

## **COVID-19 EU update**

### **European Commission**

- On April 7<sup>th</sup>, the European Commission [announced](#) that it is mobilising 123 million euros for research and innovation to combat the threat of COVID-19 variants. These funds would be made available under the Horizon Europe Program.
- On March 31<sup>st</sup>, the European Commission has [launched](#) a public consultation for the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA). As of March 31<sup>st</sup>, the consultation will be open for six weeks, consisting of questions on the EU's framework to develop, manufacture and deploy medical countermeasures as well as the impact, role, scope and coordination of a future HERA. CPME is preparing a response.

### **European Parliament**

- On the 25<sup>th</sup> of March, the European Parliament [decided](#) to accelerate the approval of the Digital Green Certificate. With 468 votes in favor and 203 against, MEPs supported using the urgency procedure which allows for faster parliamentary scrutiny of the Commission's proposals. A large majority of MEPs support the creation of the Digital Green Certificate. The Digital Green Certificate aims to facilitate safe and free movement inside the EU during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Council of the EU**

- [Portuguese Presidency and European Commission appeal for coordinated action on vaccines](#): EU Health ministers met to discuss policies on the AstraZeneca vaccine following the EMA's statement on its side effects (see below). There was an appeal for coordinated action and to ensure that technical rather than political considerations drive decisions.

### **European Council**

- On the 30<sup>th</sup> of March, European Council President Charles Michel and more than 20 other world leaders [called](#) for a more robust international health architecture. They believe that nations should work together towards a new international treaty for pandemic preparedness and response. This new treaty would have the objective to foster an all-of-government and all-of-society approach in fighting future pandemics as well as strengthening national, regional and global capacities.
- On March 25<sup>th</sup>, members of the European Council [adopted](#) a statement on COVID-19. The members of the European council state that accelerating the production, delivery and deployment of vaccines remains essential to overcoming the crisis. The European Council underlines the importance of transparency as well as the use of export authorizations. Furthermore, the European Council confirms the pro-rata population key for the allocation of vaccines.

### **EMA**

- On the 7<sup>th</sup> of April, the EMA [presented](#) a statement on the link between AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine and very rare cases of unusual blood clots. The EMA's safety committee concluded that unusual blood

clots with low blood platelets should be listed as very rare side effects of the AstraZeneca vaccine. The EMA confirms that the overall benefit-risk for the AstraZeneca vaccine remains positive.

- On the 26<sup>th</sup> of March, the EMA's human medicines committee [adopted](#) several recommendations for increasing the manufacturing capacity and supply of COVID-19 vaccines in the EU. Two new manufacturing sites have been approved by the committee. These include the new Halix site in Leiden for AstraZeneca, and a new facility in Marburg for BioNtech-Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine production.
- On the 26<sup>th</sup> of March, the EMA's human medicines committee [issued](#) advice on the use of regdanvimab for COVID-19 treatment. The Agency concluded that regdanvimab can be used for the treatment of confirmed COVID-19 in adult patients who do not require supplemental oxygen therapy and who are at high risk of progressing to severe COVID-19. While some uncertainties remain, the human medicines committee concluded that regdanvimab can be considered a treatment option for patients at high risk of progressing to severe COVID-19.

## ECDC

- ECDC published a [report](#) on reinfection with SARS-CoV-2. The aim of this document is to present the findings of a survey of EU/EEA countries carried out to ascertain surveillance practices implemented to document and report suspected reinfection cases. In addition, this document summarises the available evidence on the duration of protective immunity following infection with SARS-CoV-2, addressing concerns related to reinfection, such as disease severity during a reinfection episode.

## WHO/WHO-Europe

- [Therapeutics and COVID-19: living guideline](#): WHO has updated its guidelines on treatment options, in particular ivermectin.
- [Data for action: achieving high uptake of COVID-19 vaccines](#): This guidance includes draft survey questions on behavioural and social determinants to identify attitudes to the uptake of vaccines, including among health professionals.