

COVID-19 EU update

European Parliament

- IP waiver for COVID-19 vaccines: The European Parliament continues to be split as regards the proposal to waive patent rights for the COVID-19 vaccines. While a [majority of MEPs voted against a waiver](#) last week, there are several [initiatives by groups of MEPs](#) to put pressure on the European Commission and Member States to support a waiver.
- [Lessons from the COVID-19 health crisis and impact on cancer care: hearing](#): The special committee on Beating Cancer will discuss the results of the public consultation on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on cancer prevention, health services, cancer patients and research, at its public hearing with experts of 10 May.

EMA

- EMA [started evaluating](#) an application to extend the use of Comirnaty to include people aged 12 to 15. It is currently authorised for use in people aged 16 and older. EMA's human medicines committee will carry out an accelerated assessment of data submitted by the company that markets Comirnaty, including results from a large ongoing clinical study involving adolescents from 12 years of age, in order to decide whether to recommend the extension of indication.
- EMA [started rolling review](#) of COVID-19 Vaccine (Vero Cell) Inactivated developed by Sinovac Life Sciences Co., Ltd. The EU applicant for this medicine is Life'On S.r.l. The CHMP's decision to start the rolling review is based on preliminary results from laboratory studies (non-clinical data) and clinical studies.
- EMA [published the assessment report](#) of its review of the monoclonal antibody regdanvimab in COVID-19 patients.

ECDC

- ECDC [published a guidance](#) for EU/EEA Member States on implementing genomic SARS-CoV-2 surveillance. It also includes advice on how to estimate the number of sequenced samples needed to achieve various objectives, including the early detection of novel variants.
- ECDC [outlined](#) the use of saliva as a diagnostic sample for detecting SARS-CoV-2 infection, considering the advantages, limitations and uncertainties associated with the use of saliva as sample material.
- ECDC [presented](#) the public health considerations for the use of rapid antigen detection tests (RADTs), including self-test RADTs to detect SARS-CoV-2 in individuals in occupational settings in Europe, and provides information on the use of such tests in an occupational safety and health at work context.
- ECDC [provided](#) an updated overview of the progress of national COVID-19 vaccination strategies in EU/EEA countries, including updates on: vaccine uptake overall and by target group; current vaccination phases and priority groups, as well as any adjustments made to priority groups during the rollout; vaccination strategies and policies in place; and the use of vaccination certificates and challenges countries face with the rollout and good practices to mitigate these challenges.

WHO/WHO-Europe

- WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus [commends the US decision to support the temporary waiver of intellectual property on COVID-19 vaccines.](#)
- WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus [welcomes Sweden's announcement to share 1 million doses of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine with the COVAX Facility](#) in an effort to

provide life-saving vaccines to people at risk in low income countries. COVAX is in urgent need of 20 million doses during the second quarter of 2021 to be able to cover interruptions in supply due to increased demands for vaccines in India. Several other countries, including New Zealand and France, have recently made similar commitments. WHO and its partners are advocating for countries to make contributions and to donate COVID-19 vaccine doses to COVAX to increase vaccination coverage in low-income countries and ensure that populations there receive the second doses.

- WHO [adds the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to the list of vaccines](#) validated by WHO for emergency use, as the fifth vaccine to receive emergency validation.
- [Gender-related barriers have been observed by WHO in relation to COVID-19 vaccinations.](#) WHO states that these barriers need to be addressed in the planning and rollout of vaccine distribution to reach everyone. Women oftentimes facing limited mobility or having limited restricted decision-making power in their health and limited access to and control over resources needed for their health as well as often at risk of experiencing harassment and gender based violence during health services.

Other reports/webinars

- [Non-Communicable Diseases: Mental health and the pandemic: living, caring, acting:](#) On the occasion of European Mental Health Awareness Week 2021, the European Commission is hosting a conference to highlight the mental health impact of COVID-19 along five themes - understanding – living – caring – responding – acting. CPME is speaking on a panel on healthcare workers. More information including agenda and registration can be found [here](#).