



European Union Reference Laboratory (EU-RL) for Rabies

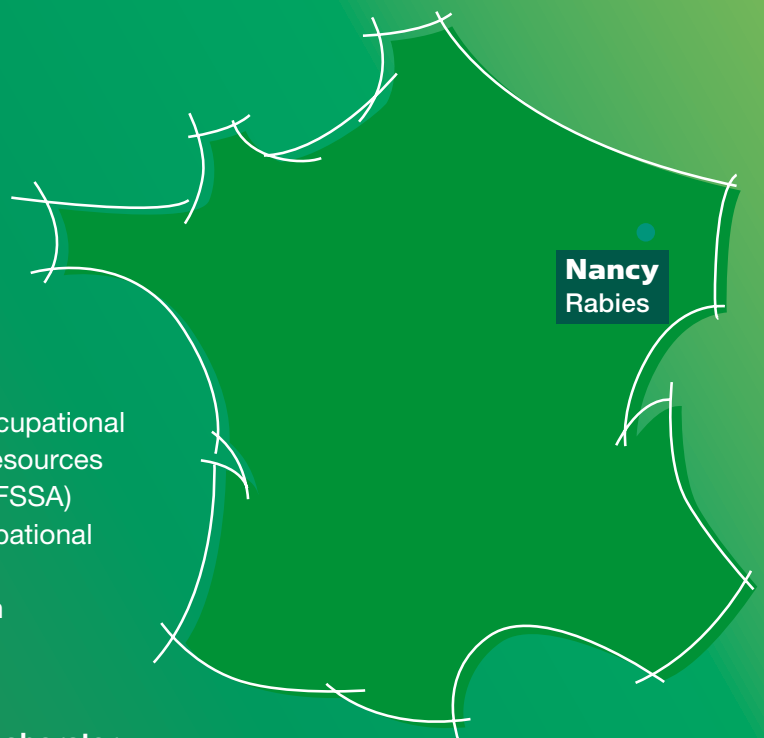
On 1 July 2008, the European Commission designated the French Food Safety Agency as the European Union Reference Laboratory (EU-RL) for rabies.

The French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health Safety (ANSES) has taken on the missions, resources and personnel of the French Food Safety Agency (AFSSA) and the French Agency for Environmental and Occupational Health Safety (AFSSET).

Its principal mission is to contribute to the protection of human health with respect to the environment, the workplace and food.

The activities of the European Union Reference Laboratory are undertaken in the Lyssavirus Unit of the Nancy laboratory for rabies and wildlife.

This laboratory is specialised in animal rabies and several dominant and emerging wildlife zoonoses. It has over 35 years of experience in rabies and is internationally recognised in this field.





Responsibilities and tasks of the European Union Reference Laboratory for Rabies

In addition to the general functions and duties laid down in Article 32(2) of Regulation (EC) No. 882/2004, certain specific responsibilities and tasks are stipulated in commission regulation No. 737/2008 dated 28 July 2008.

Coordinating the methods employed in the Member States for diagnosing rabies

- **Typing, storing and supplying strains** of rabies virus.
- **Preparing, controlling and supplying international standard sera** and other reference reagents to the National Reference Laboratories (NRLs) in order to standardise the tests and reagents used in the Member States.
- **Validating reference reagents** including antigens and national standard sera submitted by the National Reference Laboratories.
- **Building up and maintaining a sera bank** and a collection of rabies virus strains, and maintaining a database of strains isolated across the European Union, including typing.
- **Organising periodical comparative tests of diagnostic procedures** at EU level as well as laboratory proficiency tests for the National Reference Laboratories.

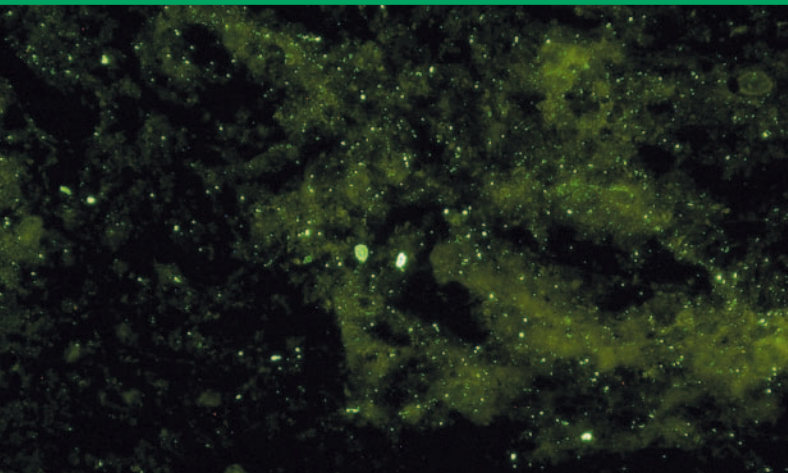
- **Collecting and collating data and information on the methods of diagnosis** used and the results of tests carried out in Europe.
- **Characterising rabies virus** by the most up-to-date methods available to allow a greater understanding of the epidemiology of that disease.
- **Keeping abreast of developments in rabies surveillance**, epidemiology and prevention throughout the world.
- **Acquiring a thorough knowledge of the preparation and use of veterinary immunology products** used to eradicate and control rabies, including the evaluation of vaccines.

Promoting the harmonisation of techniques throughout the European Union

By specifying standard test methodologies.

Organising workshops for the benefit of National Reference Laboratories

Including **training of experts** from the Member States and, as appropriate, from third countries, **in new analytical methodologies.**



Providing technical assistance to the Commission

And, upon its request, by **participating in international fora** relating to rabies, concerning in particular the standardisation of analytical diagnostic methods and their implementation.

Coordinating and performing research activities

For the improved control and eradication of rabies:

- **carrying out and collaborating with National Reference Laboratories** in test validation trials;
- **providing scientific advice** to the Commission and collecting information and reports associated with the activities of the European Union Reference Laboratory.

Scientific support

Material provided by the EU-RL

- **Material for rabies diagnosis and typing:** reagents, cells, negative controls, fixed and field rabies viruses.
- **Material for bait titration:** cells and reagents.
- **Material for evaluation of oral vaccination programmes** (animal age and tetracycline determination): protocols on CD-Rom, tooth samples.

Training and proficiency testing provided by the EU-RL

- Reference techniques for rabies diagnosis such as Fluorescent Antibody Test (FAT), Rabies Tissue Culture Inoculation Test (RTCIT), Mouse Inoculation Test (MIT).
- Molecular biology techniques: Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR), Real Time PCR, typing by gene sequencing.
- Training and proficiency test on SAG2 bait titration, proficiency test on SADB19 bait titration.
- Tetracycline determination.

Sharing of information

- Organisation of annual workshops bringing together experts from NRLs in the European Union.
- Creation of an EU-RL website.
- Project implementation of a rabies sequence database.

Expertise

- Evaluation of new tests for rabies diagnosis.
- Development of the most up-to-date molecular techniques.
- Standardisation of methodologies throughout Member States.
- Participation in international rabies events.



Rabies EU-RL team members and contact information

The EU-RL team has a full time staff of three linked to the Lyssavirus Unit.

The Lyssavirus Unit, including 16 staff members, is headed by **Dr. Florence Cliquet**.

Director of the EU-RL for Rabies:
Dr. Florence Cliquet

Head of projects: Dr. Emmanuelle Robardet

Technical support: Sabrina Andrieu

Administrative officer: Sylvie Tourdiat

For all request: rabies.eu-rl@anses.fr



French agency for food, environmental and occupational health safety
(Nancy Laboratory for Rabies and Wildlife)
Technopôle agricole et vétérinaire
BP 40 009
F-54220 Malzéville – France
Phone: + 33 (0)3 83 29 89 50 – Fax: + 33 (0)3 83 29 89 58
Email: rabies.eu-rl@anses.fr
www.anses.fr