Service contract for « Capacity Building in Pollinator Taxonomy - lot 2: Capacity building in hoverfly (Syrphidae) para-taxonomy »

Contract No 090201/2024/927759/SER/ENV.D2

# EPIC-FLY information

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In this document there is summarized all the information regarding EPIC-Fly project, in terms of course information and organization and logistical aspects. This information is organized in "most common questions" that appeared during the process of selecting the participants.

- **In which region is placed my country?**

Training has been divided from regional point of view by separating European territory into different regions. Member states of the European Union have been divided in four regions, each one of them leader by one of the consortium organizations (Fig. 1):

- o **Northern Region**: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania and Sweden. Coordinated by Luomus.
- o **Central Region**: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Poland. Coordinated by EIS.
- o **Eastern Region**: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. Coordinated by UNS.
- o **Western Region**: France, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain. Coordinated by UA.
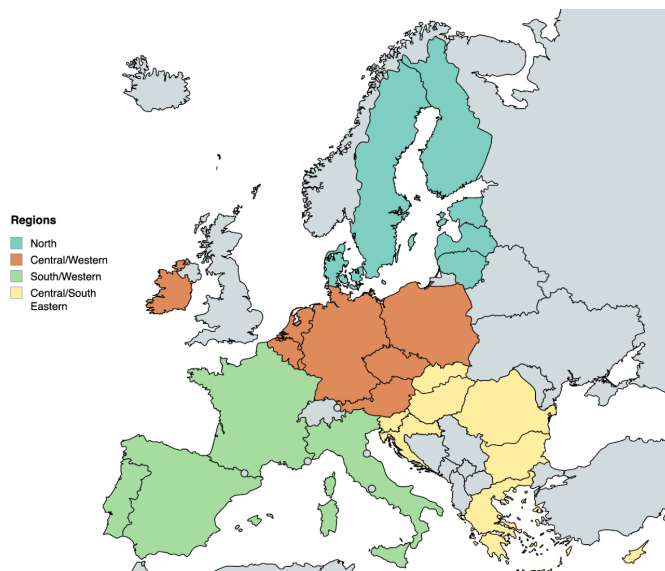


**Figure 1.** Geographical framework of the project. Member states are coloured by the defined regions.

The participants of each country **must attend to the trainings organized by the region in which they belong**.

- **How many levels are going to be and which is the courses organisation?**

Training system in EPIC-Fly has been designed as a continuous learning that involves three levels of courses: Basic, Intermediate I and Intermediate II. These three courses provide the sufficient taxonomic capacity to be involved in hoverfly monitoring, being able to identify many species in the field, and having the criteria to decide which individuals to collect and send to identify in the laboratory. Moreover, there is an extra level, the Advanced level, which is focused on much higher taxonomic level, focusing mostly on difficult species groups. The idea of the project **is that all the participants that starts in the basic level continues until Intermediate II** and the ones that obtain higher scores and yields during the training process will attend to the Advanced level (Fig. 2).
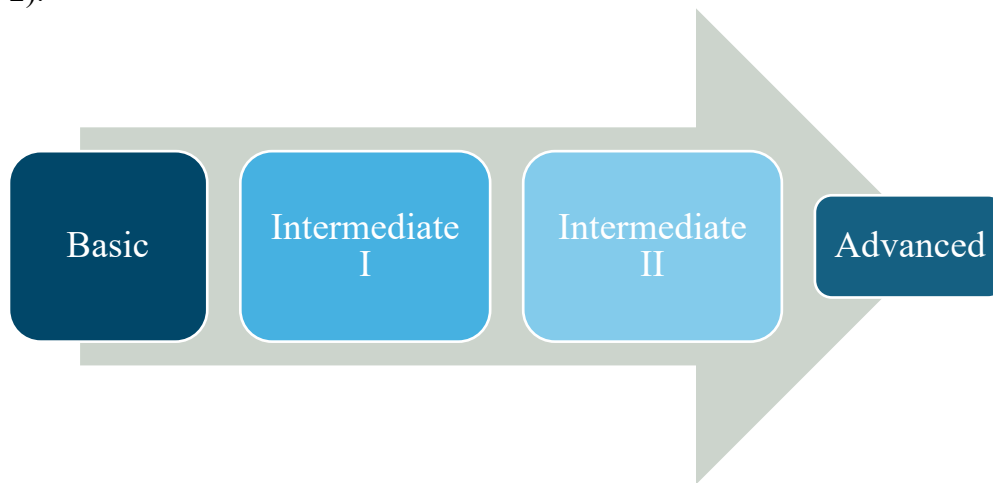


**Figure 2**. Flow chart representing the 4 levels of training considered in EPIC-Fly project.

The distribution of the courses on each region has been done attending to previous assessment of the taxonomic gap of the region (Tab. 1).

**Table 1.** Number of training courses to be implemented per level of training and region.

|  | Northern | Central | Eastern | Western |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Basic** | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| **Intermediate I** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| **Intermediate II** | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| **Advanced** | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| **Total** | 4 | 7 | 9 | 8 |

- Basic course
    - **Aim**: introduce the participants to the specific morphology of hoverflies, the use of identification keys and to train them to be able to identify all genera present in their region, and the most common species of each.
    - **5 days long**, fully focused on laboratory work.
    - **Number of participants**: 10-20 participants (only 10 funded by the project).
    - **Basic level of knowledge in entomology** encouraged to participate

- Intermediate course (level I and II)
  - **Aim:** train the participants in the use of specific keys, to be able to identify most (approximately 70 %) of the species present in their regions.
  - **6 days long,** four in the laboratory and two in the field.
  - **Number of participants:** 10-15 participants (only 10 funded by the project).
  - **Medium level of knowledge in hoverflies** required to participate **(attendance to basic course)**

- Advanced course
  - **Aim: Deep in the training in** genera with high taxonomic difficulty, giving the future trainers enough knowledge to teach the courses in the future.
  - **5 days long,** fully focused on laboratory work
  - **Number of participants:** 10-15 participants (only 10 funded by the project).
  - **High level of knowledge in hoverflies** required to participate **(attendance to both intermediate courses)**

Training will be primarily offered in the English in all the levels and regions, but additional languages could be offered for basic and intermediate training sessions in certain regions or Member states if there is no sufficient interest from participants with enough command of English language to participate in training courses.

The distribution of all the courses across the duration of the project is not defined yet, however an estimated period can be indicated when the exact date is not available, find all this information in table 2-5. Moreover the location of each one of the courses is indicated as well.

**Table 2.** Preliminary time organization for the training courses in central region.

| Northern region | Date | Locality | Length |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Basic course** | 11-15th June, 2025 | Helsinki | 5 days |
| **Intermediate I course** | 4-8th August, 2025 | Helsinki | 6 days |
| **Intermediate II course** | June, 2026 | Lamni | 6 days |
| **Advanced** | August, 2026 | Helsinki | 5 days |

**Table 3.** Preliminary time organization for the training courses in central region.

| Central region | Date | Locality | Length |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Basic course 1** | June, 2025 | Westfalen, Germany | 5 days |
| **Basic course 2** | 12-16th January, 2026 | Prague, Czech Republic | 5 days |
| **Intermediate I course 1** | 26-30th May, 2025 | Remerschen, Luxembourg | 6 days |
| **Intermediate I course 2** | 18-22th August, 2025 | Haren, Groningen, Netherlands | 6 days |
| **Intermediate II course 1** | 8-12th June, 2026 | Prague, Czech Republic | 6 days |
| **Intermediate II course 2** | April 2026 | Westfalen, Germany | 6 days |
| **Advanced** | August 2026 | Haren, Groningen, Netherlands | 5 days |

**Table 4.** Preliminary time organization for the training courses in eastern region.

| Eastern region | Date | Locality | Length |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Basic course 1** | May, 2025 | Novi Sad, Serbia | 5 days |
| **Basic course 2** | December, 2025 | Novi Sad, Serbia | 5 days |
| **Intermediate I course 1** | June, 2025 | Novi Sad, Serbia | 6 days |
| **Intermediate I course 2** | May, 2026 | Novi Sad, Serbia | 6 days |
| **Intermediate II course 1** | June, 2026 | Novi Sad, Serbia | 6 days |
| **Intermediate II course 2** | June, 2026 | Novi Sad, Serbia | 6 days |
| **Advanced** | September, 2026 | Novi Sad, Serbia | 5 days |
| **Integrative taxonomy** | October, 2026 | Novi Sad, Serbia | 5 days |

**Table 5.** Preliminary time organization for the training courses in western region.

| Western region | Date | Locality | Length |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Basic course 1** | 9-13th June, 2025 | Alicante, Spain | 5 days |
| **Basic course 2** | January, 2026 | Alicante, Spain | 5 days |
| **Intermediate I course 1** | 15-20th September, 2025 | Alicante, Spain | 6 days |
| **Intermediate I course 2** | 29th September - 4th October, 2025 | Alicante, Spain | 6 days |
| **Intermediate I course 3** | April, 2026 | Alicante, Spain | 6 days |
| **Intermediate II course 1** | May, 2026 | Alicante, Spain | 6 days |
| **Intermediate II course 2** | May, 2026 | Alicante, Spain | 6 days |
| **Intermediate II course 3** | June, 2026 | Alicante, Spain | 6 days |
| **Advanced** | September, 2026 | Alicante, Spain | 5 days |

- **How many people can be nominated from my country?**

The number of participants per each of the Member states is defined according to the diversity of the country, the pre-existing knowledge, the size of the country and the number of monitoring sites designated on each. These numbers will be indicated soon.

Either way, we expect a list of each Member states with a maximum of 10 potential participants. The number of participants will be selected from that list according to the number of places designated for that country and the criteria indicated below.

- **Which certificate will be issued?**

The certificates issued during the project will not be issued by a formal education system (University, or other), but by the project itself. The process of certification that we will follow during the project is divided into 3 types of certificates:

- **Attendance:** The attendance certificate will be delivered based on the signature of attendance of the whole training. It will be handed to the participants at the end of the training, this certificate will be signed by the regional leader and the project leader.

- **Basic level:** This certificate will be delivered when the participant prove that is capable to recognise in laboratory conditions all the genera recorded in their respective country. This certificate will be signed by the regional leader and the project leader.

- **Advanced level:** Advance level certificate will be delivered to the candidates able to determine approximately 70% of the species that are visually distinguishable using a binoculars and a taxonomic key. The advanced exam would prove the capacity of the participants to properly use the reference collections and identification keys, to ensure proper identifications in the future. This certificate will be signed by the regional leader and the project leader.

Considering that the training is designed as continuous and all the participants should attend all the levels except the advanced, the certification process will be organised at the end of the Intermediate II level courses. At the end of the course two exams will be done, first one for the basic level and then other for the advanced level. The certification will be organised in the laboratory with keys and binoculars at disposable.

For trainees who do not pass the certification, there will be one extra opportunity at the end of the project (one extra exam per region) where they can try to get the certification again, the attendance to this second try won't be financed by the project.

- **Which is the level required for the participants?**

Considering the continuous learning way in which the project is organized, the participants that start the courses from the basic level do not need to have previous knowledge in hoverflies. However, previous knowledge in basic entomology and experience in pollinator monitoring is highly encouraged to participate in the training.

The requirement for the participation in the intermediate levels is to have attend to the basic training or to have a basic knowledge on hoverflies (the participants must have the ability of distinguish most of hoverfly genera and they have to know the morphological aspects and terminology related with syrphids). Finally, the criteria to select the participants of the advanced and integrative taxonomy levels will be the scores and yields obtained during the training process.

Surveys for the future pollinator monitoring scheme are likely to require full time employment (at least during the field season). Preference will be given for applicants that have an employment situation allowing them to undertake future surveys of the pollinator monitoring scheme (or that could become trainers for other surveyors). Applicants should explain how they intend to carry out the surveys.

- **How can be the participants nominated?**

Nomination of participants should be done by email, list of participant must be send to the email of the project (epicflyproject@gmail.com) indicating the following data of each of the participants:
- Full name
- Position/affiliation
- Country
- Contact information (preferable email)
- Previous knowledge of entomology or hoverflies
- Short cv - Just a paragraph indicating the expertise and background of the participants, no details are needed.
- Language skills

It is preferable that each country suggest more participants than the number of participants designated to the country, in case some places are free at the end of the selection, or in the case some of the first nominees cannot attend. The deadline for the nomination of half of the participants (those attending to the courses of 2025) is 28th February, for the rest of participants, list can be provided during autumn, deadline September 2025.