



Curriculum Vitae

Personal information **Jozica Skufca**

Work experience

PUBLIC HEALTH & EPIDEMIOLOGY CONSULTANT – INDEPENDENT – 22 Sep 2025 – Current – SLOVENIA

- Providing technical support to governments, international organisations, and private-sector partners, including pharmaceutical companies, on public health, epidemiology, infectious disease and health security projects.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST (HEALTH SECURITY AND EMERGENCIES) – WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, WESTERN PACIFIC REGION, COUNTRY OFFICE - VIET NAM – 8 Oct 2024 – 20 Jun 2025 – HANOI, VIETNAM

- Led the health sector in conducting a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) following Typhoon Yagi, collaborating with multiple other United Nations (UN) agencies, international organizations, and national counterparts to draft reports and outline recovery strategies.
- Enhanced country preparedness by supporting International Health Regulations (IHR) monitoring and evaluation activities, including SPAR, JEE, AAR, and simulation exercises.
- Conducted public health intelligence activities in health security, including event-based surveillance, risk assessments, and data analysis, ensuring timely information sharing during health emergencies.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST (HEALTH SECURITY AND EMERGENCIES) – WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, WESTERN PACIFIC REGION - DIVISION OF PACIFIC TECHNICAL SUPPORT (DPS) – 10 Feb 2024 – 18 Apr 2024 – FIJI

- Drafted guidance for integrated respiratory disease surveillance and facilitated the 2024 Pacific Integrated Respiratory Disease Surveillance meeting and workshop with multiple Pacific Island countries in Fiji.
- Produced epidemiological reports on public health events, providing key insights to inform regional health strategies.
- Improved risk assessment processes for acute public health events in Pacific Island countries, enhancing response preparedness.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST (HEALTH SECURITY AND EMERGENCIES) – WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, WESTERN PACIFIC REGION - REGIONAL OFFICE – 18 Oct 2023 – 10 Feb 2024 – PHILIPPINES

- Supported WHO country offices in outbreak and disaster preparedness, providing situational updates and evidence-based recommendations.
- Assisted national authorities on the implementation of influenza and COVID-19 reporting to the Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS).
- Developed an initial risk assessment tool to triage public health event signals systematically and guide response actions.
- Conducted event-based surveillance and risk assessments for potential public health threats in the Western Pacific Region.
- Supported the Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) programme across the Western Pacific countries.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST (HEALTH SECURITY AND EMERGENCIES) – WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, WESTERN PACIFIC REGION, COUNTRY OFFICE - MONGOLIA – 24 Apr 2023 – 24 Sep 2023 – MONGOLIA

- Coordinated immediate flood response efforts, including enhanced surveillance and infectious disease prevention in temporary shelters and health facilities.
- Contributed to an After-Action Review (AAR) following flood events and developed standard operating procedures (SOPs) for infectious disease surveillance during disasters.
- Provided technical guidance on outbreak investigations and response for Anthrax, COVID-19, Plague, Meningitis, Varicella, poisonings of unknown cause and other diseases, delivering risk assessments and control recommendations.
- Initiated and led the first joint WHO-national risk counterparts meeting and risk assessment on carbon monoxide poisoning, presenting findings and recommendations to government stakeholders.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST (HEALTH SECURITY AND EMERGENCIES) – WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, WESTERN PACIFIC REGION - COUNTRY OFFICE SOLOMON ISLANDS – 3 Oct 2022 – 31 Dec 2022 – SOLOMON ISLANDS

- Coordinated COVID-19 emergency operations during deployment to Temotu province, establishing an Emergency Management System (IMS/PHEOC) for multi-sectoral response efforts.
- Delivered medical supplies and performed rapid antigen testing in COVID-19 outbreak in remote islands of Temotu province, enhancing outbreak control measures in underserved communities.
- Conducted the first comprehensive assessment of surveillance systems and health facilities across all 16 facilities in all five zones of Temotu Province, delivering actionable recommendations to improve health system resilience.
- Led the response to Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD) outbreaks, including action plan development, training healthcare workers, and publishing situational reports.
- Developed a comprehensive document to guide the rapid risk assessment of communicable diseases, providing a structured framework for timely and effective evaluation during outbreaks.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST (HEALTH SECURITY AND EMERGENCIES) – WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, WESTERN PACIFIC REGION - REGIONAL OFFICE – 11 Feb 2022 – 2 Oct 2022 – MANILA, PHILIPPINES

- Supported Monkeypox response efforts as IMST focal point for surveillance during PHEIC, including case line list management, analysis, and risk assessments, and drafted situational reports and policy documents.
- Conducted event-based surveillance and risk assessments for potential public health threats in Western Pacific countries, using tools like EIOS and other surveillance systems.
- Developed and implemented databases and SOPs (EMS-2, AEFIs dashboard in EIOS) to enhance the detection and documentation of acute public health events.
- Provided training and guidance to Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) fellows, enhancing the capacity of emerging public health professionals.
- Drafted and submitted a manuscript for WPSAR titled “An Epidemiological Overview of Human Infections with HxNy Avian Influenza in the Western Pacific Region, 2003–2022,” providing a comprehensive analysis of trends and implications for public health interventions.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST – WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, REGION OF THE AMERICAS – 7 Oct 2021 – 2 Dec 2021 – BELMOPAN, BELIZE

- Conducted a comprehensive evaluation of Belize's national infectious disease surveillance system, identifying gaps and recommending system improvements.
- Supported the implementation of Go.Data for outbreak management and contact tracing, enhancing national disease surveillance capacity.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST – P95 - EXCELLENCE IN PHARMACOVIGILANCE & EPIDEMIOLOGY – 29 Feb 2020 – 30 Aug 2021 – LEUVEN, BELGIUM

- Led and coordinated multi-country database studies to estimate Lyme disease incidence across 19 European countries, collaborating with Pfizer and other stakeholders.
- Managed budgets, contracts, and study deliverables, ensuring timely completion of epidemiological projects.
- Contributed to data management, analysis, study protocols, manuscript writing, and presentations for international conferences.
- Authored and submitted multiple manuscripts on the epidemiology and incidence of Lyme disease across various European countries, contributing to the body of scientific literature on vector-borne diseases.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST – NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE (THL) – 31 Aug 2019 – 30 Jan 2020 – HELSINKI, FINLAND

- Conducted a second nationwide vaccine safety study on the bivalent HPV vaccine, analyzing adverse event data and producing actionable insights.
- Facilitated epidemiology and vaccinology training sessions for international PhD students in collaboration with Tampere University.
- Authored study protocols, manuscripts, and abstracts, contributing to national public health research.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST – P95 - EXCELLENCE IN PHARMACOVIGILANCE & EPIDEMIOLOGY – 26 Feb 2018 – 28 Aug 2019 – LEUVEN, BELGIUM

- Collaborated with the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) to coordinate protocol development for a prospective multi-site cohort study estimating the incidence of Lassa Fever Virus infection and disease in West African countries.
- Prepared and participated in international Lassa Fever workshops, including at the National Center for Disease Control in Abuja, Nigeria (January 2019) and with CEPI in Accra, Ghana (November 2018).
- Conducted systematic literature reviews and analyses on the impact and effectiveness of the quadrivalent Human Papillomavirus (4vHPV) vaccine, focusing on methodologies and outcomes.
- Reviewed epidemiological data and research on various infectious diseases, including West Nile Virus and Streptococcus pneumoniae.
- Authored manuscripts, abstracts, posters, study protocols, and reports, while delivering presentations at professional forums.
- Acted as a liaison with technical experts, clients, and stakeholders to ensure alignment on research objectives and outcomes.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST – NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE (THL) – 28 Sep 2017 – 25 Feb 2018 – HELSINKI, FINLAND

- Led a nationwide register-based cohort study in Finland to analyze the association between adverse events and bivalent Human Papillomavirus (2vHPV) vaccination, contributing to evidence-based vaccine safety evaluation.
- Successfully completed a complex and extensive study within a short timeframe, culminating in the publication of a manuscript in Vaccine (August 2018), serving as a vital resource for addressing public skepticism and countering allegations regarding the safety of the HPV vaccine in Finland and globally.
- Authored and presented findings at professional forums to promote awareness and support evidence-based policy decisions.

EUROPEAN PROGRAMME FOR INTERVENTION EPIDEMIOLOGY TRAINING (EPIET) FELLOW – NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND WELFARE (THL) – 13 Sep 2014 – 13 Sep 2016 – HELSINKI, FINLAND

- Conducted epidemiological investigations on outbreaks such as Campylobacter, Hepatitis A, and Norovirus.
- Researched risk factors for surgical site infections and adverse events associated with HPV vaccination, publishing findings in peer-reviewed journals and presenting results at various international conferences.
- Evaluated national surveillance system and quality of data in the national register on the surgical site infections
- Provided epidemiology training to public health students and healthcare professionals.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST (EBOLA RESPONSE TEAM) – WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, AFRICAN REGION – 26 Apr 2015 – 14 Jun 2015 – MONROVIA, LIBERIA

- Collaborated with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of Liberia (MOH), CDC, UNICEF, MSF, and other international organizations to conduct heightened surveillance of suspected Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) cases, including laboratory surveillance, during the 2014/2015 outbreak.
- Established a comprehensive dataset and national database of all EVD cases reported during the Liberia outbreak, facilitating accurate tracking and analysis.
- Partnered with the WHO Vaccinology Unit to monitor the standards and effectiveness of the integrated nationwide measles, polio vaccination, and deworming campaign (IMC).
- Worked closely with MOH Liberia to collate data during the nationwide vaccination campaign and delivered daily National IMC Reports to support the final campaign evaluation.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST – UNIVERSITY EL BOSQUE, FACULTY OF MEDICINE – 21 Jan 2014 – 29 Apr 2014 – BOGOTA, COLOMBIA

- Delivered lectures on infectious diseases and epidemiology as part of the undergraduate medical program curriculum, fostering foundational knowledge among medical students.
- Led the implementation of a Dengue and diarrhea prevention project in rural primary schools in the Cundinamarca Department, Colombia, enhancing community health awareness and preventive practices.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST (HEALTH SECURITY AND EMERGENCIES) – WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, WESTERN PACIFIC REGION, DIVISION OF HEALTH SECURITY AND EMERGENCIES – 29 Feb 2012 – 13 Jun 2012 – MANILA, PHILIPPINES

- Analyzed events spanning infectious diseases, chemical incidents, medicine-related issues, and disasters in the Western Pacific Region over a five-year period, collating and interpreting data into a comprehensive summary report.
- Drafted a manuscript highlighting the benefits of the Western Pacific Region event-based surveillance database, emphasizing its role in improving regional health security and response capabilities.
- Conducted daily screening for potential health threats and managed the event-based surveillance database, collaborating with the IT team to develop and enhance database functionality.
- Partnered with a Japanese research team to conduct field sample collection for leptospirosis, followed by laboratory analysis and comprehensive reporting of findings.
- Analyzed surveillance data on leptospirosis and other zoonotic diseases in the Western Pacific Region, incorporating a gender perspective, and authored a manuscript for WPSAR titled "Sex, Gender, and Emerging Infectious Disease Surveillance: A Leptospirosis Case Study."

**MEDICAL OFFICER ON HUMAN MEDICINES – EUROPEAN COMMISSION,
HEALTH AND CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE (DG SANTE) – 29 Sep 2007 – 29
Sep 2010 – BRUSSELS, BELGIUM**

- Coordinated actions regarding the safety, quality and efficacy of medicines on a daily basis and during emergency situations;
- Coordinated EU actions and measures to mitigate supply issues of first vaccines in the pandemic 2009 influenza H1N1 outbreak;
- Facilitated procedures for early patient access to new medicines, particularly those that target an unmet medical need or are of major public health interest;
- Provided scientific advice on maximum residue limits for medicines in foodstuffs of animal origin;
- Cooperated on the safety and quality of medicines with European Medicines Agency, other European Institutions and Member States, including representatives of patients and healthcare professionals.

**MEDICAL OFFICER ON HUMAN MEDICINES – KRKA D.D -
PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY – 27 Feb 2007 – 30 Aug 2007 – NOVO MESTO,
SLOVENIA**

- Prepared registration documentation for medicinal products for human use, ensuring compliance with regulatory standards.
- Managed and regularly updated the medicinal product database to maintain accuracy and accessibility of information.
- Monitored relevant scientific developments and pharmaceutical legislation to ensure alignment with industry standards and regulatory requirements.

Education and training

1) 14 SEP 2014 – 14 SEP 2016 Stockholm, Sweden - CERTIFICATE IN INTERVENTION EPIDEMIOLOGY (EPIET) European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)

2) 31 JAN 2011 – 31 JAN 2012 Sydney, Australia - MASTERS OF INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH (MIPH) The University of New South Wales, Faculty of Medicine

3) 14 OCT 1999 – 29 MAR 2006 Ljubljana, Slovenia - DOCTOR OF VETERINARY MEDICINE (DVM) The University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

Additional information

Publications **Publications:**

1. **Skufca J**, Katawera V, Nguyen PN, Matsui T, Olowokure B. Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on seasonal influenza in the WHO Western Pacific Region, 2016–2024. *Western Pac Surveill Response J* [Internet]. 2025 Jul. 4 [cited 2025 Jul. 26];16(3). Available from: <https://ojs.wpro.who.int/ojs/index.php/wpsar/article/view/1230>
2. Nagarajan A, **Skufca J**, Vyse A, et al. The Landscape of Lyme Borreliosis Surveillance in Europe. *Vector Borne and Zoonotic Diseases* (Larchmont, N.Y.). 2023 Apr;23(4):142-155. DOI: 10.1089/vbz.2022.0067. PMID: 37071402; PMCID: PMC1012225
3. Paradowska-Stankiewicz I, Zbrzeźniak J, **Skufca J**, et al. A Retrospective Database Study of Lyme Borreliosis Incidence in Poland from 2015 to 2019: A Public Health Concern. *Vector-Borne and Zoonotic Diseases*. 2023;23(4):247-255. doi:[10.1089/vbz.2022.0049](https://doi.org/10.1089/vbz.2022.0049)

4. Nuttens C, Bessou A, Duret S, **Skufca J**, et al. Epidemiology of Lyme Borreliosis in France in Primary Care and Hospital Settings, 2010–2019. *Vector-Borne and Zoonotic Diseases*. 2023;23(4):221-229. doi:[10.1089/vbz.2022.0050](https://doi.org/10.1089/vbz.2022.0050)
5. **Skufca, J.**, De Smedt, N., Pilz, A., Vyse, A., Begier, E., Blum, M., Riera-Montes, M., Gessner, B., Skovdal, M., Stark, J. H. (2022). Exploring spatial and temporal trends in the incidence of Lyme borreliosis in Finland using surveillance data, 2015 – 2020. *Open Forum Infectious Diseases* 9 (Suppl 2). PMID: PMC9752542.
6. **Skufca, J.**, Tran, T. M. P., Brestrich, G., Pilz, A., Vyse, A., Malerczyk, C., Dzingina, M., Begier, E., Blum, M., Riera-Montes, M., Gessner, B., Stark, J.H (2022). Incidence of Lyme Borreliosis in Germany: Exploring Observed Trends Over Time Using Public Surveillance Data, 2016–2020. *Open Forum Infectious Diseases* 9 (Suppl 2): ofac492.1182.
7. Houben E, de Jong H, Penning-van Beest F, **Skufca J**, et al. Incidence of Lyme Borreliosis in the Dutch General Practice Population: A Large-Scale Population-Based Cohort Study Across the Netherlands Between 2015 and 2019. *Vector-Borne and Zoonotic Diseases*. 2023;23(4):230-236. doi:[10.1089/vbz.2022.0048](https://doi.org/10.1089/vbz.2022.0048)
8. **Skufca, J.**, De Smedt, N., Pilz, A., Vyse, A., Begier, E., Blum, M., Riera-Montes, M., Gessner, B., Skovdal, M., Stark, J. H. (2022). Incidence of Lyme neuroborreliosis in Denmark: Exploring observed trends using public surveillance data, 2015-2019. *Ticks Tick Borne Dis*, 13(6), 102039. doi:10.1016/j.ttbdis.2022.102039.
9. **Skufca, J.**, Bell, L., Molino, J. C. P., Saulo, D., Lee, C.-K., Otsu, S., Co, K. C., Chiew, M., Leuangvilay, P., Patel, S., Khalakdina, A., Ieng, V., Matsui, T., & Olowokure, B. (2022). An epidemiological overview of human infections with HxNy avian influenza in the Western Pacific Region, 2003–2022: Human infections with HxNy avian influenza in the Western Pacific Region. *Western Pacific Surveillance and Response*, 13(4), 6. <https://doi.org/10.5365/wpsar.2022.13.4.987>
10. Wang, W., Kothari, S., **Skufca, J.**, Giuliano, A. R., Sundström, K., Nygård, M., Koro, C., Baay, M., Verstraeten, T., Luxembourg, A., Saah, A.J., Garland, S. M. (2022). Real-world impact and effectiveness of the quadrivalent HPV vaccine: an updated systematic literature review. *Expert Review of Vaccines*, 21(12), 1799-1817. doi:10.1080/14760584.2022.2129615
11. Wang, W., Kothari, S., Baay, M., Garland, S.M., Giuliano, A.R., Nygård, M., Velicer, C., Tota, J., Sinha, A., **Skufca, J.**, Verstraeten, T., Sundström, K (2021). Real-world impact and effectiveness assessment of the quadrivalent HPV vaccine: a systematic review of study designs and data sources. *Expert Rev*

12. **Skufca, J.**, Ollgren, J., Artama, M., Ruokokoski, E., Nohynek, H. and Palmu, AA. (2018). The association of adverse events with bivalent human papilloma virus vaccination: A nationwide register-based cohort study in Finland. *Vaccine*. DOI: 10.1016/j.vaccine.2018.06.074.
13. **Skufca, J.**, Ollgren, J., Ruokokoski, E., Lyytikäinen, O. and Nohynek, H. (2017). Incidence rates of Guillain Barré (GBS), chronic fatigue/systemic exertion intolerance disease (CFS/SEID) and postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS) prior to introduction of human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccination among adolescent girls in Finland, 2002–2012. *Papillomavirus Research*, 3, pp. 91–96. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.pvr.2017.03.001>
14. **Skufca, J.**, Ollgren, J., Virtanen, M.J., Huotari, K. and Lyytikäinen, O. (2017). Interhospital Comparison of Surgical Site Infection Rates in Orthopedic Surgery. *Infect Control Hosp Epidemiol*, 38(4), pp. 423–429. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/ice.2016.333>
15. **Skufca, J.** and Arima, Y. (2012). Sex, gender and emerging infectious disease surveillance: a leptospirosis case study. *Western Pacific Surveillance and Response Journal*, 3(3), pp. 37-9. DOI: 10.5365/WPSAR.2012.3.3.001

Contribution to article in literature search, data extraction, and analyses:

1. Izurieta, P., M. Scherbakov, J. Nieto Guevara, V. Vetter and L. Soumahoro (2022). "Systematic review of the efficacy, effectiveness and impact of high-valency pneumococcal conjugate vaccines on otitis media." *Hum Vaccin Immunother* 18(1): 2013693.

Conferences and presentations:

- **Skufca, J.**, Ollgren, J., Partinen M., Nohynek, H., Palmu, AA and Artama, M. The risk of autoimmune, neurological and other conditions following the immunization of adolescent girls with bivalent human papilloma virus vaccine in Finland: a nationwide register-based cohort study.
 - *ESPID Conference, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 26-29 Oct 2020 (abstract accepted and planned for presentation)*
- **Skufca, J.**, Baay, M., Yen, G.P., Kothari, S., Drury, R, Kuter, B., Velicer, C. Impact and effectiveness of the quadrivalent HPV vaccine on cervical cytological abnormalities: a systematic literature review update.
 - *EUROGIN Conference, Lisbon, Portugal, 2-5 Dec 2018*
 - *IPVC Conference, Sydney, Australia, 2-6 Oct 2018*
- **Skufca, J.**, Ollgren, J., Artama, M., Ruokokoski, E., Nohynek, H.

and Palmu, AA. The association of adverse events with bivalent human papilloma virus vaccination: A nationwide register-based cohort study in Finland.

- *Nordic Vaccine Meeting, Helsinki, Finland, 15 Jun 2018*
- *ESPID Conference, Malmo, Sweden, 31 May 2018*
- *Vaccinology Seminar, Helsinki, Finland, 26 Feb 2018*
- **Skufca, J.,**Ollgren, J., Ruokokoski, E., Lyytikäinen, O. and Nohynek, H. Exploring Incidence Rates of Guillain Barré, Chronic Fatigue and Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome to Understand Safety Profile of HPV Vaccination Among Adolescent Girls.
 - *HPV Prevention and Control meeting: Barriers in HPV vaccination and cervical screening programs, Antwerp, Belgium, 27-28 Jun 2016*
 - *HPV meeting, SSI, Copenhagen, Denmark, 17 Jun 2016*
 - *Vaccinology Seminar, Helsinki, Finland, 2 Jun 2016*
 - *ESPID Conference, Brighton, UK, 13 May 2016*
- **Skufca, J.,** Ollgren, J., Virtanen, M.J., Huotari, K. and Lyytikäinen, O. Inter-hospital comparison of surgical site infection rates in orthopedic surgery.
 - *SIRO Hospitals Conference, Helsinki, Finland, 27 Sep 2016*
 - *ESCAIDE Conference, Stockholm, Sweden, Nov 2016*
- **Skufca, J.,** Ollgren, J., Arifulla, D., Möttönen, T. and Lyytikäinen, O. Evaluation of Post-Discharge Surveillance of Surgical Site Infections in Finland, 1999-2013: Can Register Linkage Improve Completeness of Reporting?
 - *ESCAIDE Conference, Stockholm, Sweden, 11-13 Nov 2015*
 - *SIRO Hospitals Conference, Helsinki, Finland, 29 Oct 2015*

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