



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Public health, country knowledge, crisis management
Crisis management and preparedness in health

Audio conference of the HSC

Zika virus outbreak

17 March 2016, 11:00 to 12:30 (CET)

Flash report

Meeting objectives

The European Commission convened an audio meeting of the Health Security Committee (HSC) to discuss the updated documents on the outbreak prepared by the ECDC and the possibility of setting up an HSC ad-hoc working group on Zika.

Definition of case and reporting

The “Provisional case definition for epidemiological surveillance of Zika virus disease in the EU” was discussed. The document had been changed following discussions in the ECDC Advisory Forum. The HSC agreed the draft case definition, subject to a written comment to be submitted from Germany.

Protocol for surveillance

The draft “Protocol for surveillance of Zika virus infection” was discussed. Following discussion in the Advisory Forum, the possibility to report aggregated records had been included. All notifications are to be done in the European Surveillance System (TESSy) and a differentiation is made between Overseas Countries and Territories/ Outermost regions (OCT/OMR) and continental EU.

The HSC agreed the Protocol (notably the sections about the main features of the reporting tool, indicators, analyses, and the annex containing a list of variables for case-based reporting and a list of variables for aggregated reporting).

Issues around the surveillance of adverse birth disorder

Based on an introduction by ECDC, the HSC discussed how best to take forward the surveillance of adverse birth disorders. The outcome of a meeting with the WHO, continued liaising with the JRC and a closer look at the approaches of MS and the US will feed into a document exploring the different options to be prepared by the ECDC for a future HSC discussion.

Updated travel information

The HSC discussed the updated draft information to travellers prepared by ECDC. The document takes into consideration comments made by Member States. Several additional comments were raised by Member States which will now have to be integrated into the document, in particular in relation to precautionary measures to prevent sexual transmission. Member States can supplement the travel information with guidance at national level to take in consideration national settings.

It was agreed that a revised version of the document will be discussed by the ad hoc working group (see below) of the HSC on Zika for adoption by the full HSC in written procedure.

Creation of an ad hoc working group on the Zika virus

The HSC agreed to create an ad hoc working group on the Zika outbreak. The group will be convened soon, inter alia to look at the revision of the information to travellers and to review and discuss the disinsection of aircrafts.