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“Capacity building of veterinary and plant health services in the Western
Balkans - Lot 1 - Animal Health” - **ADEWB II**

SANTE/2022/EA-OP/0001

Beyond the Western Balkans project ADEWB – follow up initiative

Standing Group of Experts on Rabies for Europe under the GF-TADs umbrella
5th meeting (SGE-RAB5)

Toni Kirandjiski and Florence Cliquet

04 July 2023 -Online

Basic information

- **Project Title:** “Capacity building of veterinary and plant health services in the Western Balkans - Lot 1 - Animal Health” - **ADEWB II**
- **Financing and Contracting Authority:** European Union / EC – DG SANTE and DG NEAR
- **Procurement reference No:** SANTE/2022/EA-OP/0001
- **Contractor:** Agriconsulting Europe SA (AESA) in consortium with Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell’Abruzzo e del Molise (IZSAM Teramo)

ADEWB: Action on Disease Eradication in the Western Balkans



Basic information

➤ Project stakeholders

Veterinary competent authorities

Farmers, traders and other stakeholders involved in animal production and trade



Beneficiary countries

Project office

Naum Naumovski Borce
79B, Skopje 1000,
North Macedonia



Some recommendations - SGE-RAB 4th meeting, 2022

Sustainability - Regional cooperation

- To develop pathways to facilitate sustainable planning and implementation of rabies eradication programmes
- To maintain coordination of measures in the region
- To promote regular and transparent epidemiological information sharing in the region

Passive surveillance

- To set up efforts on rabies surveillance
- To increase surveillance in proximity of any new cases to appropriately estimate the extension of the outbreak and take an informed decision of the area to be vaccinated

Oral vaccination campaigns

- To ensure ORV implementation for at least 6 years
- To secure adequate coordination of ORV amongst bordering countries/territories
- To consider phasing out of vaccination after careful assessment and within a regional perspective
- To draw up specific measures for emergency vaccination



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Main outcomes

It was overall noted that good progress on the eradication of rabies has been made in the region, but that several strong concerns remain: a weak surveillance and monitoring, a discontinuity of vaccination which is already taking place in the region, and a strong need for strategic coordination and technical guidance.

Rabies component of ADEWB II

Main objectives

- To improve effectiveness of Western Balkans in detecting, fighting and limiting the size of rabies outbreaks
- To adopt an exit strategy following the decade of oral rabies vaccination programmes

Activity	Result	Indicator
Support preparation of national surveillance plans for rabies aligned with the regional strategic approach	National surveillance plans	Development of procedures to collect sufficient valid data to be able to conclude rabies free-status
Develop procedures to implement surveillance programmes	Surveillance programme	Collected information of the number of samples analysed to establish surveillance
Evaluate existing systems for early detection and indicate gaps. How to benefit the most from early warning should be included in a plan for education of veterinary staff.	Implemented early warning procedures	Plan for implementation of early warning procedures
Support the implementation of vaccination strategies	Implemented vaccination strategies	Template for information collection needed for procurement of vaccine

Rabies activities of ADEWB II

Passive surveillance

- Define a model in line with EU legislation and standards to serve as a template for preparation of national rabies surveillance programmes
- Nomination in each country of two national experts responsible to fully cooperate with the Project team, provide required data and information. They will develop their own national surveillance plan using the proposed model
- Analyze the prepared national surveillance plans

Oral vaccination campaigns

- Prepare a comprehensive assessment of the implemented oral rabies vaccination programmes in the region
- Based on the analysis, exit strategy and/or continuation of ORV will be proposed
- Technical recommendations on the steps to achieve free-rabies status

Regional cooperation

- Support the expert group of national rabies experts for cooperation and correspondence with neighbouring countries in coordinated approach for rabies control
- Define standard set of information to be exchanged on regular intervals between the Western Balkan countries



Conclusion

- Western Balkans started with great success and very rapidly using ORV in the 2010s as funded by the EU, from the pre-accession funds, which stopped with spring 2023 campaigns and WB countries take it over
- It is necessary to consolidate the achievements on rabies control, therefore to give to rabies control and surveillance a priority and to secure funding for achieving sustainable rabies elimination
- ORV campaigns alone are not sufficient to guarantee the free status of a country, as only robust surveillance data indicates the absence of the disease. Efforts for surveillance are absolutely required in this final phase for effectively eliminating the last foci or for ruling out rabies





Thank you for your attention

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