

Dear readers,

Here are the latest updates from the EU-WISH project.

This edition introduces a new feature: from now on, you will receive the full version of the newsletter, which is exclusively designed for consortium members.

This version will regularly offer practical advice to help with project coordination in a new section called the "Consortium Toolkit", as well as providing direct links to important resources on our SharePoint. A lighter version of the newsletter will also be shared with registered subscribers via the project website.

With each edition, we continue to evolve the newsletter to make it more engaging and useful, both as a communication tool within the consortium and as a way to showcase our activities and progress to internal and external audiences.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition.

Latest news from the inside

Overview of progress from the project

This issue provides a concise overview of each work package (WP), highlighting key developments and current directions. These snapshots reflect ongoing activities. Participants seeking further information or wishing to get involved are encouraged to contact the relevant WP and task leaders.

Project management and coordination

Coordination and collaboration across WPs

WP1 continued to foster strong interconnection and seamless collaboration across all WPs, promoting an integrated and cohesive approach without silos.

Planning Group for the Vienna Workshop

The Planning Group has been actively shaping the content, thematic priorities, and practical organisation of the upcoming EU-WISH International Workshop & Consortium Meeting in Vienna.

Stakeholder Committee meetings

Monthly Stakeholders Committee meetings are held as a forum for dialogue, dissemination and discussion with key European and international organisations (HERA, JRC, ECDC, and WHO), this supports exchange on needs, synergies, and the uptake of EU-WISH outcomes. Two meetings have already taken place, during which "WP2 – Communication, dissemination and exploitation" and "WP4 – Sustainability and capacity building" were presented.

Steering Board

The Steering Board continued to ensure close coordination across national initiatives and related projects, providing strategic oversight and supporting key decisions on the implementation and evolution of EU-WISH activities.

Sustainability Working Group (SWG)

The SWG was established and held its initial meetings, bringing together representatives from Member States and associated countries to share experiences, promote uptake of EU-WISH solutions, and contribute to shaping long-term sustainability and governance. Key signals from the SWG are channeled into WP4's sustainability report.

WP1

Communication, dissemination and exploitation

WP2 continues to support the visibility of EU-WISH by sharing the latest project news across different channels. Updates are regularly relayed through direct communication within the consortium, this newsletter, social media, and the project website.

If you have any content to share, ideas to promote, or a need for guidance, don't hesitate to contact WP2 via contact@eu-wish.eu.

WP2



A small milestone worth celebrating: EU-WISH has recently reached 1,000 followers on LinkedIn. If not already following the page, it's definitely worth joining to stay up to date with the latest news and activities.

WP2

WP3

Evaluation and preparedness

Deliverable 3.2 provides a structured framework for integrating wastewater-based surveillance (WBS) into Public Health Preparedness Plans (PHPPs) across EU Member States. It positions WBS as a complementary tool that enhances early detection, situational awareness, and response planning by capturing population-level signals, including asymptomatic transmission.

Building on EU-WISH outputs across all Work Packages, the deliverable defines key operational elements for integration, including pathogen prioritisation based on public health relevance and feasibility, as well as the design of sampling strategies, site selection, and adaptive sampling frequency aligned with epidemiological needs. It also highlights the importance of standardised laboratory methods and quality assurance to ensure reliable and comparable data.

In addition, D3.2 emphasises governance, training needs, multidisciplinary collaboration, and capacity building, alongside long-term sustainability through institutional integration, funding, and alignment with EU frameworks and the One Health approach.

Sustainability and capacity building

The WP4 team have been working diligently together with WP5 and WP7 for the development and delivery of a portfolio of training and capacity building products focused on antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

A first webinar focusing on Culture-based workflows was held on 16 April 2026 with a turnout of 88 people. The webinar was a success, and the group look forward to delivering the next webinar focusing on PCR-based workflows on 21 May 2026. The webinars target technical and laboratory professionals involved in wastewater surveillance within the EU-WISH and JAMRAI 2 networks. It is a key example of Joint Action cooperation and mutual benefit stemming from the efforts of our experts. The webinars also contribute to the preparation of a subsequent small-group hands-on instructor led training in Riga on 2-4 June.

Besides these tangible products, the WP4 team are also pushing forward the sustainability report. For this, experts are consolidating governance (T4.1) and financial sustainability frameworks (T4.2). This is being supported by the Sustainability Working Group (SWG) which is recently formed. A draft report will be available by the end of Q2.

In parallel to these activities, WP4 is actively engaging with external stakeholders in the WES community to ensure strategic alignment and integration of EU-WISH training and capacity building products into broader networks and digital platforms. As part of Task 4.5 (Digital Platform for Training), a series of bilateral sessions with JRC, HERA, ECDC, and other partners is underway. These efforts aim to explore technical feasibility, support sustainable training infrastructure, and identify pathways for long-term integration of wastewater surveillance training resources.

WP4

WP5

Mapping current actions and future priority targets of wastewater surveillance

In January-February 2026 a second survey mapping the operative wastewater surveillance systems in Europe was conducted with invitation to respond reaching beyond the countries represented in EU-WISH. With a total of 35 responses, the team is now analysing the results which will be included in the deliverable D5.1 later this year.

Meanwhile, the thematic tasks focusing on WBS of respiratory viruses, AMR, poliovirus and non-polio enteroviruses, emerging pathogens and chemicals and health-related biomarkers are finalizing and updating the priority lists of WBS targets for future use in Europe. This prioritization work is expected to be ready by end of June 2026.

The action group T5.2 intended to draft recommendation for international WBS guidelines has met once and will meet on every third week this spring. More participants among the EU-WISH partner organisations are welcome, registrations can be made to the table: [Action group section 4 - tasks.xlsx](#).

Usage of wastewater surveillance data for public health

Epidemiology and surveillance are the key components of WP6, which aims to support and consolidate application and integration of wastewater surveillance in public health.



Task 6.1 focus on exploring and designing risk-based sampling strategies and produce sampling guidelines. A major element of this task is assessing and compiling existing knowledge through literature reviews. The first scoping review on wastewater surveillance programmes for public health is nearing completion, while a second scoping review, that focus on targeted sampling in specific scenarios, is entering the implementation phase. A systematic review on determining optimal sampling frequencies for WBS has also entered the final stages. In parallel, preparation for a Member State questionnaire-survey on sampling strategies is advancing, with implementation planned for the coming months. Importantly, all outputs generated under this task will be used to inform, revise, and expand the “Guidance for Designing Wastewater Surveillance Sampling Strategies to Monitor Public Health”, that is the cohesive final guideline output from this task.

Task 6.2 revolves around statistical data analysis for WBS in public health. Currently, the major overview document “Statistical workflow of wastewater surveillance” is progressing rapidly and be made available to EU-WISH'ers for feedback in the near future. This document, that will be a mixture of guidance, report, and discussion elements will of course also be made publicly available, and this is expected in the second half of 2026. The workflow document is comprised of chapters that address all relevant data analysis aspects from “data preparation and quality control”, “normalization”, “aggregation of data and comparisons”, “statistical indicators”, “visualization”, “smoothing, modelling and prediction”, and “statistical implications of sampling design” as well as “aspects of data management”. To further enhance the usability and accessibility of learning about the data analysis approaches, a resource with R-code examples is being prepared.

Task 6.3 deals with the major challenge of how to integrate wastewater surveillance data into existing public health surveillance systems. This task uses an approach based on collecting and synthesizing knowledge through qualitative interviews. To guide these interviews, standardized questionnaires were developed and shared with the Member State representatives in advance. This allowed collection of relevant information prior to the interviews, which in turn enabled informed, constructive, and focused dialogue during the interviews themselves. Questions were organised in three main areas – approaches adopted to integrate wastewater surveillance data with data from other national surveillance systems, strategies for the development and validation of indicators describing wastewater data, and public health actions adopted using WBS.

The main areas were further subdivided per target groups of interest within the project (respiratory viruses, emerging pathogens, antimicrobial resistance, illicit drugs and chemicals). The online face-to-face interviews focused on clarifying and deepening the critical information provided through the questionnaires. In April, the interview process was completed for 14 Member States (Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, and Slovakia). These countries were selected to ensure geographical variation within Europe as well as the different levels of WBS implementation achieved for the target groups. Three more interviews (Denmark, Italy and Greece) are planned to finalize the interview process. A report is being compiled, that will summarize the key contents and insights reached through the interviews as well as highlight and discuss practices and successful approaches for WBS exploitation.



WP6

WP7

Wastewater surveillance technical procedures, sampling schemes and analysis methods for priority targets

For all WP7 tasks, tasks 1-3, both the micro and macro analyses of the surveys distributed in 2025 have been completed. The results from these analyses are currently being processed and will be incorporated into the final deliverable.

WP7

Be part of the discussion: Interlaboratory studies session coming soon

For WP7 task 2 interlaboratory studies have been conducted over the past two years, to support the participants in using their own analytical methods. The goal of these studies is to contribute to the harmonization of laboratory procedures across the consortium. A first trial in 2024 focused on SARS-CoV-2 detection in wastewater, followed by a second study completed in 2026 targeting Influenza A & B and RSV A & B.

How does it work? Raw urban wastewater samples are sent to participating laboratories with one simple instruction: detect the target pathogen(s). Beyond that, each laboratory is free to apply its own methods.

All results are then collected and analysed by ANSES (France), leading sub-task 7.2.1. The goal is to better understand current practices, highlighting commonly used steps, as well as less frequently applied techniques. These interlaboratory studies clearly illustrate the value of collaboration. Through their participation, laboratories contribute to building robust, harmonized procedures that will strengthen our collective response to future public health crises.

Curious to learn more? An upcoming session organized by the sub-task 7.2.1 team will present the study design and key findings. Do you have specific topics or questions you would like to see addressed? Share them with the organising team, the team will do their best to include them in the session.

[Submit questions & topics](#)



Upcoming Activities

In addition to the onsite training, we are planning to organize a series of webinars and practical online training sessions covering various topics, such as sampling/biobanking and NGS analysis. These activities are currently in the design phase - stay tuned for more details!

Meet EU-WISHers

Spotlight on the EU-WISH Next Generation Sequencing training: from theory to practice in wastewater surveillance

From March 24th to 26th 2026, Sciensano opened its doors to 16 participants from 15 EU-WISH member countries, along with one participant from a low- and middle-income country (LMIC), Sabine, who will share her first European training experience later in this newsletter. Together, they took part in an intensive hands-on training on Next Generation Sequencing (NGS).



EU-WISH NGS Training - Group Photo, March 2026

Upcoming events

- Online

Webinar 1 - AMR detection in wastewater
Culture-based workflows
Date: 16 April 2026
Expression of interest: **closed**
Registration: **closed**
- Online

Webinar 2 - AMR detection in wastewater
PCR-based workflows
Date: 21 May 2026
Expression of interest: details coming soon
Registration: details coming soon
- On-site

Capacity Building Workshop - Riga
AMR & Chemical monitoring
Date: 2- 4 June 2026
Expression of interest: **Opened until 24 April 2026**
Registration: details coming soon

[More details](#)
- On-site

2nd International Workshop - Vienna
Date: 6-10 October 2026
Registration (if applicable): details coming soon

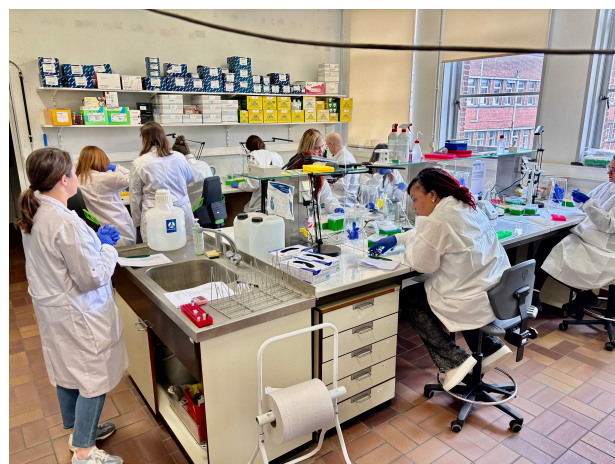
[More details](#)

From the very first day, participants were immersed in real-world case studies showcasing the implementation of wastewater surveillance in Belgium, Denmark, and the Netherlands. These sessions highlighted not only the added value of sequencing in public health monitoring, but also the technical and operational challenges associated with detecting respiratory viruses in such complex samples.

A theoretical refresher on sequencing technologies followed, with a focus on Illumina and Oxford Nanopore Technologies. Participants explored key sequencing strategies (including whole genome sequencing, amplicon sequencing, probe capture, and metagenomics) while discussing the advantages and limitations of each. A central takeaway emerged clearly: selecting the most appropriate sequencing approach starts with asking the right question. What are we trying to detect? What do we want to demonstrate? What signal(s) are we looking for?



Theoretical session on wastewater surveillance and NGS technologies



Wet-lab session: from RNA to sequencing

This theoretical foundation was quickly put into practice during two intensive days in the laboratory. Participants had the opportunity to work through the full sequencing workflow of a wastewater sample, from extracted RNA to bioinformatic analysis, using both Illumina and Oxford Nanopore technologies.

Of course, many experts might wonder how such workflows could be completed in just two days. The trainers therefore demonstrated remarkable ingenuity, adapting and streamlining protocols so that participants could still gain hands-on experience at each critical step, all the way through to sequencing platform loading.

Feedback collected at the end of the training highlighted its strong impact. Participants emphasized how valuable the experience was for supporting the implementation of NGS technologies in their own laboratories for wastewater surveillance.

The numerous practical tips shared by the experienced trainers were particularly appreciated.

At the same time, participants suggested areas for improvement, such as expanding the scope beyond SARS-CoV-2 to include other pathogens or exploring alternative protocols beyond the widely used ARTIC framework. The intensity of the three-day program was also noted, while highly enriching, some sessions could benefit from additional time and deeper exploration... perhaps in a future training session?



Dry-Lab Session: Data Analysis Using the Galaxy Platform

Broader context

Opening doors beyond Europe: a participant's perspective from Côte d'Ivoire

Following our overview of the EU-WISH NGS training, this article takes a step back to explore a broader perspective: the importance of extending such initiatives beyond Europe.

Among the participants, one profile stood out: Sabine, a researcher from Côte d'Ivoire working at the Institut Pasteur, and the only participant from a low- and middle-income country, selected from a pool of 177 applicants. Her experience highlights both the impact and the necessity of opening such trainings beyond Europe.

"I was really amazed by what can be done with wastewater," she shared. "I saw how important wastewater surveillance is for public health... without even needing to test individuals, you can already respond to epidemics."

Advanced technologies such as NGS are not out of reach. Through international collaborations like [PulseNet Africa](#), her laboratory has been able to access tools such as Oxford Nanopore sequencing. Yet, as she explains, routine implementation remains a major hurdle:

"Funding is the main limitation. We use these techniques only when there is an outbreak or specific support... not on a daily basis."

Despite this, Sabine was clear about the value of the training. Beyond discovering cutting-edge NGS technologies such as Illumina and Oxford Nanopore, she particularly appreciated the practical aspects and quality control approaches: "I realized that Qubit alone is not enough... here, they combine several methods and compare results. That's something I would really like to implement in my lab."

Of course, participating in such a training also comes with its own challenges. For Sabine, language was one of them:

"The only difficulty for me was the language barrier. But apart from that, the training was very well structured. The trainers were attentive, I never felt isolated."

Her experience also reflects the added value of non-commercial, collaborative training environments. While she had previously attended technical commercial trainings, this was her first training of this kind in Europe:

"I didn't think I would be selected... when I saw there were 177 applicants, I thought it would be difficult. So I am really grateful for this opportunity to see what is being done elsewhere and bring added value to our reality!"

Importantly, her perspective reinforces a key message: opening such trainings beyond Europe is not only beneficial, it is essential.

"The microorganisms we isolate in Africa are not necessarily the same as those in Europe. It would be really interesting to expand this... maybe even develop a dedicated African component."

Now back home, she carries more than new knowledge, she carries responsibility:

"My shoulders are very heavy!" she said with a smile. "I have to report back, present what I learned, and train my colleagues."

Her story is a powerful reminder that capacity building is not just about transferring knowledge, but about creating bridges, fostering collaboration, and empowering local expertise. Opening high-level, hands-on trainings to LMICs is not just valuable, it is essential for strengthening global health surveillance.



Upcoming conferences

Several conferences related to infectious diseases, microbiology, and the One Health approach will take place in Europe in the coming months. The list below is not exhaustive, but highlights a few upcoming events that may be of interest to the EU-WISH community.

- [The ESCMID Global 2026](#), organised by the European Society of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases, will gather experts in infectious diseases and clinical microbiology from 17th to 21st of April 2026 in Munich, Germany.
- [The Debrecen Online Conference on Infectious Diseases in a One Health context \(DOCIDOH 2026\)](#), organised by the University of Debrecen, will focus on topics such as antimicrobial resistance, emerging infectious diseases, pathogen genomics, environmental health, and food safety within a One Health framework. The conference will be held online and free of charge.
- [The Luxembourg Microbiology Days 2026](#), organised by the Luxembourg Society for Microbiology, will bring together researchers and professionals working in microbiology and related fields. The event will take place on site in Luxembourg City.

WBS: ongoing work at ECDC



In the context of the implementation of the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive (Article 17),

the ECDC continues its work to better identify when and where wastewater data can support public health decision-making.

This includes strengthening expertise in integrating, interpreting and using WBS data for infectious diseases, and understanding for which pathogens and in which contexts wastewater data can best complement clinical surveillance.

[ECDC Framework Guide on WBS](#)

EU-WISH Training corner

Stay informed about ongoing and upcoming trainings with this new training section. In addition, a [dedicated webpage on the project website](#) is available to also provide up-to-date information and easy access to upcoming training opportunities.

AMR Detection in Wastewater: From Culturing to Molecular Analysis

On 16th April, the first EU-WISH webinar on AMR detection in wastewater took place, focusing on the culturing workflow. The next training will take place on 21st May, focusing on PCR-based workflows for AMR detection in wastewater.

[More details](#)



How are EU-WISH trainings being developed?

EU-WISH training activities are currently being rolled out in phases to ensure quality, relevance, and continuous improvement before broader access.

Pilot Phase



- Restricted access to ensure optimal learning conditions
- Small-scale sessions due to format and capacity
- Testing content, delivery methods and institutional set-up
- Training quality assurance based on expert-defined criteria

Evaluation & Refinement



- Collecting participant feedback
- Assessing and prioritising learning needs
- Adapting training content
- Refining quality criteria based on participant feedback

Exploring broader access



- Progressive expansion informed by pilot outcomes
- Diversified formats and delivery channels
- Gradual outreach and stakeholder engagement
- Alignment with global and regional training ecosystems for sustainability

Consortium toolkit

Are you presenting or publishing EU-WISH content?

Here are a few useful tips, mandatory wording, and helpful resources.

Getting started:

- WP2 templates (word, powerpoint, and how-to): [EU-WISH MS Office Templates](#)
- Logos: [EU-WISH Logos](#)
- Colour scheme: [EU-WISH - color codes](#)
- If you are presenting the project at a conference or event, you can use this general presentation: [EU-WISH General presentation](#)
- Flyers are also available to showcase the project's key messages: [Flyers](#)

Mandatory wording:

Please include the following in all dissemination materials:

Grant information:

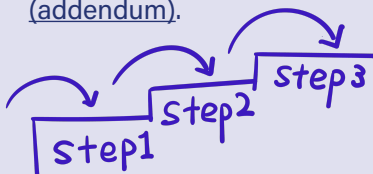
This activity is supported by co-funding from the European Union's EU4Health programme under Grant Agreement No 101140460 EU-WISH.

Disclaimer:

Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Health and Digital Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Scientific publications:

If you are preparing a scientific publication, please refer to the [EU-WISH Communication and Dissemination Plan \(addendum\)](#).



In short:

- **Inform your WP leader** early about any publication idea related to their WP. The information will be shared with the coordination team and other WP leaders to align on the publication strategy.
- Prepare your manuscript and make sure that authorship inclusion follows the [ICMJE guidelines](#)
- Ensure that your WP lead can **share the final manuscript with the consortium** (via the MS Teams “EU-WISH Articles, Manuscripts & Drafts” folder) at least 14 days before submission (or 24 hours for rapid communications). A notification should also be posted on the General channel by the WP lead.
- Before submission, allow **time for feedback or objections**: any concerns must be raised within 7 days (or 24 hours for rapid communications) to the WP lead. If no objection is received within this timeframe, submission can proceed.
- **Notify WP2** (Leader/Deputy) 1–2 weeks before publication so that dissemination activities (e.g. website, social media, press release) can be prepared if relevant.
- **Ensure open access**: all peer-reviewed publications must be made freely accessible online, in line with the Grant Agreement requirements.



Keep EU-WISH updated about your activities:



Don't forget to add your activity to the [Tracking of EU-WISH dissemination and communication activities v2.xlsx](#) list, so we can capture all the valuable dissemination and communication work done in EU-WISH.

This applies to any dissemination or communication activity, for example seminar/conference presentations, infographs, podcasts, news items, teaching or training events. All activities contribute to our joint key performance indicators (KPIs), therefore tracking of activities is an important part of demonstrating project success.

For scientific publication, add your study to the [EU-WISH Study list form.xlsx](#).

Both documents can be found in the WP2 folder, in the “[Register your communication activities](#)” subfolder.

 [Register your communication activities](#)

Feel free to contact the coordination team or WP2 via contact@eu-wish.eu if you have any questions.

Stay connected

Keep up to date with the latest actions, events, workshops, and activities of EU-WISH!

- Visit the website: <https://www.eu-wish.eu>
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