



ZIG 3: Preparedness and Operations Support

The central task of the unit is to enable RKI staff to effectively and safely deploy internationally as they tackle disease outbreaks and strengthen international partnerships. ZIG 3 also engages in international consortia, networks, and learning collaboratives with scientific institutes, UN agencies, and Africa CDC, amongst others. The unit provides:

- ▶ Expertise in didactics and methodologies for leadership training, and the implementation of training activities in partner countries
- ▶ Travel risk management before and during the deployment of RKI staff
- ▶ Support to German emergency medical teams in the WHO EMT classification scheme, and specialist advice in its role as the WHO National Focal Point for Emergency Medical Teams (EMT-NFP)
- ▶ Specialised personal training for RKI staff to prepare for international deployments, i.e., advanced safety or first-aid courses
- ▶ Logistical and technical support

👤 Heads: Silva Lauffer, Dr Florian Schwöbel

ZIG 4: Public Health Laboratory Support

Reliable and rapid diagnostics of infectious agents is one of the most important pillars of well-functioning health systems and key to countries being able to quickly detect and respond to disease outbreaks. ZIG 4 focuses on fostering such capacities by strengthening public health laboratories and their workforce by:

- ▶ Establishing and improving laboratory capacities for pathogen diagnostics, based on both emergency support and long-term partnerships
- ▶ Delivering trainings for public health laboratory staff on site and at RKI
- ▶ Implementing best practices for quality management and biosafety and biosecurity at trainings and in partner laboratories
- ▶ Developing projects and research activities to enhance international health protection
- ▶ Supporting partners with the implementation of projects
- ▶ Collaborating with national and international partners for setting up mobile laboratory capacities
- ▶ Supporting outbreak response activities in affected countries on bilateral request or through networks such as the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) or the German Epidemic Preparedness Team (SEEG – Schnell Einsetzbare Expertengruppe Gesundheit)

👤 Head: Dr Sabrina Weiss



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STRONG PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS
FOR THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY

**Centre for International
Health Protection (ZIG)**



Centre for International Health Protection (ZIG)

In a globalised world, where outbreaks of infectious diseases easily cross borders, national and international health protection are closely linked. Increasing interdependencies between people, animals, and the environment result in increasing epidemic and pandemic risks. As illustrated by the COVID-19 pandemic, resilient public health systems – from local to global – as well as expert exchange and international networking are crucial for public health in Germany. Since 2017, the international commitment of the Robert Koch Institute has been anchored in the German Protection against Infection Act. The ‘Centre for International Health Protection’ at the RKI, abbreviated as ‘ZIG’ in German, started to work in January 2019. Today, ZIG supports, coordinates, and leads the international work of Germany’s public health institute. By cooperating with partner countries, organisations, and networks all over the world, the Centre aims at sustainable impact on international health and ultimately on all health-related UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Mission

The Centre works with partners to strengthen public health systems and to respond to public health emergencies. It focuses on all public health functions relevant to international health protection, among them surveillance, diagnostic capacity, programme evaluation, public health workforce development, and emergency structures. More than 90 international experts from various disciplines develop best practices in outbreak response and preparedness. ZIG seeks to create synergies with initiatives and capacities in the field of global health at the national and international level. In its bilateral and multilateral collaborations, the Centre generates and improves the use of evidence in global health and international health protection.

👤 Director: Prof Dr Johanna Hanefeld
👤 Deputies: Dr Charbel El Bcheraoui, Dr Iris Hunger

ZIG Office

ZIG Office provides overarching functions for the Centre and for all international activities within RKI, including strategic development and public relations. It is also responsible for collaboration with external advisers, first and foremost the Scientific Advisory Board of ZIG, and with strategic cooperation partners such as Africa CDC. ZIG Office coordinates all RKI’s contributions to the Global Health Protection Programme (GHPP) of the Federal Ministry of Health and to the German Biosecurity Programme of the Federal Foreign Office.

👤 Head: Dr Iris Hunger

ZIG RKI WHO HUB Office

The WHO Hub for Pandemic and Epidemic Intelligence was opened in Berlin in September 2021. ZIG RKI WHO HUB Office coordinates joint projects: RKI scientists work alongside leading WHO experts and other global partners in Berlin to better predict, prevent, detect, prepare for, and respond to worldwide health threats.

👤 Head: Prof Dr Johanna Hanefeld



ZIG 1: Information Centre for International Health Protection (INIG)

INIG (‘Informationsstelle für Internationalen Gesundheitsschutz’ in German) is divided into the operational areas of Public Health Intelligence and International Cooperation and has the following responsibilities:

- ▶ Monitoring the international health landscape by detecting, gathering, consolidating, and assessing data on global health threats
- ▶ Providing internal and external stakeholders with evidence-based reports to support decision-making processes with regard to global health issues of concern
- ▶ Providing technical expertise in surveillance, including novel digital solutions and training activities for partner countries
- ▶ Identifying potential cooperation partners in areas of detection, prevention, and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases
- ▶ Strengthening capacity in partner countries through joint projects in the context of outbreaks preparedness and response
- ▶ Developing a national network for regular exchange of information on international projects, deployments, and interventions
- ▶ Acting as the WHO Collaborating Center for Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN) at RKI

👤 Head: Dr Andreas Jansen



ZIG 2: Evidence-based Public Health

ZIG 2 aims to improve global public health through the generation, evaluation, and use of strategic information. By doing so, it provides the scientific evidence for prioritisation, and effective implementation, of international health policies and projects. ZIG 2 provides:

- ▶ Development and application of scientific methods to study the effectiveness of public health measures
- ▶ Evaluation of global health initiatives and interventions
- ▶ Analysis of public and global health policies
- ▶ Development and preparation of systematic reviews on priority public and international health topics
- ▶ Health needs assessments
- ▶ Development of human resources capacity in international health research methods
- ▶ Development and implementation of prioritisation processes for projects and measures in the context of international health protection
- ▶ Development of topic-specific guidelines and protocols for public health measures in an international context
- ▶ Generation of research projects to strengthen international health protection

👤 Head: Dr Charbel El Bcheraoui

