



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Public health
Health security

General Working Group of the Health Security Committee Meeting

Friday, 09 February 2024 – 10:00-11:30
Summary Report

Chair: Head of Unit, European Commission, DG SANTE B2

Participants: AT, BE, CY, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FR, HR, IE, IT, LT, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, IS, LI, NO, DG SANTE, DG ECHO, DG HERA, EMA, ECDC, WHO

EU/EEA only

Agenda points

1. Update on the selection and designation of EU Reference Laboratories for public health
2. Update on the increase of measles cases
3. AOB

Key messages:

- 1. Update on the selection and designation of EU Reference Laboratories (EURLs) for public health**

The first set of EURLs have been selected, they will be designated after the implementation of Article 15 of Regulation (EU) 2022/2371. The comitology committee will gather on 07 March 2024, and the EURLs are expected to be fully established by the end of 2024. The EURL network will be coordinated by the ECC and in collaboration with WHO reference laboratories. EURLs will be funded through direct grants under the EU4Health programme, they can apply after being designated. A budget of EUR 12.4 million has been allocated for the first batch.

- 2. Update on the increase of measles cases**

The HSC was informed on EC projects to support Member States (e.g., projects on vaccination funded by the EU4Health programme, including the “Overcoming obstacles to vaccination” project on how to reduce structural barriers to vaccination).

ECDC informed about the increase of measles in the EU/EEA. Some causes identified include reduced vaccination coverage over the last years, and a reduction in infection, prevention and control measures since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. Most of the people infected and/or hospitalised were not vaccinated. Most of the cases have been identified in children one to four years of age, followed by children five to nine years of age.

The latest ECDC [risk assessment](#) shows that infants and children younger than five years of age show the biggest risk, along with immunocompromised individuals. ECDC presented recommendations to

tackle the increase in measles cases (e.g. increase vaccination coverage), and different resources and guidelines.

3. AOB

The senior level Health Security Committee plenary meeting is planned for 17 to 18 April in Luxembourg. The next online General Working Group Health Security Committee meeting is planned for 21 February 2024.