

## Holding of World Rabies Day in the Russian Federation

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The international health organizations of the Tripartite Alliance – the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) – will carry out an awareness-raising campaign in many countries on the occasion of World Rabies Day celebrated by the international community on September 28.

It is planned to organize events in Russia in partnership with national health authorities and scientific institutes in order to strengthen multilateral cooperation for Russia to reach zero human deaths from dog-mediated rabies by 2030, and total eradication in following years.



According to the World Health Organization, rabies kills approximately 60 thousand people worldwide every year. Although human rabies infections are 100% deadly, this disease is 100% preventable. All veterinarians promote and implement vaccination of dogs and cats, sometimes other endangered species in endemic areas, as proven measure to prevent the transmission of virus from wild reservoirs (e.g. red fox) to humans. For total eradication of rabies from some territory it is needed to carry out oral

rabies vaccination of wild animals. However, it is needed to go step by step, from adoption of clear, well designed strategy, development of modern legislation and collaboration with several stakeholders. Such coordination on eradication on rabies is efficient too for prevention and control of other zoonotic diseases – including those with pandemic potential.

Since 2015, the WHO, OIE, FAO, and the Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC) with Member Countries have been implementing the Global Strategic Plan to end human deaths from dog-mediated rabies by 2030. The plan is based on the One Health approach recognizing the interconnections between human, animal, and environmental health. This partnership, so-called “United Against Rabies collaboration” leverages existing infrastructure, measures and expertise of human, veterinary and wildlife health institutions in a coordinated way to empower, engage and enable countries to save human lives from this preventable disease. As animal bites cause almost all human cases, we can prevent rabies deaths by increasing awareness and knowledge, vaccinating animals to prevent the disease at its source and administering life-saving treatment after people have been bitten by rabid dogs or other animals.

All countries should develop and implement strategic framework to eliminate rabies – based on following pillars:

1. *Preparedness and communication.* Preparedness includes surveillance, detection, control, and eradication activities, based on implementation of dog population management and vaccination programme in domestic animals, supplemented with oral rabies vaccination of wild animals. In addition, communication to public, communities and the authorities, recognising that all players share the responsibility to limit the spread of infection and to eradicate the disease, is of crucial interest.

2. *Surveillance and detection.* Early warning of rabies cases and the ability to closely track the spread of the disease is critical for rapid deployment of resources to contain the spread of the virus. An effective surveillance

and detection system will save lives by enforcing the veterinary authorities to activate the response plans to prevent further cases, carry out control mechanisms including vaccination.

3. *Control and eradication.* The most effective way to protect the country is to keep rabies beyond the borders of the country by mass vaccination of dogs as the major vector for human infection. Mathematical models and practical experiences from some countries show that sustained vaccination coverage of at least 70% of dog populations (including stray dogs) is sufficient to stop the transmission of rabies between dogs, and from dogs to humans. Also, the implementation of large-scale and sustained oral vaccination in the relevant areas of national interest may become the starting point for the gradual elimination of rabies across the country. However, if the neighbouring countries are not implementing similar measures the disease can be easily re-introduced. Therefore, control, progressive elimination, and eradication of rabies at regional level is a more realistic outcome if all the countries in the region have the same approach.

4. *Disease freedom.* In contrast to the previous pillars, this one is focused on changing the strategy from vaccination of companion animals and wildlife to non-vaccination policy with well-organized surveillance and early reporting system. However, this phase is based on continuous awareness maintenance.

### OIE COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

The OIE encourages joining the social media campaign “Rabies Ends Here” which calls on the dog owners caring about their pets to get them vaccinated against rabies regularly. For this purpose, the World Organisation for Animal Health has developed new communication tools that are available at <https://trello.com/b/66Bqv1ld/world-rabies-day-toolkit>.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

OIE Rabies Portal:  
<https://www.oie.int/en/animal-health-in-the-world/rabies-portal>

OIE technical disease card for rabies:  
[https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Animal\\_Health\\_in\\_the\\_World/docs/pdf/Disease\\_cards/RABIES\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Animal_Health_in_the_World/docs/pdf/Disease_cards/RABIES_FINAL.pdf)

Dog population control programme:  
[https://www.oie.int/index.php?id=169&L=0&htmfile=chapitre\\_aw\\_stray\\_dog.htm](https://www.oie.int/index.php?id=169&L=0&htmfile=chapitre_aw_stray_dog.htm)

OIE Collaborating Centres and Reference Laboratories for rabies in Europe:

<https://rr-europe.oie.int/en/the-oie-reference-centres-reference-laboratories-and-collaborating-centres/collaborating-centres/?page-nb=1&1828=1920>

<https://rr-europe.oie.int/en/the-oie-reference-centres-reference-laboratories-and-collaborating-centres/reference-laboratories/?page-nb=1&1830=1966>

The list of the countries with a self-declared rabies-free status published by the OIE:

[https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Animal\\_Health\\_in\\_the\\_World/docs/pdf/Self-declarations/Archives/ENG\\_archive\\_2000\\_Dec\\_2019.pdf](https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Animal_Health_in_the_World/docs/pdf/Self-declarations/Archives/ENG_archive_2000_Dec_2019.pdf)

Zero by 30. The Global Strategic Plan to end human deaths from dog-mediated rabies by 2030:

<https://www.oie.int/en/animal-health-in-the-world/rabies-portal/action-plan>

WHO fact sheet on rabies:  
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/rabies>

WHO, FAO and OIE unite in the fight against rabies:  
[https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Media\\_Center/docs/pdf/FAO\\_OIE\\_WHO\\_Rabiesfactsheet.pdf](https://www.oie.int/fileadmin/Home/eng/Media_Center/docs/pdf/FAO_OIE_WHO_Rabiesfactsheet.pdf)