



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Public Health, Cancer and Health security
The Director (acting)

Luxembourg
SANTE.B.2/RF/tm (2024)2488112

NOTE FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIONS OF THE MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Subject: Invitation to nominate Member State competent authorities in the scope of the calls for applications for EU reference laboratories for public health (Article 15 of Regulation (EU) 2022/2371)

Regulation (EU) 2022/2371 on serious cross-border threats to health and repealing Decision No 1082/2013/EU ("SCBTH Regulation") entered into force on 26 December 2022.

According to Article 15, the European Commission is empowered to designate EU reference laboratories (EURLs) for public health *“to provide support to national reference laboratories to promote good practice and alignment by Member States on a voluntary basis on diagnostics, testing methods, use of certain tests for the uniform surveillance, notification and reporting of diseases by Member States”*.

On 2 October 2023, the first calls for applications for EURLs were published by the Commission ⁽¹⁾. Laboratories in EU/EEA countries were invited to submit applications to be designated as EURL in one of six areas of public health. As part of their application, national laboratories had to seek endorsement by a national competent authority. The competent authorities endorsing applicants were asked to confirm that each candidate laboratory met the eligibility criteria of the call. Importantly, this included the confirmation that they already played an active role in the national public health microbiology system.

The applications were evaluated in January 2024 and selected laboratories are about to be designated as EURLs, via an implementing regulation, expected to be adopted before the end of March 2024.

The Commission is currently working on the next set of calls for applications to designate further EURLs. The topics are being defined at the moment and calls for applications will be launched in the very near future (Q2 2024). Competent public health authorities will be asked again to endorse the national laboratories wishing to apply.

⁽¹⁾ https://health.ec.europa.eu/health-security-and-infectious-diseases/surveillance-and-early-warning/eu-reference-laboratories-public-health-calls-application_en

In a change to last year's procedure, aimed at streamlining the application process further and as a result of feedback received from the Member States, this time **each EU/EEA country is asked to formally nominate one national competent authority in public health** ahead of the calls for application being launched. Only that authority will be responsible for the endorsement of national applicants.

This information will be made public at the time of the launch of the calls and applicants will be invited to contact the nominated authority via pre-defined contact channels. For that, **we ask countries to submit the following information:**

- name of national competent authority;
- contact information (email address and telephone number and, where relevant, name of responsible person).

We would be grateful to receive your nominations by Monday 22 April 2024. Please send your nominations to SANTE-CONSULT-B2@ec.europa.eu.

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c.c.: KEYS Rosalyn (SANTE.B), KELLER Ingrid (SANTE.B.2), FIGUEIRA Rita (SANTE.B.2), MACÉ Tamara (SANTE.B.2)