



TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE NETWORK ON VETERINARY ENTOMOLOGY

March 2024

BACKGROUND

Given that vector-borne diseases (VBDs) require a **one-health approach** in their prevention and control, ECDC and EFSA will establish a joint One-Health VectorNet Entomological Network (OHVEN), to strengthen collaboration and exchange of information among involved stakeholders to support the prevention and control of VBDs in the Member States (MS) of the EU and in neighboring countries (see list in “Members” section).

This initiative builds further on eight years of intense collaboration between ECDC, EFSA and different stakeholders through two consecutive inter-institutional framework contracts that founded “[Vectornet](#)”. To increase the visibility of VectorNet and surround the network members with stronger institutional support, it is the ambition of EFSA and ECDC to officialise the network and establish a joint One-Health VectorNet Entomological Network (OHVEN).

The core functions of the OHVEN include the provision of entomological expertise to support ECDC and EFSA in their assessments of the risks related to vectors and zoonotic and non-zoonotic vector-borne diseases and the provision of scientific advice on entomological matters. The OHVEN should collaborate with national and international projects related to vector surveillance and control. Network members will be expected to facilitate the exchange of essential vector-borne diseases surveillance data (on hosts, pathogens, vector occurrence and density and vector control) between data providers in their country and ECDC and EFSA and facilitate the communication between national health authorities and the local entomologists in their country.

Often, the same vector species can transmit pathogens affecting both human and animal health. In practice, entomologists involved in the prevention and control of vector-borne diseases are appointed either by human public health institutions, or by veterinary health institutions with limited collaboration between sectors. To strengthen this collaboration, the OHVEN will be composed of **ECDC’s Operational Contact Points (OCPs) for entomology and EFSA’s Network on Veterinary Entomology (NVE)**. Whereas the OCPs are nominated by ECDC National Coordinators and will represent the entomologists working in the human public health sector to combat vector-borne diseases, the NVE members are appointed by EFSA’s Advisory Forum members and will represent entomologists working in the veterinary health sector. In



some countries, one person may cover both the human and the veterinary public health sectors.

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the Network on Veterinary Entomology (NVE) are to:

- Participate and contribute to the activities of the OHVEN.
- Share entomological expertise between countries, EFSA and ECDC to assist in their risk assessment activities on vector-borne diseases.
- Act as contact point for entomological matters in their country.
- Ensure the provision of vector surveillance data to maintain and continue the development of a pan-European database on vector distribution, abundance and seasonality.
- Facilitate the exchange of essential vector-borne disease surveillance data (host, pathogen, vector) and vector control data between national data providers, ECDC and EFSA and networks such as:
 - Emerging and vector-borne diseases network (EVD, ECDC)
 - Emerging Viral Diseases-Expert Laboratory Network (EVD-LabNet, ECDC)
 - Animal Health and Welfare network (AHAW, EFSA)
 - Zoonoses Network (EFSA)
- Facilitate communication between national health authorities and the local entomologists in your country.
- Interact with plant health entomology network and with Horizon Europe projects for topics of common interest.

MEMBERS

The Members of the Network on Veterinary Entomology are organisations appointed for three-year terms through the EFSA Advisory Forum Members, in accordance with Articles 2 and 3 of the Decision of the Management Board of EFSA¹ on the establishment and operations of networks. Countries to be represented are those represented in the EFSA Advisory Forum, as members (EU Member States, Iceland and Norway) or as observers (Switzerland and EU candidate countries).

The network shall be composed of experts (one member and one alternate per country) with the following profile:

- Veterinary entomologist or expert working in the field of veterinary entomology.
- Actively involved in vector surveillance by owning or having access to surveillance data.
- Actively involved in the existing ECDC-EFSA project "VectorNet" by sharing or facilitating the sharing of surveillance data with VectorNet.
- Resident of the country represented.

¹ [Management Board Decision concerning the establishment and operation of European Networks of scientific organizations operating in the fields within the Authority's mission](#)



ACCESS TO MEETINGS

Other organisations may be invited by EFSA, on a one-time basis, after discussion with the network members, including those from outside the EU, if they hold specific expertise to participate in a OHVEN meeting, where deemed appropriate or necessary. These organisations may be invited either to participate in full or as observers only.

In addition, representatives of the European Commission may participate in the work of the network. Representatives of other EU agencies may participate in the work of the network as appropriate.

WORKING METHODS

The NVE shall meet once per year, together with ECDC's OCPs for entomology during the annual OHVEN network meeting. The working language for the network activities will be English. In addition, the network will use other means of collaboration in order to:

- Share surveillance data either directly with the VectorNet project, directly on the VectorNet database or uploading them on the Global forum for Biodiversity by using the VectorNet data entry forms. The VectorNet database has already been developed and is managed for eight years by EFSA and ECDC. This guarantees the use of harmonised definitions and approaches for sharing information.
- Share information on newly emerging vector-borne diseases during the meetings or on dedicated platforms (e.g. MicroSoft TEAMS) created for the network.

Country representatives in the network shall commit to liaise as appropriate at national level before and after each network meeting to make sure all the necessary information is shared, without prejudice to Article 10 of the Decision of the Management Board concerning the establishment and operation of European Networks of scientific organization operating in the fields within the Authority's mission.

DELIVERABLES AND OUTCOMES

- Minutes of the annual meeting of the One Health VectorNet Entomology Network, where both the EFSA NVE members and the ECDC OCPs for entomology participated.
- Contribution to specific deliverables of VectorNet, such as:
 - periodic maps of European geographic distribution of vector species.
 - periodic maps of on-going surveillance activities in Europe



TIMELINE

The terms of reference for the network will be due for revision in 2027