COVID-19 EU update

European Commission:
- On 27 June 2020, the Commission organised a pledging summit 'Global Goal: Unite for our Future' and mobilised €6.15 billion in additional funding to help develop and ensure equitable access to coronavirus vaccines, tests and treatments. Please find here what President of the Commission Ursula von der Leyen and European Investment Bank President Werner Hoyer said in the event.

European Parliament:
- On Monday 29 June, the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee adopted a resolution, calling on the Commission to come up with a new chemicals strategy for sustainability that effectively ensures a high level of protection of health and the environment, minimising exposure to hazardous chemicals. It also says that further regulatory measures are needed to adequately protect vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant and breastfeeding women and the elderly.

Council:
- Council agrees to start lifting travel restrictions for residents of some third countries: ministers have adopted a recommendation to gradually lift travel restrictions for non-EU countries, including Georgia, Montenegro, and Serbia. This and future decisions should be based on a cumulative assessment of the number of new COVID-19 cases over the last 14 days and per 100 000 inhabitants being close to or below the EU average; a stable or decreasing trend of new cases over this period in comparison to the previous 14 days; the third country's overall response to COVID-19 taking into account available information, including on aspects such as testing, surveillance, contact tracing, containment etc. Decisions should be reviewed every two weeks. The recommendation is not legally-binding, but should Member States decide to deviate from it, their decision-making should be transparent. The travel ban does not apply to returning EU citizens and their family members, long-term EU residents and their family members, or travellers with an essential function. Iceland, Lichtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland also participated in this process.

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control:
- Guidance on the provision of support for medically and socially vulnerable populations in EU/EEA countries and the United Kingdom during the COVID-19 pandemic: Based on a survey of NGO activities and a literature review, ECDC has mapped problems faced by vulnerable groups and adopted recommendations to better address their needs. The guidance discusses i.a. ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, persons classified as a high risk group due to age or underlying health conditions, persons in abusive households, the homeless, LGBTI communities, alcohol or drug abusers, sex workers, and undocumented migrants.

European Medicines Agency:
- Treatments and vaccines for COVID-19: "As of 3 July 2020, EMA had been in discussion with the developers of 35 potential vaccines and 144 potential treatments, including immunomodulators, antivirals and hyperimmune serums."
- International regulators provide guiding principles for COVID-19 clinical trials: EMA has endorsed a joint statement on clinical trials from the International Coalition of Medicines Regulatory

Authorities (ICMRA) which sets out factors that increase the probability of clinical trials for COVID-19 to be successful. This includes the need for a sound evidence-based methodology, but it is also indicated that those trial will be given priority that i.a. focus on the most severe complications caused by COVID-19, provide for a simple administration of the therapy and a short duration of the treatment.

WHO/WHO-Europe:

- Please see the CPME President`s intervention at WHO-Europe where Non-State actors shared views on WHO/Europe's forthcoming European Programme of Work

- Planes carrying more than 4.7 million items of personal protective equipment (PPE), procured by WHO/Europe with funding from the European Union (EU), have landed in Azerbaijan, Belarus and Ukraine over the last 2 days. The 92-tonne consignment includes more than 2.8 million medical masks, 1.3 million respirator masks, 100 000 face shields, 60 000 pairs of goggles and 340 000 isolation gowns. All these meet quality and safety standards.

- Strengthening health systems resilience: key concepts and strategies: the briefing published by the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies builds on a literature review on definitions and methodologies relating to resilience and shock. It identifies good practices in relation to governance, financing, resources and service delivery to improve systems' resilience and provides guidance around assessing systems' capacity to deal with shock.

Reports from other sources/COVID-19 Webinars:

- ECPC launched the survey 'Mapping EU Member State's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and cancer' earlier this month.