

The **Directorate-General for Health and Consumer Protection** (SANCO) of the **European Commission** works to improve the safety of food and other products, consumers' rights and the protection of people's health and supports the following projects in the area of pandemic influenza and communicable diseases.

More information: www.europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/health_consumer/index_en.htm

FLUSECURE: Combating FLU in a combined action between industry and the public sector in order to SECURE adequate and fast vaccine interventions in Europe

FLUSECURE will be established by establishing a network of European public health institutions, support European manufacturers in producing an effective pandemic influenza vaccine for the population in the shortest possible time.

Through this project, the public sector will underpin industry initially by: (1) the development of a library of safety-tested viral vaccine seed stocks as a source for manufacturing of a pandemic influenza vaccine, (2) initiatives to improve vaccine efficacy and the quantification thereof by the development of better correlates of protection, e.g. potency testing/serological methods, and (3) providing support for clinical trials for the mock-up vaccine and development of post marketing surveillance systems. It will assist industry in conducting the clinical trials and gathering data on alternative vaccine formulations, including varying doses of antigen and the use of adjuvants.

Collaborations will be established with EVM, WHO, EMEA and the ECDC. It is anticipated that this project will aid Industry in manufacturing trial lots of vaccine and in submission of mock-up dossiers for different virus reference strains in accordance with the latest guidelines on pandemic vaccines issued by the EMEA, and in exploiting the mock dossier data to the deployment of a real pandemic vaccine produced under the mock dossier scheme.

The Commission contribution covers 60% of total costs. Partners are UK (HPA), DEN (SSI), KTL(FI); NO, DE, FR, SI, RO, HU. Projected costs (3 years): € 6.250.153; Commission contribution: €3.749.777.

EISS: aims to contribute to a reduction in morbidity and mortality due to influenza in Europe

EISS helps reduce the burden of disease associated with influenza in Europe by collecting and exchanging timely information on influenza activity, contributing to the annual determination of the influenza vaccine content, providing relevant information about (seasonal) influenza to health professionals and the general public and contributing to European influenza pandemic preparedness activities.

All 25 European Union Member States, Norway, Romania and Switzerland participate in EISS. The United Kingdom is represented by four surveillance networks: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

EISS publishes a [weekly surveillance report](#) on influenza activity in 28 countries: Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Wales. The surveillance reports are based

on data reported by roughly 13,000 sentinel physicians and cover a total population of 464 million inhabitants.


EISS also operates the [Community Network of Reference Laboratories for Human Influenza](#). This network includes 38 reference laboratories in all of the countries participating. EISS has been developing standard protocols for laboratory evidence for human infections with Avian Influenza. Further information is available on www.eiss.org

The EU Early Warning and Response System (EWRS)

Communicable diseases such as Tuberculosis, Measles and Influenza, represent a serious risk to human health, contributing to about one third of all deaths occurring globally. Communicable diseases do not respect national frontiers and can spread rapidly if actions are not taken to combat them. New diseases such as AIDS emerge and others develop drug-resistant forms such as multi-drug resistant tuberculosis, and methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*. In addition, new scientific developments on the role of infectious agents in chronic conditions such as cancer, heart diseases or allergies are under investigation.

In responding to these various issues the Network on Communicable Diseases started work in 1999 ([Decision 2119/98/EC](#) of the European Parliament and the Council). The Communicable Diseases Network is built on work done with [Member States](#) and consists of two pillars:

▶ **Surveillance:**

Commission [Decision 2000/96/EC](#) specifies the [list of communicable diseases](#)  to be placed progressively under EU-wide surveillance and the criteria for their selection. The network's main task is to monitor and track developments. Within that network [disease-specific networks](#) have been created.

▶ **Early warning**

The second pillar of the network is an early warning and response system (EWRS) to alert public health authorities in Member States and the Commission on outbreaks with greater than national dimensions, so that a co-ordinated EU action may be required (Commission [Decision 2000/57/EC](#)).

To increase the comparability of the data from the different Member States an important Commission decision was taken on 19 March 2002. This [decision 2002/253/EC](#) lays down case definitions for reporting communicable diseases to the Community network.

The second pillar of the Communicable Diseases Network is an early warning and response system (EWRS) to alert public health authorities in Member States and the Commission on outbreaks with greater than national dimensions, so that a co-ordinated EU action may be required. Commission Decision 2000/57/EC on the EWRS makes it clear that all events which could lead to outbreaks of EU-wide significance should be reported under the EWRS irrespective of whether or not a disease-specific network at EU level has been set up. Depending on the specific situation, the Commission and Member States agree on the appropriate action to be taken individually or together.

The EWRS is a telematic system linking the designated authorities in Member States and the Commission. The system allows for immediate exchange of views on risk assessment and risk management crucial for timely public health action. The EWRS has already proven to be a useful tool during a number of outbreaks/incidents and is presently actively engaged in surveillance and response for influenza.
