

## Administrative Decision – ECDC/AD/2025/18

# Administrative Decision on 'Rules governing the MS-Track of the ECDC Fellowship Programme, Field Epidemiology Path (EPIET) and Public Health Microbiology Path (EUPHEM)' Cohort 2025

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### Related documents

<b>List of relevant standards, legislation and documents</b>	Regulation (EC) No 851/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 April 2004 establishing a European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.
<b>List of relevant ECDC documents</b>	Manual for the ECDC Fellowship Programme EPIET and EUPHEM paths Annexes to the Fellowship Manual

### Abbreviations and definitions

EAN	EPIET Alumni Network
ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
EEA	European Economic Area
EPIET	Epidemiology Path of the ECDC Fellowship programme, formerly known as European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training
EU	European Union
EUPHEM	Public Health Microbiology Path of the ECDC Fellowship Programme, formerly known as European Public Health Microbiology Training Programme
FFO	Fellowship Faculty Office
FPA	Framework Partnership Agreement
MS	Member State
NFPTs	National Focal Points for Training
SGA	Specific Grant Agreement

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## **1. Introduction**

ECDC shall support and coordinate training programmes to assist Member States and the European Commission to have sufficient numbers of trained specialists in epidemiological surveillance and field investigations, and to have a capability to control disease outbreaks.

The ECDC Fellowship Programme is a two-year competency-based training programme with two paths: the field epidemiology path (EPIET) and the public health microbiology path (EUPHEM). Both provide training and practical experience in intervention epidemiology at the national and/or regional centres for surveillance and control of communicable diseases and in laboratories with public health functions, acknowledged as collaborative training sites in the European Union (EU) and European Economic Area (EEA) Member States.

In the MS-track, fellows are placed in one of the EPIET or EUPHEM training sites of their country/ies of citizenship/residency. Under the professional supervision of the training supervisor/s based at the training site, the fellows carry out field assignments and other activities related to the core competencies of the fellowship. The progress of the fellows is monitored by supervisors and scientific coordinators. The scientific coordinators review all the fellows' outputs during their two-year training programme.

This Administrative Decision governs the MS-track of the ECDC Fellowship Programme, field epidemiology path (EPIET) and public health microbiology path (EUPHEM), Cohort 2025.

The legal basis of this Administrative Decision lies in Article 9 (6), Article 5 (8) and Article 11a (1) of Regulation (EC) No.851/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 April 2004 establishing a European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (the ECDC Founding Regulation):

Article 9 (6) 'The Centre shall, as appropriate, support and coordinate training programmes, in particular in relation to epidemiological surveillance, field investigations, preparedness and prevention, response to public health emergencies, public health research and risk communication. Those programmes shall take into consideration the need for training to be kept up-to-date, take into account the training needs of Member States and shall respect the principle of proportionality.'

Article 5 (8) 'By encouraging cooperation between expert and reference laboratories, the Centre shall foster the development of sufficient capacity within the Community for the diagnosis, detection, identification and characterisation of infectious agents which may threaten public health. The Centre shall maintain and extend such cooperation and support the implementation of quality assurance schemes.

Article 11a 'Support for international and field preparedness and response' (1) The Centre shall establish a EU Health Task Force and ensure that there is a permanent capacity and an enhanced emergency capacity to mobilise and use it. The EU Health Task Force shall provide assistance with regard to requests for prevention, preparedness and response planning, local responses to outbreaks of communicable diseases and after-action reviews in Member States and in third countries, in cooperation with the WHO. The EU Health Task Force shall include the Centre's staff and experts from Member States, fellowship programmes and international and non-profit organisations.

During the two-year training programme, all fellows work towards a number of common learning outcomes, with specified levels for the EPIET and EUPHEM paths within the key competency domains, specified in the ECDC Fellowship Manual.

## **2. Scope and applicability**

The objectives of the Fellowship Programme are the following:

- To contribute to strengthening the prevention, preparedness, surveillance and control of infectious diseases and other cross-border health threats or issues of public health concern in the EU/EEA Member States and at EU level, supporting the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2022/2371.
- To contribute to enhancing response capacities for effective field investigation and communicable disease control at European, national and community level to meet public health threats, in particular for the EU response to cross-border threats to health.
- To contribute to strengthening the European and global network of public health professionals through the use of state-of-the-art, shared standards and methods, good practices and common public health objectives.
- To contribute to knowledge transfers and capacity building within and between Member States.
- To facilitate innovative inter-disciplinary and multi-sector cooperation and communication to achieve the above objectives while adjusting to emerging needs.
- To contribute to the reduction of disparity across Europe in the prevention, preparedness, surveillance, and control of communicable diseases.

The Fellowship Programme is part of ECDC's efforts to strengthen the public health workforce in the EU/EEA and benefits significantly from the contribution of EU/EEA Member States in terms of training resources. Member States provide training sites, supervision of the fellows and expert facilitation for EPIET/EUPHEM training modules and are therefore key stakeholders in the programme.

In the EU-track, fellows are trained in a country other than their country/ies of citizenship, whereas in the MS-track, they remain in their country of citizenship/residency.

## **3. Governance**

The ECDC Fellowship programme is governed by the ECDC governance mechanism which includes the National Focal Points for Training (NFPTs) and the Training Site Forum, being the operational contact points within the Coordinating Competent Bodies framework.

## **4. Eligibility and selection criteria of candidates**

Member States that have been allocated an MS-track post in the EPIET/EUPHEM training may engage in a process to select suitable candidates among their current workforce or open a selection process to recruit new staff.

### **4.1. Eligibility criteria**

In order to be eligible for the ECDC Fellowship Programme, candidates for both paths need to fulfil the following set of formal requirements:

- Have a thorough knowledge (minimum B2) of at least two official languages of the EU/EEA, one of which shall be English.
- Be a national of a Member State of the EU/EEA; and
- Be entitled to her or his full rights as a citizen.

In addition, depending on the path they apply for, candidates need to fulfil the following formal requirements:

Specific eligibility requirements for EPIET path:

1. Completed post-secondary education attested by a diploma<sup>1</sup> in medicine, public health, epidemiology, veterinary medicine, nursing, biology, microbiology, pharmacology, biomedicine, bioinformatics or other health and social sciences, at the level of Masters' degree or equivalent<sup>2</sup>; and
2. At least two (2) years of work experience in public health or applied epidemiology. (Work during a PhD could count as work experience if it is in applied public health/epidemiology.)

Specific eligibility requirements for EUPHEM Path:

1. Completed post-secondary education attested by a diploma<sup>1</sup> in medicine, biology, microbiology, veterinary medicine, nursing, pharmacology, bioinformatics, or biomedicine, at the level of Masters' degree or equivalent<sup>2</sup>; and
2. At least three (3) years of work experience in microbiology; or a PhD degree in microbiology or equivalent (e.g. clinical microbiology specialisation, veterinary medicine specialisations, or a specialisation in any microbiology field).

#### 4.2. Selection criteria

Fellows are selected based on criteria relating to professional and personal characteristics/interpersonal skills and the possibility to benefit from the programme. References to EPIET or EUPHEM in parenthesis below refer to the path that these skills and experiences are most relevant for.

Professional skills and experiences

- Experience in public health and/or epidemiology (EPIET)
- Scientific background in epidemiology, and a basic knowledge of biostatistics, including skills in epidemiological/biostatistical analysis and software (EPIET)
- Experience and/or scientific background in microbiology, and skilled in microbiological techniques and softwares (EUPHEM)
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Personal characteristics/interpersonal skills

- Strong commitment to field epidemiology (EPIET)/public health microbiology (EUPHEM) in the EU/EEA
- Good organisational skills
- Ability to work in interdisciplinary teams, manage a broad range of responsibilities and competing priorities

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<sup>1</sup> Only diplomas and certificates awarded in Member States of the EU/EEA, or equivalent certificates issued by authorities in an EU Member State shall be considered. UK degrees awarded prior to 31 January 2020 are accepted. After this date, the candidates must provide the EU equivalence certificate of the degrees, this also applies to degrees delivered in non-EU/EEA Countries.

<sup>2</sup> Time invested towards a Master's degree doesn't count as work experience.

- Good command of scientific writing and oral communication in English.

Advantageous criteria

- Experience in public health and/or epidemiology, including skills in epidemiological/biostatistical analysis and software (EUPHEM)
- Ability to undertake independent work, demonstrating logical, analytical and innovative thinking
- Experience of international activities and multicultural awareness
- Understanding the public health regulatory framework and requirements in the Member States.

## **5. Selection procedure**

### **5.1. Application process for acknowledged training sites:**

Applications should be made in accordance with the process established by ECDC.

The main counterpart of ECDC in the Member States for the MS-track Selection process is the NFPs for Training, under the structure of the ECDC Coordinating Competent Bodies.

Part 1: Pre-selection process

#### **5.1.1 Expression of interest from the Member States**

Every year, ECDC sends an invitation to the NFPT requesting their expressions of interest to train EU- and MS-track fellows in the cohort of the following year. In this "Call for Expressions of Interest" ECDC asks the Member States to propose training sites interested in training a fellow in the ECDC Fellowship Programme, both for the EU-track and the MS-track. NFPTs should channel to ECDC expressions of interest from all acknowledged training sites and potential training sites, which need to apply to have a site appraisal. This is done by submitting a response by the deadline stated in the invitation.

The Member State will inform ECDC about the sites interested in being a training site for the next cohort, as well as how many fellows they are willing and have capacity to train in each of the fellowship paths (EPIET/EUPHEM) and tracks (EU/MS). Note that only acknowledged training sites<sup>3</sup> are eligible to train a fellow in the upcoming cohort, but the Member States can request to have a site appraised to become an acknowledged training site, in preparation to host a fellow.

In the first round of allocations of fellowship posts for EU- and MS-track for each path, no country will receive more than one post for each path. Prioritisations for EPIET and EUPHEM are independent from one another. Hence, Member States need to prioritise between EU- and MS-tracks for each path separately. This principle is to ensure that the number and geographical range of countries hosting fellows is maximised.

#### **5.1.2. Number and allocation of fellowship posts**

Based on financial resources available, ECDC will decide on the total number of fellowships posts each year and assign them to each track and path. After the deadline for the 'Call for Expression of Interest', ECDC will contact the NFPs for Training of the Member States that expressed their interest in an MS-track post in that year to inform them of the ranking and allocation of MS-track posts, according to pre-established priority criteria that apply in case there are more applications than available posts.

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<sup>3</sup> An acknowledged training site is a training site that has a) trained a fellow within the last three years or b) has been visited (the site visit may be virtual) and approved in the last three years or c) has had a successful training site appraisal no later than February in the year the cohort begins.



Each cohort will have a minimum number of posts per path under the MS-track, to be distributed among the requesting Member States according to their expression of interest of path. Priority to receive a fellow will be given, in this order of importance, to Member States that have trained the least number of MS-track fellows by path.

The budget available for the MS-track will vary by year. The total number of MS-track fellows would therefore be known only once the hosting Member States for the EU-track have been identified. Additional fellowship posts will be assigned to the path/s based on the number of expressions of interest for each path. This gives flexibility to distribute resources according to the needs and training capacity expressed by the Member States.

If the number of Member States applying for a MS-track post in EPIET and/or EUPHEM exceeds the number of available posts, ECDC will apply a set of criteria discussed with the Advisory Forum. ECDC periodically consults the Advisory Forum and the NFPs for Training to update these criteria or adjust the ways in which they will be applied each year.

ECDC will generate a list of applying Member States, ranked according to the application of these criteria separately for EPIET and EUPHEM, and allocate available MS-track posts according to this list.

If a Member State has applied for two or more training posts within the same path and is granted only one MS-track post, it is up to the Member State to prioritise which training site will be granted the MS-track post in that path.

Member States with a national field epidemiology programme, in particular with EPIET Associated Programmes (EAP), will only receive a MS-track fellow once all the other expressions of interest by Member States without such a programme have been fulfilled.

Once the number of EPIET and EUPHEM fellows in the MS-track has been decided, the further allocation of the fellows for the two paths among the Member States are done independently from each other.

If the assigned number of MS-track fellowship posts in either of the two paths exceeds the number of Member States expressing an interest to host fellows in that path, the remaining posts will be distributed among the Member States that expressed an interest in training more than one fellow according to the following priority order:

- First, to Member States that have not been assigned an EU-track fellow in the same path that year
- Second, to training sites without a fellow that may risk losing their acknowledgement regardless of path
- Further prioritisation is based on the cumulative historical number of fellows trained by the Member State in that path (ranked from lower to higher numbers)
- Finally, in the event of a tied ranking in the rotation scheme, ECDC will also consider the capacity needs of the Member States and allocate unassigned posts.

## Part 2: Selection of candidates by the Member States

Member States requesting a MS-track seat are strongly encouraged to identify candidates meeting the eligibility criteria through mechanisms of their choice (e.g., internal search among their workforce or a call for internal or external applications) already by the time of expression of interest.

After the fellowship posts for the two paths have been allocated according to the above criteria, the results will be shared with all the Member States.

The Member States which have been allocated fellow/s are invited to, within a given deadline, nominate a candidate for each allocated fellowship post based on an application form which includes the CV and letter of motivation of the nominated candidate/s.

If Member States cannot identify candidate(s) meeting the eligibility and selection criteria, the unfilled MS-track post will be offered to the next ranked Member State on the list (as specified in Article 4.2).

The Member State is responsible for selecting the candidate(s) to be trained using the following selection procedure:

- Member States may appoint a selection panel and conduct interviews with the shortlisted candidates to check the eligibility of the candidate(s) and apply the selection criteria. The interview language is English. Candidates who do not demonstrate sufficient English language skills during the interview will be asked to take a proficiency test documenting a minimum B-2 level.
- Member States create a shortlist of candidates (including CVs and letters of motivation in English) and send these via the NFPs for Training to ECDC for review of the eligibility and selection criteria by the Fellowship Scientific Coordination team.
- After eligibility check, the Head of Fellowship Programme (or by delegation to other coordinators) will organise a teleconference to interview the candidates for confirmation of their suitability. In case of non-suitability, the nominating Member State will be invited to nominate another potential fellow. If this fails, the post will be given to the next Member State on the waiting list.
- Member States make the final choice of the candidate among all eligible candidates; however, at Member States' request, ECDC can make a recommendation on the suitability of the candidates.

#### 5.2.6. Notifications and acceptance

ECDC notifies successful candidates by e-mail, with a deadline for accepting or rejecting the offer and confirming the dates of the fellowship period. The selected candidate cannot postpone the start of fellowship to the subsequent Cohort. The final composition of the year's cohort is announced when all parties have accepted their respective offers.

#### 5.2.7. Protection of personal data

Any personal data collected by ECDC will be processed solely for the purposes of the selection process and performance, management and follow-up of the ECDC training activities in accordance with [Regulation \(EU\) n. 2018/1725](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data. The details on the processing of the personal data for the selection process can be found [here](#) and for the performance, management and follow-up of the ECDC fellowship [here](#). Data subjects have the right to access and rectify their personal data at any moment. For more information on personal data protection and related documents, reference is made to the ECDC website. Queries or requests concerning the processing of personal data may be addressed to the relevant ECDC data controller or the Data Protection Officer ([dpo@ecdc.europa.eu](mailto:dpo@ecdc.europa.eu)).

Fellows are advised to contact their relevant training site for advice on personal data retained by the training site and its respective retention, processing and distribution.

Data subjects have the right of recourse to the [European Data Protection Supervisor](#).

## **6. Organisation**

Fellows are placed at the training sites under the responsibility of a main supervisor, experienced in applied epidemiology (EPIET) or public health microbiology (EUPHEM). The supervisor must guide and closely monitor the fellow during his/her fellowship, acting as his/her mentor. An assigned co-supervisor will assist the main supervisor in scientific and practical issues. In addition to the main and the co-supervisors, a team of project supervisors shall be available to work closely with the fellow. For the EUPHEM fellows a dedicated epidemiology supervisor shall be assigned to support and supervise fellows with epidemiological competencies and facilitate the link between field epidemiology and public health microbiology. For EPIET fellows, where relevant, a microbiology supervisor should be assigned to support the fellow with microbiological content in her/his projects. The supervision time to be provided by the training site to the fellow should be, on average, a minimum of four (4) hours per week.

The training site shall grant the fellow access to supervised field activities and datasets in order to achieve the objectives of the training.

A team of scientific coordinators, based at ECDC and in Member States, and led by the Head of Fellowship Programme, shall provide guidance to fellows and assist supervisors on how to best develop the required field epidemiology and public health microbiology competencies, while promoting interdisciplinary work that equips them with tools and methods for collaborative practice.

The supervisor must immediately notify the Head of Fellowship Programme of any significant incidents occurring during the fellowship (in particular professional incompetence, prolonged absences, sicknesses, accidents, unprofessional behaviour, or interruption of the fellowship), which come to his/her attention, or of which the fellow informs him/her. Similarly, the Head of Fellowship Programme must be informed by the Training Site Representative if any incidents arise that affect the availability of the supervisor, such as prolonged absences.

## **7. Contracts and agreements**

Fellows will sign an employment or similar contract with the training site (if not already employed). A further two-party agreement (named 'Training Site Agreement') will be signed between the training site and ECDC to detail the terms and conditions of being a training site. ECDC will not be a party to the employment contract signed between the fellows and the employer.

In cases where the training site is not the employer of the fellow, it is up to the parties involved to develop an agreement that will guarantee compliance of all parties to the rules laid down in the present Administrative Decision and in the Training Site Agreement.

The training site shall reserve funding for travel within the country to perform duties related to the fellow's activities, including, but not restricted to, outbreak investigations. The training site may assign the fellow to perform training activities at other institutes or send fellows to another training

site in other Member States if this is required to meet the training objectives within the timeframe of the fellowship.

## **8. Rights and duties of fellows**

### **8.1. Duration of the fellowship**

The fellowship is a full-time, 'learning-by-doing' programme and the training period lasts 24 months. Fellows who end the fellowship before 23 months will not be eligible for the EPIET/EUPHEM diploma.

Under certain circumstances, such as in case of serious illness, pregnancy, birth or adoption of a child, the fellowship may be extended beyond the maximum length laid down in this Decision subject to (1) terms and conditions of the employment contract and (2) availability of funds at ECDC to cover the cost of participation in the EPIET/EUPHEM activities. The fellow shall inform the main supervisor, the Head of Fellowship Programme and FFO as soon as possible of the reasons and need for leave, keeping the Fellowship Programme and the training site informed of expected duration of leave and return date.

The aim of any potential prolongation is to achieve the minimum period of 23 months training. Under such circumstances, the extension will be approved by ECDC and the training site on a case-by-case basis.

### **8.2. Compliance with instructions and regulations**

Fellows shall comply with the instructions given by their training site supervisors as well as with the present Administrative Decision. Fellows must respect the rules of the training site in accordance with their employment contract and national legislation.

### **8.3. Compulsory training activities**

Fellows must take part in all compulsory activities organised under the auspice of the Fellowship Programme, respecting the timetables and schedules laid down by ECDC.

### **8.4. Confidentiality**

Fellows must treat in strict confidentiality, facts and information that come to their knowledge during the course of their training. They must not disclose to any unauthorised person any document or information not already in the public domain. They will continue to be bound by this obligation even after the end of their fellowship.

### **8.5. Conflict of interests**

In this context, a conflict of interest exists when a fellow undertakes an activity which may conflict, or reasonably be perceived by a third party as conflicting with the interests of ECDC or the European Union, including anything which calls the independence and transparency of ECDC into question. If a conflict of interest should arise during their assignment, fellows should immediately report this to their supervisor and to the Head of Fellowship Programme. In the event that an international assignment for a fellow is proposed (see Article 12 on international assignments), the fellow shall complete a declaration of interest, which the supervisor and Head of Fellowship Programme shall review in order to determine whether there are any conflicting interests hindering the international assignment. Completed declarations shall be filed for reference.

Fellows are not permitted to enter into gainful employment, provide consultancy services, participate in other training activities or any activities, which may adversely affect the work assigned to them during the fellowship period.

Scientific coordinators and all actors in the Fellowship Programme are also required to ensure that they act independently of third-party interests in all aspects of their work.

#### **8.6. Publications**

Fellows must not, either alone or with others, publish or contribute to publishing any material dealing with the work of their training site without the prior written permission of their supervisor and frontline coordinators. Approved publications of EPIET and EUPHEM fellows need to include the affiliation of their respective paths, either 'ECDC Fellowship Programme, Field Epidemiology path (EPIET), European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), Stockholm, Sweden' or 'ECDC Fellowship Programme, Public Health Microbiology path (EUPHEM), European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), Stockholm, Sweden'.

Publications resulting from work not related to the training objectives under the fellowship or as a result of previous work, require prior permission from the frontline scientific coordinator. The publication may not pose a conflict of interest or negatively affect the achievement of the fellowship objectives in any way, and in case of any doubt, the frontline scientific coordinator should contact the Head of Fellowship Programme for decision.

#### **8.7. Regular progress reports**

Fellows must update their supervisors and their frontline scientific coordinators on their activities during the training period on a monthly basis, using the format proposed by ECDC.

#### **8.8. Diploma**

Fellows who have completed the minimum required fellowship period of 23 months and achieved all training objectives in accordance with the ECDC Fellowship Manual will receive the ECDC Fellowship Programme diploma, with reference to the specific path (EPIET or EUPHEM).

## **9. Absences**

#### **9.1. Holidays**

Fellows should keep the same reporting working hours, have the same public holidays and entitlements to annual leave as the other staff at their training site. However, fellows cannot take holidays during compulsory training activities such as the Introductory Course, modules, and during ESCAIDE.

The training site supervisors and scientific coordinators ensure that the above rules are respected. Leave requests should comply with the service needs of the training site and must be approved by the training site supervisor.

#### **9.2. Sickness**

In the event of sickness, fellows must notify the supervisor immediately and present a medical certificate according to the rules of the training site. In case of prolonged sickness, the Head of Fellowship Programme as well as the FFO must be informed, especially if the sick leave has implications which might prevent the fellow from participating in modules or any other compulsory fellowship activity.

Fellows must notify the training site supervisor and confirm their communicated return date from sick leave to the Head of Fellowship Programme and FFO.

#### **9.3. Pregnancy and birth or adoption of a child**

In the event of pregnancy and birth or adoption, fellows must notify the supervisor and the Head of Fellowship Programme as soon as possible and produce a medical certificate or the appropriate documentation for the training site and FFO.

In the event of pregnancy and birth or adoption, fellows are entitled to maternity or paternity leave according to the rules of the employer. The training period may be extended in order to ensure the minimum length of 23 months to be eligible for the diploma.

Fellows must notify the training site supervisor and confirm their communicated return date to the Head of Fellowship Programme and FFO in accordance with the national law, but at least 30 days in advance.

#### **9.4. Absence without justification and notice**

When fellows are absent without justification, the main supervisor of the training site will inform the Head of Fellowship Programme in order for decisions regarding consequences to be coordinated in terms of fellowship (ECDC) and employment contract (training site).

#### **9.5. Exceptional leave**

In the event of severe illness or death of close family members and in exceptional circumstances, fellows may be granted additional days of leave according to the employment rules of the training site.

## **10. Financial provisions and working conditions**

10.1. Fellows will receive a salary from the training site. The amount of the salary is decided by the training site according to their local salary scales.

10.2. ECDC does not cover pension payments, social security (e.g., sickness insurance) or insurance against occupational hazards. Therefore, the fellow and/or the training site are responsible for making the necessary arrangements as per the national legislation and the payment of the taxes and social charges related to the employment contract.

Since ECDC is not part of the contract between the fellows and the training site, ECDC is not responsible for any possible breach of labour law or breach of taxation law committed by the training site and/or the fellows. Neither will ECDC be directly liable to the fellows for any payments or reimbursements due to the fellow under their contract of employment.

10.3. When travelling on ECDC's request, ECDC will arrange for the travel, accommodation and per diems of the fellows under ECDC rules of travel for experts.

## **11. Place of fellowship**

11.1. The placement of the fellow will be at the training site.

11.2. Fellows are required to participate in training modules and courses organised in one of the EU/EEA Member States and may occasionally be deployed to Member States for projects with an EU dimension, and to international assignments outside the EU. Fellows may take part in elective

modules and courses of the fellowship that occasionally take place outside of the EU/EEA Member States.

## **12. Projects tackling EU cross-border health threats and international assignments**

12.1. During the fellowship, fellows might be offered opportunities for international assignments/missions by the training site or projects tackling EU cross-border health threats, or fellows might participate in assignments following requests by a third party. As part of the EU Health Task Force, fellows may be assigned tasks or deployed to respond to a request for assistance to support emergency preparedness or response to outbreaks or other public health events.

12.2. The Head of Fellowship Programme, or by delegation a scientific coordinator, reviews the relevant terms of reference and decides whether the proposed assignment is suitable for fellows according to the provisions of the international assignments' standard operating procedures.

12.3. Fellows interested in applying for international assignments, projects tackling EU cross-border health threats, requests by a third party, or provision for assistance to support emergency preparedness or outbreak response, will first seek the approval of their main supervisor to ensure the assignment will not interfere with the training outputs of the fellow. The training site also ensures the assignment is compatible with the fellow's employment contract. International assignments or requests by a third party are not a compulsory activity of the fellowship but represent a positive learning opportunity.

12.4. The party that requests the assignment/mission covers all costs (travel, accommodation, per diems and insurances) and shall provide ECDC and the employer with a copy of the terms and conditions before the assignment.

12.5. The fellow selected to go on an international assignment shall not receive any bonuses or salaries from the requesting party.

12.6. These assignments should offer a clear added-value and not be in conflict with the activities and projects conducted by the fellow at the hosting site of their employment.

## **13. Tax arrangements**

13.1. Salaries paid to the fellows are subject to taxation either in the country of origin of the fellow or the country of employment. It is the responsibility of the fellow to independently ensure declaration of the salary and payment of taxation on the salary received.

## **14. Interruption and termination of the fellowship and consequences**

14.1. At the written request of the fellow, stating the relevant reasons and with proper justification, the training site and ECDC will jointly decide whether or not to accept the interruption of the fellowship. Should the interruption be accepted, the fellowship may be interrupted only once during its entirety for a maximum of one (1) month. In addition, the fellow will not be entitled to reimbursement of any travel expenses incurred during the suspension period. In justified cases, the fellow may extend his/her training for a maximum of one (1) month to complete the unfinished part of the training, with the aim of achieving the minimum training period of 23 months.



14.2. If a fellow wishes to terminate his/her fellowship before the full 24 months of fellowship, the fellow must submit a written request to the Head of Fellowship Programme, via his/her main supervisor. The termination request must conform with the national law valid at the training site. ECDC will respond to the Training Site within 10 working days.

14.3. Fellows must exercise their duties and behave with integrity, courtesy, and consideration. The training site supervisor will inform ECDC of the following situations: if the conduct of the fellow does not prove satisfactory, if the fellow's professional performance or knowledge of the working language is insufficient for the proper execution of his/her duties; if it becomes apparent that the fellow has knowingly made false declarations or provided false statements or documentation at the time of application or during the fellowship period; if the fellow does not comply with Articles 9.3, 9.4, 9.5 and 9.6, and in cases of unjustified absences. ECDC and the training site will coordinate the consequences in terms of fellowship (ECDC) and employment contract (training site). Any pre-term termination of the employment contract will be subject to the national employment legislation in force

14.4. Notwithstanding the exceptions detailed in Articles 14.1, 14.2, and 14.3 above, the fellowship employment contract shall end upon expiry of the period for which it was awarded.

## **15. Final provisions**

These rules will enter into force on the day following their signature.

Implementation of these rules may be defined in work instructions.