

MIDDAY EXPRESS

*News from the Press and Communication Service's midday briefing
Nouvelles du rendez-vous de midi du Service Presse et Communication*

07/12/2015

Health Threats Decision has improved health security in the EU, finds report

Since the [Decision on Serious Cross-border Threats to Health](#) was adopted two years ago, its mechanisms have been repeatedly put to the test, namely during the Ebola outbreak, the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS CoV) and the poliomyelitis threat. Today, the Commission has published a report that assesses, in particular, how the mechanisms to notify an alert, assess the risk and manage a cross-border threat set up under the Decision such as the Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) and the epidemiological surveillance network have worked since the Decision entered into force.

The report concludes that the established mechanisms have worked well and that the Decision has improved health security in the EU. The EWRS has been instrumental to notify alerts as well as measures undertaken by the Member States. The epidemiological surveillance network, the EWRS, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), and the Health Security Committee (HSC) have operated effectively, and to the required quality level, during serious cross-border threats to health. These systems have complemented EU rapid alert systems which cover other areas (e.g. food, animal health, etc.), while avoiding any duplication.

Measures successfully carried out during the Ebola outbreak include information to travellers, guidance to health professionals, and medical evacuation to the EU of patients and health workers infected or suspected to be infected with the Ebola virus. A major conclusion from the Ebola outbreak is that there is scope to further improve coordination between Member States' national responses.

For more information:

http://ec.europa.eu/health/preparedness_response/policy/decision/index_en.htm

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