

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000702/25
to the Commission
Lynn Boylan (The Left), Kathleen Funchion (The Left)
(14 February 2025)**

Subject: Adequate diagnostics and data collection on Lyme disease

In its response to Written Question E-001998/2024 ⁽¹⁾, the Commission notes that the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control collects surveillance data from Member States on neuroborreliosis, and that EU funds have been allocated to Member States to carry out surveillance for ticks responsible for Lyme borreliosis.

However, there are different types of diagnostic test available and approaches to testing may differ among Member States.

In light of this:

1. What concrete measures does the Commission propose to support Member States in achieving accurate diagnostics on Lyme disease?
2. How will the Commission ensure that the reporting data it receives from Member States provide an accurate count of the number of cases of Lyme disease?

Submitted: 14.2.2025

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(6 May 2025)**

1. In March 2024, six EU reference laboratories (EURLs) for public health ⁽¹⁾ were designated by the Commission as per Article 15 of Regulation (EU) 2022/2371 ⁽²⁾. One of these EURLs focuses on high risk, emerging and zoonotic bacterial pathogens (EURL-PH-HEZB), which includes Lyme borreliosis (also known as Lyme disease). This EURL has been tasked with supporting national reference laboratories by providing reference diagnostics and test protocols, reference materials, external quality assessments, scientific advice, technical assistance and training, among other things. These activities will support Member States in implementing accurate diagnostic methods for Lyme borreliosis. The EURL-PH-HEZB started its activities on 1 January 2025 ⁽³⁾ and is financially supported by the EU4Health Programme.

2. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) collects surveillance data from Member States on Lyme neuroborreliosis, a severe form of Lyme borreliosis.

Surveillance of Lyme neuroborreliosis was deemed more feasible than surveillance of Lyme borreliosis, as a more precise and standardised case definition is possible and as it is likely less susceptible to under-reporting due to its severity ⁽⁴⁾. This makes surveillance data more comparable between Member States.

ECDC is supporting Member States by identifying inconsistencies in reporting and providing advice on how to improve the data quality.

Currently, the ECDC is performing an in-depth analysis of the Lyme neuroborreliosis surveillance data reported by Member States to the ECDC.

Based on this analysis, the ECDC plans to develop and implement specific recommendations to improve the reporting of Lyme neuroborreliosis data in 2026.

¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/E-10-2024-001998_EN.html.

⁽¹⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2024/892/oj

⁽²⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/2371/oj>

⁽³⁾ [https://www.rki.de/EN/News/Newsroom/News/Archive/2025-01-20-reference-laboratory.html#:~:text=The%20EURL%2DPH%2DHEZB%20covers,Q%20fever\)%2C%20Rickettsia%20spp](https://www.rki.de/EN/News/Newsroom/News/Archive/2025-01-20-reference-laboratory.html#:~:text=The%20EURL%2DPH%2DHEZB%20covers,Q%20fever)%2C%20Rickettsia%20spp)

⁽⁴⁾ van den Wijngaard Cees C, Hofhuis Agnetha, Simões Mariana, Rood Ente, van Pelt Wilfrid, Zeller Herve, Van Bortel Wim. Surveillance perspective on Lyme borreliosis across the European Union and European Economic Area. Euro Surveill. 2017;22(27):pii=30569. <https://doi.org/10.2807/1560-7917.ES.2017.22.27.30569>