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WEEKLY EU HEALTHCARE NEWS UPDATE

1 OCTOBER – 7 OCTOBER 2022

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT EXTENDS THE MANDATE OF EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR DISEASE PREVENTION AND CONTROL

On Tuesday (4 October), the European Parliament endorsed the deal with the Council on extending the mandate of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). The new legislation aims to strengthen the European Union's capacity to prevent, prepare for and manage outbreaks of infectious disease pandemics.

Following the extension, agreed by a vast majority of MEPs (542 votes in favour, 43 against, 9 abstentions), the ECDC will coordinate the standardisation of data collection procedures and validation, analysis, and dissemination of data at the EU level. The ECDC will also work with the European Commission, national authorities, EU bodies and international organisations to ensure that their activities are consistent and complementary. In addition, with the extended mandate, the ECDC will closely monitor the capacity of national health systems to detect, prevent, respond to and recover from infectious disease outbreaks, identify gaps in health systems and make scientific recommendations.

The rapporteur has been Polish lawmaker Joanna Kopcińska, the MEP in charge of negotiating with EU-27 ministers on this file, who claimed that her main goal during the talks was to ensure that the agency's extended mandate will support but not replace national public health efforts. "It is necessary to respect the principle of subsidiarity at the EU level in such a way that the EU supports and coordinates the actions of member states where action at the national level alone would be ineffective," she said after the Parliament's endorsement.

Source: <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/news-events/ecdc-extended-mandate-endorsed-today-european-parliament>

ECDC and EFSA ALARM THAT BIRD FLU EPIDEMIC IS SO FAR THE LARGEST IN EUROPE EVER

According to the latest data from a joint report published on Monday (3 October) by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), and the European Union Reference Laboratory.

The report points to a total of 2,467 outbreaks in poultry, 48 million birds culled in the affected establishments, 187 detections in captive birds, and 3,573 highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) events in wild birds in the years 2021-2022. It is also worth mentioning that the geographical extent of the epidemic season is unprecedented, ranging from Northern Svalbard islands to the South of Portugal and Eastern Ukraine, thus affecting 37 countries in Europe.

Influenza viruses spreading through animal species such as birds or pigs can rarely infect humans, causing mild to very serious diseases. These viruses have the potential to drastically affect public health, as it was during the previous epidemics of avian influenza H5N1 in Egypt or H7N9 in China.

However, in spite of an increased number of recently detected cases in poultry and birds, no human transmission has yet been observed in the EU/EEA in the last few years. Furthermore, only a small number of human infections with asymptomatic or mild disease have been reported globally.

Source: <https://www.euronews.com/2022/10/03/nearly-48-million-animals-culled-in-europes-largest-ever-bird-flu-epidemic>

HIMSS AND WHO-EUROPE SIGNED A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO BOOST DIGITAL HEALTH TRANSFORMATION

Fifty-three member states of the World Health Organization European Region and the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS), plan to collaborate to boost digital health transformation and bring paperless healthcare to all parts of Europe.

Also recently, the 53 members comprising the World Health Organization's European Region have approved a Resolution and Action Plan aiming to scale up digital transformation for better health, whereas the HIMSS already has extensive experience in the area and has said it stands ready to help. Moreover, it is not the first joint initiative of WHO-Europe and HIMSS, as the relationship started about four years ago.

HIMSS role will be to help lead the reform of the worldwide health ecosystem through technology and information. With a membership of more than 120,000, HIMSS serves the world's health communities through its operations across Europe, North America, the Middle East, and the Asia Pacific.

The key part of the memorandum is that HIMSS and WHO-Europe will set a new agenda of transatlantic collaboration in the field of transatlantic health. The two parties will work together across the public and private sectors to help countries in the European region assess where they are in their digital health transformation by the end of this year and by 2023.

Source: <https://www.healthcareitnews.com/news/emea/how-himss-and-who-europe-plan-boost-digital-health-transformation>

Thank you for your attention!

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