



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

SUMMARY OF THE REGIONAL VIRTUAL LEARNING CENTER ACTIVITIES IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA AS OF 1 JANUARY 2024

**FAO
Virtual
Learning
Centers**

Summary of the regional Virtual Learning Center activities as of 1 January 2024

Dear Training Focal Points,
Dear colleagues,

The Regional **Virtual Learning Center** for Europe and Central Asia regional VLC of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is delighted to share its second newsletter: a brief overview of the courses conducted in the latter half of 2023, an overview of upcoming activities for the first half of 2024, and other ongoing initiatives.

Delivered courses:

In the second half of 2023, the regional VLC successfully conducted the following online courses:



Sheep and Goat Pox Preparedness (SGP) in English (September - October, 288 participants from 20 countries). This was the first time that the VLC run this newly developed course. A field manual on the same subject will soon be available to complement the course.

African Swine Preparedness (ASF) course in Spanish (November-December, 306 participants from Spain). This was the second time in 2023 that the VLC delivered this course for Spanish veterinarians, responding to a request of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food of Spain (MAPA).

Upcoming courses:

The regional VLC is expanding its training areas beyond livestock health, as well as the modes of delivery. In the first half of 2024, we have a fully booked schedule for the development and delivery of eight courses.

- A new course on **Improving Ruminant Biosecurity in English** is scheduled from 13 February to 15 March 2024. Jointly developed with the Autonomous University of Barcelona, Lleida University (UdL) and LleidaVet, the course will host around 400 European private and official veterinarians who work regularly with cattle, sheep or goats. This course will be adapted and delivered in **Russian, Turkish and Romanian** by May, and combined with face-to-face cascade field trainings.
- A virtual learning course on **One Health in English** is planned for 20 February to 15 March 2024. This FAO course will be delivered jointly with the World Health Organization (WHO), and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH). In the spirit of One Health, the training will bring together European participants from the veterinary, food safety and public health authorities, as well as those working on wildlife.
- The **African Swine Fever Preparedness in Romanian**, adapted for participants in Moldova and Romania.
- A new **Introductory course on Food Waste and Loss in English** is now under development and scheduled for delivery in May-June. This course will host around 400 participants representing different actors along the food value chain (e.g. farmers, processors, retailers, etc.) from Europe and Central Asia.
- The **Sheep and Goat Pox Preparedness in Russian** in May-June 2024. This course is an adaptation of the English version delivered last year with improvements and minor modifications.



Others:

The VLC just got its first course **accredited by the Veterinary Continuing Education in Europe (VetCEE)**, more specifically the One Health course. Accreditation facilitates the recognition of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) across European countries. Other VLC courses will soon follow.

A **training needs assessment (TNA)** conducted last year through Focal Points in 40 countries in the region identified official veterinarians and animal health laboratory specialists as the main target audience, and the following diseases ranked highest: avian influenza, ASF, SGP, foot and mouth disease, rabies and lumpy skin disease, antimicrobial resistance and salmonellosis. These findings will guide the development of future courses.

VLCs also actively promote the concept of **open access training**, where anyone can start a course anytime without the need to be nominated. This aligns with the idea of making fully validated training resources available to a broader audience without barriers. Interested individuals can easily self-enrol in the desired courses. Newly developed and recently launched open-access courses include:

Introduction to Avian Influenza (AI) in English

is intended for veterinarians, veterinary paraprofessionals and others working in the poultry industries. The course consists of six 20-minute modules and can be studied on a smartphone, as well as on a computer or a tablet device.

Climate Change Adaptation in the Livestock Sector in English

aims to explain the concept of climate-related risks, key global climate trends and potential impacts on the land-based livestock supply-chain. It includes information on strategies to facilitate livestock adaptation, as well as tools and models to monitor and assess adaptation.

Two **communities of practice (CoPs)** have been launched. A CoP is a virtual place where an inclusive, international and multi-stakeholder community can share and co-create knowledge, experiences, and evidence to promote guidance:

CoP for the Progressive Management Pathway for Terrestrial Animal Biosecurity

to create an inclusive and multidisciplinary global community on best practices related to biosecurity along terrestrial animal value chains using a One Health approach.

CoP on the Return on Investment (ROI) for One Health and One Health Investment Planning

powered by the Quadripartite.

If you wish to receive regular updates on VLC courses, please let us know, and we will include you into our distribution list. Feel free to share this newsletter among your network and colleagues.

For any questions, suggestions or training needs regarding regional VLC courses, please contact us at REU-VLC@fao.org.

Best regards, *regional VLC team*

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