

## EURL-PH-AMR

# EU Reference Laboratory for public health on antimicrobial resistance

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meeting (minutes)**



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## Document overview

<b>Deliverable number</b>	MS2
<b>Deliverable name</b>	EURL-PH-AMR kick-off meeting
<b>Work package number / name</b>	WP1 Coordination
<b>Task number / name</b>	T1.1 Coordination with laboratory network members and ECDC
<b>Due date</b>	28.02.2025
<b>Dissemination level</b>	-
<b>Authors</b>	SSI, DTU, EDL
<b>Lead Beneficiary</b>	SSI
<b>Project website</b>	-



Agenda: EURL-PH-AMR kick-off meeting (virtual)

[Link to meeting](#)

**Thursday 20 February 2025 at 09.00-11.00**

Time	Topic	Speaker
	Introduction to the EURL-PH-AMR	
09.00-09.10	Welcome and introduction to EURL-PH-AMR	Anders Rhod Larsen (SSI)
09.10-09.20	EU4Health and EURL-PH-AMR from the perspective of HaDEA	Paola D’Acapito (HaDEA)
09.20-09.35	ECDC/EURGen-Net and EARS-Net priorities for 2025	Anke Kohlenberg (ECDC) Marius Linkevicius (ECDC)
9.35-9.45	Overview of the role of EURL-PH-AMR	Camilla Wiuff Coia (SSI)
9.45-10.05	Introduction of the personnel of the three consortium partners (SSI, DTU and EDL) and their roles and responsibilities	Anders Rhod Larsen (SSI) Birgitte Helwich (DTU) Oskar Ekelund (EDL)
	Updates on initial activities	
10.05-10.35	EARS-Net EQA plan - 2025	Birgitte Helwich (DTU)
	Laboratory testing strategy	Oskar Ekelund (EDL)
	Annual EURL-PH-AMR work plan for 2025	Camilla Wiuff Coia (SSI)
	Advisory service function	Camilla Wiuff Coia (SSI)
10.35-10.45	Plans for training activities	Valeria Bortolaia (SSI)
	Conclusions	
10.45-11.00	Questions and answers	Anders Rhod Larsen (SSI)

## Attendees

The virtual kick-off meeting for the EURL-PH-AMR consortium, advisors from ECDC and project officer from HaDEA was attended by:

SSI: Valeria Bortolaia, Lina Cavaco, Camilla Wiuff Coia, Anette Hammerum, Frank Hansen, Henrik Hasman, Kasper Tystrup Karstensen, Anders Rhod Larsen, Louise Roer, and apologies from Barbara Juliane Holzkecht and Simone Scriva

DTU: Ana Rita Rebelo, Carmen Espinosa Gongora, and apologies from Rene S. Hendriksen and Birgitte Helwich

EDL: Jenny Åhman, Oskar Ekelund, Gunnar Kahlmeter, Onur Karatuna, Erika Matuschek, Sofia Somajo

HaDEA: Paola D'Acapito

ECDC: Dana Alsaialy, Andreas Hoefler, Pete Kinross, Anke Kohlenberg, Marius Linkevicius, and apologies from Dominique Monnet.

Minutes

Introduction to the EURL-PH-AMR	Speaker
<i>Welcome and introduction to EURL-PH-AMR</i>	
A warm welcome was given to all collaborators from EDL, DTU, SSI, HaDEA and ECDC. The kick-off meeting will include an introduction to all consortium members, and HaDEA and ECDC colleagues, the overall role and the work plan of the EURL-PH-AMR for 2025.	Anders Rhod Larsen (SSI)
<i>EU4Health and EURL-PH-AMR from the perspective of HaDEA</i>	
Paola D’Acapito, HaDEA Project Officer for the EURL-PH-AMR action, introduced the organisation of the Executive Agencies under EU, including HaDEA that implements calls and manages the implementation of EU programmes on behalf of the European Commission. Implementation of the EURL grants deviated from the normal procedure, as it included a designation process managed by the European Commission. The EURL-PH-AMR is funded under the ‘EU4Health’- ‘Horizon Europe – Health’ programme. The EU4Health accounts for €3.8 billion out of HaDEA overall budget of €20 billion. The EU regulation 2021/522, issued in response to COVID-19 included 20 actions under the ‘Crisis Preparedness Strand’, of which AMR/One Health is one major topic of. A number of other EU Joint Actions and Direct Grants on surveillance were presented (see also slides). All EURLs were funded via Direct grants for 84 months. The other EURLs cover rodent-borne zoonotic viruses, vector-borne zoonotic viruses, emerging zoonotic bacteria, diphtheria and pertussis and Legionella.	Paola D’Acapito (HaDEA)
<i>ECDC/EURGen-Net and EARS-Net priorities for 2025</i>	
<p>Anke Kohlenberg, Marius Linkevicius, and Pete Kinross, ECDC advisors to the EURL-PH-AMR, presented the ECDC/EURGen-Net priorities for EURL-input for 2025. Priorities for EURL-PH-AMR support were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Next CRE survey</u> (simplified/faster updated protocol, to run on national WGS data with back-up option, direct upload to ECDC platform and piloting interim analysis). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ECDC Protocols to be updated (Expert consensus protocols on CRE and CCRE, Lab manual for CCRE detection).</li> <li>• EURGen-Net EQA/PT</li> <li>• Technical advice to generation of national WGS data for the CRE survey data and translation to action.</li> <li>• Support to investigation of detected outbreaks.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. <u>Investigation of cross-border plasmid spread</u></li> </ol>	Anke Kohlenberg (ECDC) Marius Linkevicius (ECDC) Pete Kinross (ECDC)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support to ongoing investigation of converged OXA-48 and aerobactin plasmid outbreak investigations (Outbreak 1 for advisory function)</li> <li>• Support to set-up ECDC plasmid analysis workflow</li> <li>• Support to set-up national plasmid analysis workflows</li> <li>• Training/workshops on long-read sequencing result analysis for public health action</li> </ul> <p>3. <u>Virulence</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice for/harmonisation of detection of relevant virulence markers for EURGen-Net CRE surveillance including working definition for hypervirulent <i>K. pneumoniae</i></li> <li>• Review of genomic tools for virulence detection in CRE</li> <li>• Advice on how to report genomic virulence results in public health context</li> <li>• Practical support and training on inclusion of virulence markers into NRL pipelines</li> <li>• Research study?</li> </ul> <p>4. <u>Enterobacter pilot study</u> Advice from EURL-PH-AMR</p> <p>5. <u>ECDC CRAb survey (2024-2025) and CRPa survey (2026-2027)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harmonised protocols on phenotypic testing methods for CRAb/CRPa</li> <li>• Harmonised protocols on genotypic testing methods for CRAb/CRPa</li> <li>• Updated (EURGen-RefLabCap) training materials for genotypic testing methods for CRAb/CRPa</li> <li>• Phenotypic AST of selected multi-country outbreak strains</li> <li>• EURGen-Net EQA/PT</li> </ul> <p>Pete Kinross, ECDC advisor to Phenotypic EQAs in WP7, highlighted the support to EARS-Net, led by DTU</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the <u>annual EQA of AST</u> in clinical laboratories.</li> <li>2. the <u>upcoming survey</u> of clinical laboratories regarding AST of new antimicrobials.</li> </ol> <p><b>Action:</b> ECDC and EURL-PH-AMR will discuss and agree priorities for 2025. HaDEA will be contacted in case of any changes relative to the grant agreement.</p>	
<p><u>Overview of the role of EURL-PH-AMR</u></p>	
<p>The main role of the EURL-PH-AMR is to organise and</p>	<p>Camilla</p>

<p>implement support activities under agreed workplans (documented in the grant agreement) for disease network members of the ECDC-led EARS-Net and EURGen-Net. The EURL will also be part of a network of other EURLs (currently five other EURLs, from May 2025 eight others). The support activities are organised in administrative (WP1-WP4) and technical work packages (WP5-WP11). SSI is consortium lead (WP1-WP4) and WP-lead for WP6 and WP8-WP11. EDL is responsible for phenotypic reference testing for AMR for EURGen-Net (lead for WP5) and guidance development shared with SSI (for genotypic parts). DTU is lead for the phenotypic external quality assessments (EQAs) for EARS-net/EURGen-Net (WP7) shared with SSI (for EURGen-Net Proficiency testing (PT), the genotypic parts only). All partners contribute to the delivery of subsets of other WPs than the one(s) they lead. The reference testing service (WP5) and the advisory service function (WP10) are new functions relative to what was delivered in EURGen-RefLabCap. Research and collaboration (WP9) is also a new area of activity.</p>	<p>Wiuff Coia (SSI)</p>
<p><i>Introduction of the personnel of the three consortium partners (SSI, DTU and EDL) and their roles and responsibilities</i></p>	
<p>Members of the whole teams at SSI, DTU and EDL and their main areas of work were presented (see slides).</p>	<p>Anders Rhod Larsen (SSI) Ana Rita Bastos Rebelo (DTU) Oskar Ekelund (EDL)</p>
<p><b>Updates on initial activities</b></p>	
<p><i>EARS-Net EQA plan - 2025</i></p>	
<p>The work for the EQA is ongoing and the launch of the EQA is planned for June 2025. The EARS-Net EQA 2025 follows the same structure of the previous EARS-Net EQA exercises including key steps of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining the expected results for the EQA through consensus results in collaboration with EDL and with MDU PH in Australia.</li> <li>• Performing supporting analyses through WGS.</li> <li>• Providing individual evaluation reports and certificates of certification to each participating laboratory.</li> <li>• Distributing a feedback survey to all participating laboratories.</li> <li>• Preparing national reports for each participating country.</li> <li>• Preparing the annual summary report.</li> </ul> <p>The strains and panel of antimicrobials included in each EQA follow the ECDC EARS-Net surveillance AMR reporting protocols,</p>	<p>Ana Rita Rebelo (DTU)</p>

<p>and the annual reports of each EARS-Net EQA include the impact of the results in European surveillance.</p>	
<p><i>Laboratory testing strategy</i></p>	
<p>The EUCAST Development Laboratory (EDL) will provide a laboratory testing service for phenotypic antimicrobial susceptibility testing (AST) for EURGen-Net. An agreed 'Laboratory testing strategy' is described in the EURL-PH-AMR document: MS14 (including description of quality indicators and review). EDL has preparedness to test up to a maximum of 1,000 isolates per year. Testing will be performed according to EUCAST guidelines, normally starting by disk diffusion, followed by broth microdilution (BMD) and/or functional testing when necessary. Reference testing is always initiated and approved by ECDC. Guidelines for sample submission are under development.</p>	<p>Oskar Ekelund (EDL)</p>
<p><i>Annual EURL-PH-AMR work plan for 2025</i></p>	
<p>Key deliverables in 2025 include (in chronological order):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WP7: Planning and conducting EQAs for phenotypic testing for EARS-Net and EURGen-Net (Jan 2025-Jan 2026)</li> <li>• WP7: Planning and conducting proficiency testing (PT) for WGS for EURGen-Net (Jun – TBC)</li> <li>• WP 11: Training plans 2025: Best practice activities and Technology transition support (EURGen-Net) (Mar)</li> <li>• WP5: Harmonised protocols on phenotypic/genotypic testing for CCRE for EURGen-Net (Jun) and for CRAb/CRPa (Dec)</li> <li>• WP6: Establishment of electronic repository of available reference materials is accessible to EURGen-Net (Jun)</li> <li>• WP9: Report on survey on research needs, resources and capacities for planning collaborative research studies for EURGen-Net (Jun). Protocol on collaborative research study (Sep)</li> <li>• WP8: Capacity building plan for EURGen-Net (Dec).</li> </ul> <p>See also slides for GANTT charts.</p> <p>A number of administrative deliverables that underpins project management, consortium coordination, progress/periodic reporting, communication and dissemination and evaluation of the EURL activities are also planned in 2025.</p> <p>Please save the dates for the following events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Joint virtual EURGen-Net and EARS-Net Kick-off meeting, 20 March 2025</b></li> <li>• <b>First on-site EURGen-Net network meeting at SSI, Copenhagen – 8 October 2025</b></li> </ul>	<p>Camilla Wiuff Coia (SSI)</p>



<i>Advisory service function</i>	
<p>An EURL advisory service function will be developed and implemented during the first year of the EURL (2025) (described in MS30, in revision). SSI and EDL will be available to provide advice to ECDC and NRLs on all working days. The advisory service function will focus on supporting national outbreak and cross-border investigations includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing scientific advice and technical assistance on phenotypic and genotypic reference testing</li> <li>• Assisting with bioinformatics analysis/interpretation for reporting on incidents (nationally and to EpiPulse)</li> <li>• Contributing to ECDC rapid risk assessments</li> </ul> <p>In partnership EURL-PH-AMR and ECDC will define the required actions for each incident/outbreak/request. Up to 4 significant incidents are supported by EURL-PH-AMR per year</p>	Camilla Wiuff Coia (SSI)
<i>Plans for training activities</i>	
<p>The aim of the training is to share know-how and best practice to strengthen AMR surveillance in Europe and to foster collaboration within the network. This will be delivered through various types of training activities; virtual workshops, virtual outbreak simulation exercises, webinars, pilot surveillance exercises and face-to-face multidisciplinary training See also slides for details. All consortium partners (SSI, DTU and EDL) will contribute to delivering the training activities. A training plan will be developed every year. In 2025, the training plan is scheduled to be agreed by March. Going forward, annual training plans will be developed by October for the coming year.</p>	Valeria Bortolaia (SSI)
<b>Conclusions and actions</b>	
<i>Questions and answers</i>	
<p>Meeting will be arranged to instigate the first outbreak investigation.</p> <p>Please save the date – <b>training course at SSI, Copenhagen, 9 October 2025</b></p> <p><u>Comments by Paola D’Acapito (HaDEA):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deviations from the grant agreement should be reported to HaDEA (including changes to activities and extra activities).</li> <li>• Completed milestones should be sent by standard email to HaDEA (and tick the box in the F&amp;T portal).</li> <li>• DG SANTE should be informed of/invited to future EURL-PH-AMR events.</li> </ul>	Anders Rhod Larsen (SSI)