grouping studies from the same authors.

Discussion

This section misses some practical implications. How the scoring system can be used for drawing more definitive conclusions? How the epidemiological methodology of future studies can be standardized for allowing better comparison?

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.
Declaration of competing interests:
I declare I have no competing interests