

## **Meeting of the EU scientific advice platform on COVID-19**

**Tuesday 27/06/2023 at 15:00 CET (WEBEX)**

### **1. COVID-19 – Epidemiological, vaccination and therapeutics update**

The chair welcomed the participants and gave the floor to European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) for an update on the COVID-19 situation. ECDC informed that the epidemiological indicators have been decreasing or stable in all age groups for the last weeks. Hospitalisations have decreased and, in week 24, 193 deaths were reported in the European Union (EU). The dominant variant across Europe and globally remains XBB.1.5. The vaccination coverage among those aged 60 years and above more is 85% for the first booster and 36% for the second booster. In conclusion, the COVID-19 epidemiological situation is positive and stable across the EU.

### **2. Vaccination policies for the Autumn**

ECDC and the European Medicines Agency (EMA) have issued a [joint statement](#) on adapted COVID-19 vaccines and considerations for their use during the upcoming Autumn 2023 vaccination campaigns. The recommended groups to be targeted by vaccination campaigns include people aged 60 years and above, people with weakened immune systems and underlying conditions putting them at higher risk of severe COVID-19 irrespective of age and those who are pregnant. Vaccination of healthcare workers should also be considered. Ten Member States have already given recommendations for the COVID-19 vaccination next Autumn.

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) informed that four vaccine manufacturers are working on updated vaccines of which three should be ready before or during the Autumn. In the current epidemiological situation, XBB.1.5. monovalent vaccines are a reasonable choice to provide protection against current dominant and emerging strains. It was noted that the most important for vulnerable groups is to receive a booster irrespective of the vaccine composition as vaccines based on other Omicron strains continue to provide protection against severe disease caused by circulating strains.

### **3. Next steps for the EU scientific advice platform on COVID-1**

The chair thanked the participants and announced that, considering the stable COVID-19 situation, the Platform would no longer meet on a regular basis. If the situation changed or new health threats appeared, the Platform would be reconvened. A possible meeting in the Autumn to discuss vaccination and other relevant topics was mentioned.

## Participation

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### Member States participants:

1. Professor Steven VAN GUCHT (Belgium)
2. Professor Uga DUMPIS (Latvia)
3. Professor Andrzej HORBAN (Poland)
4. Dr Zoe PANA (Cyprus)
5. Professor Toivo MAIMETS (Estonia)
6. Professor Sotiris TSIODRAS (Greece)
7. Professor Miklós SZÓCSKA (Hungary)
8. Professor Henrique BARROS (Portugal)
9. Professor Anders TEGNELL (Sweden)
10. Dr Eibhlín CONNOLLY (Ireland)
11. Professor Fernando SIMÓN (Spain)
12. Professor Silvio Brusaferrò (Italy)
13. Dr Charles MALLIA-AZZOPARDI (Malta)

### European Commission:

14. Professor Peter Piot, Special Advisor to EU Commission President, Chair
15. Giorgos Rossides, Head of Cabinet Kyriakides
16. Roberto Reig Rodrgio, Member of Cabinet of Commissioner Kyriakides
17. Daphne Von Buxhoeveden, Member of Cabinet of Commissioner Kyriakides
18. Georgina Hadjifrangiskou, Trainee of Cabinet of Commissioner Kyriakides
19. Anne Auffret, Policy Assistant to Director General, HERA
20. Isabella Panunzi, policy officer, HERA
21. Ornella Martinello, Secretariat General
22. Nicolas Pradalie, Policy Assistant to the Director-General, DG SANTE
23. Thomas Van Cangh, Deputy Head of Unit, Policy Strategy, DG SANTE
24. Marta Valenciano, Intelligence Analyst, Lead Epidemiologist, Policy Strategy Unit, DG SANTE
25. Sigrid Weiland, Policy Coordinator, Policy Strategy Unit, DG SANTE
26. Lucile Bertaux, Trainee - Policy Strategy Unit, DG SANTE

### ECDC:

27. Andrea Ammon, Director
28. Tarik Derrough, Expert in vaccine-preventable diseases

### EMA:

29. Emer Cooke, Executive Director