



**Administrative Decision – 110.1.1.2**

**Administrative Decision on 'Rules governing the MS-track of the ECDC Fellowship Programme, field epidemiology path (EPIET) and public health microbiology path (EUPHEM)' Cohort 2022**

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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, Cohort 2022 Annexes to the Fellowship Manual for Cohort 2022

## Abbreviations and definitions

EAP	EPIET Associated Programmes
ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
EEA	European Economic Area
EPIET	European Programme for Intervention Epidemiology Training
EU	European Union
EUPHEM	European Public Health Microbiology Training Programme
FFO	Fellowship Faculty Office
MS	Member State
NFPTs	National Focal Points for Training

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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 function, 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 will carry out activities related to the core competencies of their respective path. The progress of the fellows is monitored by supervisors and scientific coordinators. The scientific coordinators review all of the fellows' outputs during their two-year training programme.

This Administrative Decision governs the MS-track of ECDC Fellowship Programme, EPIET field epidemiology path (EPIET) and public health microbiology path (EUPHEM), Cohort 2022.

The legal basis of this Administrative Decision lies in Article 9 (6) and Article 5 (3) 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 order to assist Member States and the Commission to have sufficient numbers of trained specialists, in particular in epidemiological surveillance and field investigations, and to have a capability to define health measures to control disease outbreaks.'

Article 5 (3) '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.'

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 (according to the ECDC Fellowship Manual) in the following key competency domains:

- Public health surveillance
- Outbreak investigation
- Applied public health research
- Public health microbiology and laboratory investigations
- Public health management and communication
- Training and teaching
- Statistical analysis

- Biorisk management
- Quality management

## 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 Decision 1082/2013/EU;
- 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-bored 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 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.

EPIET and EUPHEM are complementary paths in field epidemiology and public health microbiology, respectively. Both paths recruit fellows in one of two tracks, the EU and/ or the Member State (MS) - track. In the EU-track, fellows train in a country other than their country/ies of citizenship, whereas in the MS-track, they remain in their country of citizenship/residency.

This Administrative Decision governs the MS-track of the ECDC Fellowship Programme.

## 3. Governance

The processes described in this Administrative Decision are based on the outcome of consultations with the Advisory Forum, the National Focal Points for Training (NFPs for Training) and the Training Site Forum, being the operational contact points within the Coordinating Competent Bodies framework. At its meeting on 15–16 November 2016, the Management Board also supported the principles behind the processes described in this document. In 2019, an external evaluation of the Fellowship Programme was conducted.

## 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 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 (university studies) of at least 3 years attested by a diploma<sup>1</sup> in medicine, public health, epidemiology, veterinary medicine, nursing, biology, microbiology, pharmacology, bioinformatics, biomedicine or other health and social sciences, at the level of graduate diploma, Masters' degree or equivalent; and
2. At least two (2) years of work experience in public health or applied epidemiology.

Specific eligibility requirements for EUPHEM Path:

1. Post-secondary education attested by a diploma<sup>2</sup> in medicine, biology, microbiology, veterinary medicine, pharmacology, bioinformatics, or biomedicine, at the level of graduate diploma or Masters' degree or equivalent; and
2. At least three (3) years of working 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. The references to EPIET or EUPHEM in brackets below, refer to the path that these skills and experience are most relevant for.

Professional skills and experiences

- Proven experience in public health and/or epidemiology (EPIET)
- Good scientific background in microbiology, and skilled in microbiological techniques (EUPHEM)
- Good scientific background in epidemiology, and a basic knowledge of biostatistics (EPIET)
- Good computer skills used for microbiological and/or epidemiological analysis

Personal characteristics/interpersonal skills

- Strong commitment to field epidemiology (EPIET)/public health microbiology (EUPHEM) in the EU
- 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 that are the subject of equivalent certificates issued by authorities in an EU Member State shall be considered.

- Good command of scientific writing and oral communication in English

#### Advantageous criteria

- Previous experience in public health and/or epidemiology (EUPHEM)
- Ability to undertake independent working, 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

Application process for acknowledged training sites in EU/EEA Member States:

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 of the Member States

Every year, ECDC sends an invitation for expression of interest to the NFPs for Training to train EU- and MS-track fellows in the cohort of the following year. In this "Call for Expressions of Interest", ECDC will ask the MS to propose national training sites interested in training a fellow in the ECDC Fellowship Programme, both for the EU-track and the MS-track. This is done by submitting a response form by the deadline stated in the invitation.

The Member States 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>2</sup> will be able 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 future.

In the first allocation round of the 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 each other. Hence, the MS will need to prioritise between EU- and MS-track 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 fellowship 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>2</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 and approved in the last three years or c) has had a successful training site appraisal no later than December in the year of the Call.

Each cohort will have a minimum number of posts per path under the MS-Track, to be distributed among the requesting countries 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 countries for the EU-track have been identified. Additional fellowship posts will be assigned to the path/s based on the number of expression of interest for each path. This gives flexibility to distribute resources according to the needs and training capacity expressed by the Member State. For Cohort 2022 we anticipate to have a minimum of two posts that are not pre-assigned to a specific path.

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.

Countries 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 countries 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 countries 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 countries expressing an interest to host fellows in that path, the remaining posts will be distributed among the countries that expressed an interest in training more than one fellow according to the following priority order:

- First, to countries 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 countries and allocate unassigned posts based on the number of alumni currently working in the Member State.

Part 2: Selection of candidates by the Member States

Member States requesting an 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 including the placements of the fellows and waiting list/s will be shared with all the Member States.

The countries 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 with a CV and a Letter of Motivation (LoM) of the nominated candidate/s.

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 Europass 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.
- Member States that are offered an MS-track post but who cannot identify candidate(s) meeting the eligibility and selection criteria will not be able to fill their post; the post will be offered to the next ranked Member State on the list (as specified in Article 4.2).
- The selection panel will guide potentially good candidates who have knowledge, experience or language skill gaps through provision of recommendations for improvement to allow them to fill these gaps and reapply at a later date.

## 6. 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 performance, management and follow-up of the ECDC fellowship can be found [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](#).

## 7. Organisation

Fellows are placed at one of 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 of her/his projects.

The training site will provide individual supervision meetings for the fellow for an average of at least four hours per week during the fellowship. The training site will grant the fellow access to supervised field activities, to datasets and vital records 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, provides guidance to fellows and assist supervisors on how to best develop the required field epidemiology and public health microbiology competencies.

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.

## 8. 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 document that (a) the training site accepts the terms and conditions of the MS-track EPIET/EUPHEM fellowship described in this Decision and in the programme manual, and (b) that ECDC covers the fellow's costs of travel, accommodation, and per diem for participation in all required EPIET/EUPHEM modules and participation to ESCAIDE. However, 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 this 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.

## 9. Rights and duties of fellows

### 9.1. 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, fellowship periods 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.

### 9.2. Prolongation of the training

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.

### 9.3. 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.

### 9.4. Obligatory training activities

Fellows must take part in all activities organised under the auspices of the ECDC fellowship programme, respecting the timetables and programmes laid down by ECDC.

### 9.5. 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 unauthorized person any document or information not already in the public domain. They will continue to be bound by this obligation even after expiry of their employment contract.

### 9.6. Conflict of interests

In this context, a conflict of interest exists when a fellow undertakes an activity which may conflict, or may 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 13 on international assignments), the fellow shall complete a declaration of interest, which the supervisor and the Head of Fellowship Programme shall then 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 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.

#### 9.7. Publications

Fellows must not, either alone or with others, publish or cause to be published any material dealing with the work of their training site without the prior written permission of their supervisor and frontline coordinators. Work carried out jointly with ECDC experts requires approval by the Head of Fellowship Programme and clearance by the Chief Scientist of ECDC. 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), Solna, Sweden' or 'ECDC Fellowship Programme, Public Health Microbiology path (EUPHEM), European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), Solna, 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 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 coordinator should contact the Head of Fellowship Programme for decision.

#### 9.8. Regular Progress Reports

Fellows must update their supervisors and the scientific coordinators on their activities during the training period on a monthly basis, using the format proposed by the Fellowship Scientific Coordination team.

#### 9.9. 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).

## **10. Absences**

### 10.1. 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. Fellows cannot take holidays during mandatory training activities such as the Introductory Course, modules, and during ESCAIDE. ECDC will not reimburse to their partners monetary payments for holidays that have not been taken by the fellows.

The training site supervisors and EPIET/EUPHEM 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.

### 10.2. Sickness

In the event of sickness, fellows must notify the supervisor immediately and obtain 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 mandatory fellowship activity.

### 10.3. Pregnancy and birth or adoption of a child

In the event of pregnancy and birth or adoption, fellows must notify the supervisor and Head of Fellowship Programme as soon as possible, and must 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.

#### 10.4. 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 for decision regarding consequences to be coordinated in terms of fellowship (ECDC) and employment contract (training site).

#### 10.5. 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.

## 11. Financial provisions and working conditions

11.1. 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.

11.2. 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 are responsible for 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.

11.3. 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.

## 12. Place of fellowship

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

12.2. Fellows are required to participate in EPIET/EUPHEM training modules and courses and may occasionally be deployed to Member States for projects with an EU dimension, and to international assignments outside the EU. The Head of Fellowship Programme, or by delegation an assigned scientific coordinator, will indicate which training activities are obligatory and which are optional.

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

13.1. 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 participate in assignments following requests by a third party. ECDC may also suggest mobilization of fellows to respond to a request for assistance to support outbreak response or other public health event.

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

13.3. 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 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 mandatory activity of the fellowship.

13.4. 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 of this coverage before the assignment.

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

13.6. 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.

## **14. Tax arrangements**

Salaries paid to fellows are subject to the tax regulations of 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.

## **15. Interruption and termination of fellowship and consequences**

15.1. 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 one (1) month. In addition, the fellow will not be entitled to reimbursement by ECDC of any travel expenses incurred during the suspension period. In justified circumstances, 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.

15.2. If a fellow wishes to terminate his/her fellowship earlier than the date specified in the agreement with ECDC, the fellow must submit a written request to the Head of Fellowship Programme, via his/her main supervisor. The termination request, stating the relevant reasons, must conform with the national law valid at the training site. ECDC will respond to this request within 10 working days. Where appropriate, the training site will reimburse ECDC for any amount unduly paid.

15.3. 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 moment 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.

15.4. Notwithstanding the exceptions detailed in Articles 15.1, 15.2, and 15.3 above, the fellowship employment contract shall end upon expiry of the period for which it was awarded.

## **16. Final provisions**

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

Implementation of these rules may be defined in work instructions.