

PZOV-379**National Research Platform for Zoonoses – working together against new threats**

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Zoonoses are infectious diseases, which can be naturally transmitted between humans and animals. Among infectious diseases, about 60% are zoonoses – among new and re-emerging diseases zoonoses account for 75%. Most of these new emerging diseases can be traced back to viral agents.

To be better prepared to this thread, it is necessary that all researchers in the field of zoonoses work together. To support this effort, the National Research Platform for Zoonoses has been built up in 2009 by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research in Germany. To ameliorate networking activities between veterinary and human medicine and between universities and other research institutes, the National Research Platform for Zoonoses organizes workshops and symposia. Beyond that, a new database to connect researchers and research projects has been established. There, all members of the platform can fill in and look for information about researchers, research institutes and infectious agents. This database will be extended continuously. Furthermore, the platform supports researchers to find adequate funding or to meet appropriate partners for building up consortia. Finally, for all members it is possible to get a funding by the platform for i) innovative pilot projects or ii) cross-linking projects to start and realize new ideas. Four projects with different focuses have just started.

Additional tasks of the platform are to give broad and independent information about zoonoses research to politics and general public (see www.zoonosen.net).

In December 2010, the National Research Platform for Zoonoses has nearly 300 members – including many virologists.