

Steven Van Gucht



Professional summary

Distinguished expert in public health microbiology with over a decade of leadership experience at [Sciensano](#).

As Scientific Director of the Department of Infectious Diseases in Humans at Sciensano, I lead strategic research and public health initiatives focused on monitoring, diagnosing, and controlling infectious diseases. I oversee a multidisciplinary team and 13 [National Reference Centers](#), guiding scientific efforts to improve disease prevention and response in Belgium.

During the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2023, I played a pivotal role in guiding national policy and public communication, serving as an intergovernmental spokesperson and advisor to the Belgian government across multiple scientific advisory boards.

With a solid academic foundation, including a PhD in Veterinary Sciences from Ghent University and a Visiting Professorship at its Faculty of Veterinary Medicine since 2014, I have combined practical leadership in public health with academic excellence, contributing to advancing the field of virology and public health microbiology.

Job history

SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR DEPARTMENT INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN HUMANS | SCIENSANO | 2024 -

- Strategy development, research agenda setting, laboratory continuity, crisis preparedness, external communication and collaborations
- Leadership and management of approximately 130 scientists and laboratory technicians, overseeing 13 national reference centers, an interventional studies platform, a clinical laboratory, a biobank, an immunology platform, BSL-2 and BSL-3 laboratories, and experimental animal facilities

HEAD OF THE SCIENTIFIC SERVICE VIRAL DISEASES | SCIENSANO | 2010 - 2024

- Coordinator of 5 National Reference Centres (NRC) and 1 National Reference Laboratory (NRL) for Influenza, Hepatitis, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Rabies, and Human Papillomaviruses

HEAD OF THE NATIONAL REFERENCE LABORATORY OF RABIES | SCIENSANO | 2008-2010

SCIENTIFIC CO-WORKER NATIONAL REFERENCE LABORATORY OF RABIES | SCIENSANO | 2005-2008

DOCTORAL RESEARCHER | GHENT UNIVERSITY | 2001-2005

- Laboratory of Virology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine
- Fellow of the Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO-Vlaanderen)
- Topic: Pathogenesis of viral respiratory disease

SCIENTIFIC CO-WORKER | GHENT UNIVERSITY | 2000-2001

- Laboratory of Virology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

Additional mandates and affiliations

- ECDC Advisory Forum - Alternate | [ECDC](#) | 2024 –
- Scientific Advisory Committee [VirusBank Platform](#) | KUL, Rega Institute | 2022 –
- Advisory Board Faculty of Veterinary Medicine| Ghent University | 2021 –
- EU advisor COVID-19 pandemic | European Commission | 2020 – 2022
- Science advisor COVID-19 pandemic | Federal Government | 2020 –
- Interfederal spokesperson COVID-19 pandemic| [National Crisis Center](#) | 2020 – 2022
[>170 press conferences](#)
- Belgian Society for Virology ([BELVIR](#)), founder and board member | 2018
- Supervisor European Programme for Public Health Microbiology Training ([EUPHEM](#)) | [ECDC](#) | 2017 – 2021
- Visiting professor Laboratory of Virology, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine| Ghent University | 2014 –
- Belgian National Microbiology Focal Point | [ECDC](#) | 2012 –
- President of the local Ethical Commission | Sciensano | 2008-2015
- Head of the Animal Platform | Sciensano | 2006 - 2010

Education

PHD IN VETERINARY SCIENCES | 2005 | GHENT UNIVERSITY

- Research domain: virology, pathogenesis of viral disease, animal and cell infection models

DOCTOR OF VETERINARY MEDICINE | 2000 | GHENT UNIVERSITY

- Great distinction

FELASA C LABORATORY ANIMAL SCIENCE | 2007 | GHENT UNIVERSITY