



# EU Initiative on Health Security

## Work Programme 2024



# EU Initiative on Health Security

---

The EU Initiative on Health Security aims to set up a competent regional workforce for the prevention and control of challenges posed by communicable diseases and to enhance regional cooperation to tackle cross-border health security threats. It focuses on three major areas:

- I. Workforce-oriented capability-building to be delivered through the Mediterranean and Black Sea Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training (MediPIET)
- II. Capacity-building in epidemic intelligence, risk assessment, preparedness and response
- III. Integration with ECDC systems, knowledge-sharing and networking.

To support partner countries, ECDC is proposing a comprehensive programme for 2024 that will remain responsive to the needs identified by the partner countries and ECDC through continuous dialogue and assessment of public health emergency preparedness and response capacities and capabilities.

## Contents

How to participate .....	1
Work Package 1 .....	2
Work Package 2 .....	4
Work Package 3 .....	7
Work Package 4 .....	8
Annex 1.....	9

## How to participate

The nominated ECDC National Correspondent in each partner country coordinates participation of experts in the activities of the EU Initiative on Health Security\*. This person is employed either by the Ministry of Health or National Public Health Agency (or similar).

Please contact ECDC for more information:

[eu-initiative-on-health-security@ecdc.europa.eu](mailto:eu-initiative-on-health-security@ecdc.europa.eu)



## Work Package 1

# Field epidemiology workforce development through Mediterranean and Black Sea Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training (MediPIET)



MediPIET is an established regional training programme in intervention epidemiology, aiming to consolidate the competence of national and sub-national workforces to enable them to carry out essential public health functions for the prevention and control of national and cross-border challenges posed by communicable diseases. The current phase of the programme funded by DG NEAR (ENI/2020/415-420) is being implemented during the period 2021–2025.

The programme is set up so as to allow the partner countries to decide on the form of its implementation, depending on the specific country needs. Components of the programme include an advanced (two-year) ‘learning-by-doing’ field epidemiology training programme (FETP), training of trainers, network strengthening activities and support for knowledge transfer and cascading the training in partner countries.

### MediPIET modules

In 2024, ECDC will deliver five MediPIET modules and additional inject day activities to the benefit of MediPIET fellows currently under training (Cohort 5 – 2022–2024 and Cohort 6 – 2023–2025), and additional nominated participants from partner countries.

---

## Inject Days:

### Qualitative research (Cohort 6)

This optional two-day module aims to provide fellows and other participants with an introduction to qualitative research and some practical skills in conducting, analysing, and reporting qualitative research using key informant interviews. We focus on key informant interviews since they offer a useful qualitative approach for field epidemiology and have often been used in previous fellowship projects.

### Vaccinology (Cohort 6)

This course will provide participants with knowledge and skills to undertake projects and routine work in the area of vaccine-preventable disease epidemiology.

### **Q1 Module 1: Multivariable analysis (MVA) (Cohort 6)**

This module aims to provide participants with practical skills in conducting the different types of multivariable analysis, including linear regression, logistic regression, Poisson regression, survival analysis, and Cox regressions.

### **Q2 Module 2: Risk assessment and mass gatherings (RAS MG) (Cohort 6)**

This module aims to prepare participants to i) use sampling methods adapted to a population; ii) conduct risk assessments at the country and international level; iii) contribute to the multidisciplinary and international response to complex emergency situations; iv) conduct surveillance during mass gathering events; and v) apply their epidemiological skills to serve public health interventions.

### **Module 3: One Health and vector-borne diseases (Cohorts 5+6)**

This module aims to improve participants' knowledge of zoonotic and vector-borne diseases by adopting the 'One Health' approach. It presents the specific interdisciplinary aspects of zoonotic and vector-borne outbreak investigations, integrated surveillance (human, animal, and vector), and preparedness and response.

### **Q3 Module 4: Project Review Module (Cohorts 5+6)**

This module aims to provide participants with methodological knowledge on the giving and receiving of feedback related to scientific projects and the communication of project findings to peers. The module will also prepare them to interact with multidisciplinary audiences at scientific conferences.

### **Q4 Module 5: Time series analysis and GIS (TSA) (Cohort 6)**

This module will strengthen participants' competencies in the areas of statistical data analysis – specifically time series analysis, spatial epidemiology, and the use of GIS software.

## **Additional activities within MediPIET:**

**Throughout the year, MediPIET fellows will be sent on international assignments and to scientific conferences to acquire the competencies necessary for a field epidemiologist.**

### **Training Centres Forum meetings**

Throughout the year, the MediPIET Training Centres Forum (TCF) will meet at regular intervals, both virtually and face-to-face. In addition, ECDC will organise a joint annual meeting of national ECDC correspondents and MediPIET National Focal Points.

### **Meeting of the MediPIET alumni network**

A face-to-face meeting of the MediPIET alumni network will take place to operationalise the network further. The event is planned to take place close to the ESCAIDE 2024 conference.

### **Training of trainers**

MediPIET supervisors will be offered the opportunity to take part in training activities delivered annually by ECDC (ECDC Summer School and Winter Workshop). MediPIET will also organise training solely for supervisors to acquire and improve their competencies in R programming. In addition, supervisors are given the opportunity to express their interest in the facilitation of modules in which they can alternately participate as a training of trainer participant if it is an area where they wish to build their skills.

### **MediPIET annual scientific event**

As in 2023, ECDC will organise a scientific event for the MediPIET fellows. This will showcase the results of their projects and help them develop their competencies in abstract writing and scientific communication. Submitted abstracts are subject to peer review.

### **Graduation of Cohort 5**

Cohort 5 fellows will be celebrated at a graduation ceremony in connection with ESCAIDE 2024.

### **Training site appraisals and review visits**

In 2024, ECDC will continue to offer MediPIET training site review visits to countries with an existing training site. Training site review visits will be organised and scheduled bilaterally.

## Work Package 2

# Epidemic intelligence, risk assessment, preparedness and response



The EU Initiative on Health Security aims to address the prerequisites for efficient public health systems by helping partner countries to strengthen their capacities to assess, detect, respond, and prevent threats from communicable diseases, as well as by enhancing regional cooperation.

The programme for 2024 is based on relevant assessments of preparedness and response capacities alongside continuous dialogue between partner countries and ECDC.

The work programme presented here outlines activities primarily organised as multi-country capacity strengthening events. In addition to these activities, ECDC embarks on tailored bilateral activities based on expressed interests and requests.

All participants are nominated by ECDC National Correspondents from the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) partner countries.

### Q1 Title of training: Basic training on Epidemic Intelligence and Rapid Risk Assessment

Format	Instructor-led (face-to-face)
Dates/duration	12–16 February (five days)
Location	ECDC, Stockholm
Description	Practical and activity-based training on approaches for conducting Epidemic Intelligence (EI) and Rapid Risk Assessments (RRA)

<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the principles of EI and RRAs</li> <li>• Recognise components/steps in EI process and RRA production</li> <li>• Summarise the reasons for doing EI and RRAs</li> <li>• Identify and apply EI and RRA methodology and tools</li> <li>• Contribute to a team working on EI process and RRA production</li> <li>• Apply principles of scientific communication with health authorities, various stakeholders, media/public</li> </ul>
<b>Target audience</b>	Public health professionals who actively work in Epidemic Intelligence, risk assessment, preparedness, and response to public health emergencies

**Q2 Title of training: Southern Neighbourhood Regional workshop on the preparedness for the impacts of the climate change on infectious disease**

<b>Format</b>	Face-to-face
<b>Dates/duration</b>	Q2 – TBC
<b>Location</b>	Cairo, Egypt
<b>Description</b>	The impacts of climate change on infectious disease transmission are increasingly well documented. From a One Health perspective, this workshop will focus on assessing the current knowledge on the topic and identifying good practices for climate change adaptation oriented around anticipating and responding to the direct and indirect threats from climate change.
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate the latest scientific knowledge surrounding climate change and infectious disease as it pertains to Southern Neighbourhood Policy countries</li> <li>• Identify and prioritise the direct and indirect threats that climate change poses to the control of infectious disease</li> <li>• Discuss regional preparedness strategies for augmenting threat anticipation, early warning, and response in relation to climate change and infectious disease</li> </ul>
<b>Target audience</b>	Senior professionals and policy-advisors working in public health from the EU Southern ENP partner countries (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine <sup>1</sup> , and Tunisia), food safety, animal health, and environmental authorities.

<sup>1</sup> This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

## Title of training: Contact Tracing

<b>Format</b>	Instructor-led (face-to-face)
<b>Dates/duration</b>	4-5 June
<b>Location</b>	ECDC, Stockholm
<b>Description</b>	Provide an introduction to outbreak investigation, contact tracing and data collection, isolation and quarantine, and describe how the data can be used to mitigate the spread of infectious diseases. The course will mainly elaborate on practical aspects of data collection but will also touch upon ethical and data protection aspects. Participants will gain experience using the free open source WHO tool Go.Data, which supports collection of case data, contact data, laboratory and clinical data and contact follow-up information.
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise the importance of case investigation and contact tracing</li> <li>• Describe the main contact tracing processes and procedures</li> <li>• Discuss practical and ethical considerations around contact tracing, isolation and quarantine, and outbreak investigation</li> <li>• Explain the principles of cross-border contact tracing and some international procedures</li> <li>• Gain practical experience with the main functions of Go.Data, using ECDC's installation of the tool</li> </ul>
<b>Target audience</b>	Representatives of public health authorities with previous experience of contact tracing and outbreak investigation (related to COVID-19 or any other infectious disease outbreak), who use or plan to use Go.Data and who are willing to cascade their knowledge to others after the training. Participants will have to bring their own computer and charger.

## Q3 Title of training: In-Action and After-Action Reviews

<b>Format</b>	Instructor-led (face-to-face)
<b>Dates/duration</b>	November (TBD)
<b>Location</b>	ECDC, Stockholm
<b>Description</b>	IAR and AAR are qualitative, structured reviews of actions taken in response to a public health event, as a means of identifying and documenting best practices, gaps, and lessons. They enable improvements and strengthening in preparedness and response planning.
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight the importance of conducting post-event reviews during or following a public health emergency as good practice and for resilience purposes</li> <li>• Discuss the IAR and AAR requirements, methodologies, and outcomes</li> <li>• Discuss the use of evidence in advice- and policy-making</li> </ul>
<b>Target audience</b>	Professionals of ministries of health and public health institutes involved in preparedness, response, and recovery related to outbreaks of infectious diseases



## Work Package 3

### Integration with ECDC systems, knowledge sharing and networking



The EU Initiative on Health Security aims to progressively integrate the partner countries into the work of ECDC. To share knowledge and create networking possibilities, it proposes that partner countries participate in relevant ECDC networks and activities as observers.

---

#### Exchange of experts programme

ECDC will continue to organise the exchange of experts programme within disease-specific areas, providing an opportunity for experts from European Neighbourhood Policy partner countries to learn from the experiences of EU Member States, as well as to share their experiences.

#### Event on Hepatitis C in Egypt

This meeting will focus on the control and elimination of Hepatitis C virus. Given Egypt's well documented successes in this field, the event will constitute an excellent opportunity for exchanging knowledge and best practices across the European Neighbourhood Policy countries, selected EU Member States, and ECDC.

## Work Package 4

### Project management, communication, visibility and cross-cutting actions



---

#### Annual meeting for National ECDC Correspondents in European Neighborhood partner countries and MediPIET National Focal Points

Within the scope of this meeting is the consolidation of the outcomes and achievements of regional cooperation within the EU Initiative on Health Security in 2023, as well as a forward-looking overview of planned capacity-building activities in 2024.

#### ESCAIDE

As part of the network-building and knowledge-sharing activities, representatives from partner countries will also be invited to ESCAIDE 2024, the European Scientific Conference on Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology.

The scientific programme for ESCAIDE 2024 comprises plenaries and abstract-led sessions. During the plenary sessions high-level speakers will discuss topics of significant importance in the field of infectious diseases and public health. Selected abstracts will describe the latest cutting-edge research from a broad spectrum of fields, including infectious disease epidemiology, microbiology, surveillance, implementation science, modelling, and preparedness.

# Annex 1. Work programme 2024

---

## Work package 1

Field epidemiology workforce development through Mediterranean and Black Sea Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training (MediPIET)

Activity	Date
<b>Inject Days</b>	
Qualitative research (Cohort 6)	TBC
Vaccinology (Cohort 6)	TBC
Module 1: Multivariable analysis (MVA) (Cohort 6)	Q1
Module 2: Risk assessment and mass gatherings (RAS MG) (Cohort 6)	Q2
Module 3: One Health and vector-borne diseases (Cohorts 5+6)	Q2
Module 4: Project Review Module (Cohorts 5+6)	Q3
Module 5: Time series analysis and GIS (TSA) (Cohort 6)	Q4
<b>Additional activities within MediPIET</b>	
Training Centres Forum meetings	Whole year
Meeting of the MediPIET alumni network	Q4
MediPIET annual scientific event	Q4
Graduation of Cohort 5	Q4
Training site review visits	Whole year

## Work Package 2

Epidemic intelligence, risk assessment, preparedness and response

Activity	Date
Basic training on Epidemic Intelligence and Rapid Risk Assessment	Q1
Southern Neighbourhood Regional workshop on the preparedness for the impacts of the climate change on infectious disease	Q2
Contact Tracing	Q2
In-Action and After-Action Reviews	Q3

## Work Package 3

Integration with ECDC systems, knowledge-sharing, and networking

Activity	Date
Exchange of experts programme	Whole year
Event on Hepatitis C in Egypt	TBC

## Work Package 4

Project management, communication, visibility, and cross-cutting actions

Activity	Date
Annual meeting for National ECDC Correspondents in European Neighborhood partner countries and MediPIET National Focal Points	Q2
ESCAIDE 2024	Q4