

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control

2020/0320(COD) - 14/09/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, partial vote at 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 598 votes to 84, with 13 abstentions, amendments to the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 851/2004 establishing a European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).

The matter was referred back to the committee responsible for interinstitutional negotiations.

The main amendments adopted in plenary concern the following points:

ECDC's mandate

The regulation should aim to **extend the Centre's mission and tasks** to strengthen its capacity to provide the necessary scientific expertise and support actions against serious cross-border health threats in the EU to meet the need for a rapid, better coordinated and coherent response to new emerging health threats.

Members want to ensure that the ECDC's mandate is extended beyond communicable diseases to also cover major **non-communicable diseases**, such as cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, cancer, diabetes and mental illness.

EU Member States should develop **national preparedness and response plans** and provide timely, **comparable and high-quality data** so that the Centre can rapidly assess risks, including through epidemiological modelling and forecasting.

Mission and tasks

The Centre's mission should be to:

- **identify, assess, report** and, where appropriate, ensure that information is presented in an easily accessible way on current and emerging threats to human health from communicable diseases and relevant major non-communicable diseases and health issues in collaboration with competent bodies of the Member States or on its own initiative, through the dedicated network;
- **provide recommendations and support in coordinating the response** at Union and national levels, as well as at interregional and regional level, where appropriate. In providing such recommendations, the Centre shall take into account existing national crisis management plans and the respective circumstances of each Member State.

The amending Regulation of the Centre should prioritise pragmatic solutions to improve transparent cooperation and exchange of information, expertise and best practice between Member State authorities and the Commission, the Health Security Committee and the Centre itself, and other EU institutions and agencies, such as the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the future European Health Emergency Response and Preparedness Authority (HERA). This increased cooperation would allow for better preparedness and coordination of the response plans.

Specifically, the Centre should:

- monitor the capacity of health systems to manage communicable disease threats and other specific health problems on the basis of common indicators;
- organise regular visits to the Member States to assess health systems' capacity to manage health crises and ad hoc inspections to the Member States to verify preparedness and response plans;
- organise case-by-case source inspections in Member States to provide additional support and monitor progress in implementing and complying with the obligations set out in the Regulation, where necessary taking into account the results of stress tests;
- assist in monitoring the national response to the major communicable diseases in order to measure progress in the control of these diseases across the EU;
- inform the general public in an effective and transparent way about current and emerging health risks;
- create a public database of recognised national competent bodies and their public health experts operating within the Centre's remit;
- ensure that its processing operations comply with data protection principles.

In pursuing its mission, the Centre should take full account of the **responsibilities and competences** of the Member States, the Commission and other Union bodies or agencies, and of the responsibilities of international organisations active within the field of public health, in particular the WHO, to ensure coordination, comprehensiveness, coherence, consistency and complementarity of action.

Additional resources

The capacity of the Centre to implement new tasks will depend on the level of financial assistance available from the Union, as well as on the internal and external human resources available. In order to be able to fulfil the new tasks entrusted to it as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Centre will need increased funding and more employees. Members therefore proposed to increase the Centre's funding and staffing at the earliest opportunity.