Round Table Report
22 December 2020

For restricted use

This report summarizes the ECDC daily roundtable discussion and provides update on threats detected and monitored by Epidemic Intelligence.

Active threats

COVID-19 associated with SARS-CoV-2 – multi-country (world) – 2020

Update: On 21 December 2020, the European Commission has, following recommendations from the European Medicines Agency (EMA), granted a conditional marketing authorisation for people 16 years of age or older, for the COVID-19 vaccine Comirnaty, developed by BioNTech and Pfizer. Following the delivery of the first doses, EU vaccination will start on 27-28-29 December 2020.

According to media, the first COVID-19 cases have been reported in Antarctica. The 36 confirmed cases are among people stationed at a Chilean research base and include 26 members of the Chilean army and 10 maintenance workers. All 36 individuals have since been evacuated to Chile, are under isolation and are in good condition. It was reported that three crew members on a ship providing support to the base have also tested positive since returning from Antarctica.

Influenza A(H1N2) variant – Brazil – 2020

Source: The Paraná Department of Health, media

Summary: A second human case of a swine influenza A(H1N2) virus variant (A(H1N2)v) was detected in Paraná state, Brazil. The case is a 4-year-old girl from the rural area of Rebouças, in the central region of Paraná state. She was brought to the Darcy Vargas Hospital on 16 November 2020 with a fever of 39ºC, dyspnea, respiratory distress, runny nose and headache. The girl is in a good condition and is monitored at home.

A sample was collected for respiratory virus research, evaluated with detection of the virus as Influenza A by the Central Laboratory of the State (Lacen). Then, the sample was sent to the National Reference Laboratory, from IOC-Fiocruz in Rio de Janeiro, which sequenced the complete viral genome and determined the H1N2 subtype. Phylogenetic analysis is being performed at the Fiocruz Laboratory. Epidemiological and laboratory investigations are ongoing.

Two types of Surveillance for respiratory viruses are carried out in Paraná state: weekly collections of samples from people with flu-like symptoms in the 34 sentinel units of the health department, and mandatory collection of

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material from hospitalized patients due to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome.

The first case of A(H1N2)v was detected in April this year in Ibiporã, Paraná state in a 22-year-old woman who presented with influenza-like illness and recovered quickly. The woman worked in a slaughterhouse in the same area.

ECDC assessment: Further information is needed to identify if it is the same reassorted virus as detected in April 2020. Further characterisation of the virus in a WHO Collaborating Centre is needed accompanied by local investigations to assess the risk and impact of this virus and if limited human-to-human spread has taken place. The collaboration between human and animal health authorities is important to better understand the circulating viruses in pigs, to implement safety measures and prevent zoonotic transmission events. In a phase where health care is under high pressure by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil, not all severe cases with respiratory infection might be tested for both, SARS-CoV-2 and influenza. This underlines the risk that human infections with this emerging influenza virus might remain undetected.

Actions: ECDC is monitoring this event through influenza and epidemic intelligence activities.

Other news

Influenza A(H1N1) variant – the Netherlands – 2019

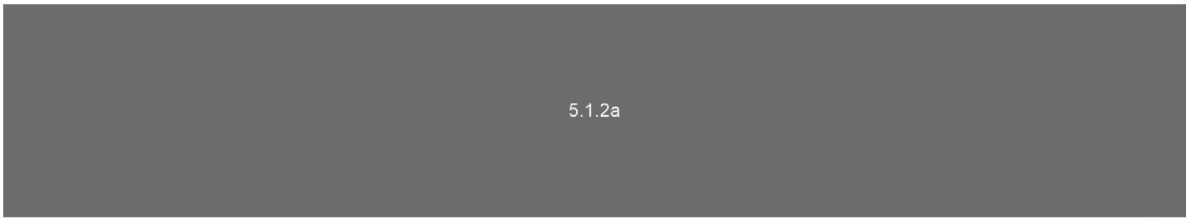
Source: WHO Influenza at the human-animal interface report, WHO

Summary: One human case of infection with a swine influenza A(H1N1)v virus was reported by the Netherlands, which occurred in September 2019. The infection was detected in a 43-year-old male farmer who developed an influenza-like illness on 25 September 2019. Samples were collected from the farmer, another symptomatic farm worker as well as symptomatic pigs at the farm. Influenza A viruses were detected in the samples from the farmer and the pigs. Antigenic and genetic characterization indicated the viruses were Eurasian avian-like influenza A (H1N1) swine influenza viruses. The full genome sequences of the viruses from the farmer and a pooled sample from the pigs were nearly identical. All segments were distant from seasonal human influenza viruses. The farmer went to his general practitioner and recovered uneventfully following treatment for pneumonia. The farmer had no recent travel history, visited no trade fairs and had not bought new animals prior to his illness. Two contacts of the farm worker had influenza-like illness prior to the illness in the farmer but were not sampled. Further details on the virus characterization are anticipated.

ECDC Assessment: Sporadic transmission of swine influenza viruses from pigs to humans has been observed over the last years also related to other lineages. This underlines the need to analyse influenza virus infections in people with pig contact before onset of symptoms to identify such event early and to share unsubtypable influenza viruses with national influenza centres or reference laboratories as well as WHO Collaborating Centres for further virus characterisation analysis. Rigorous follow-up investigations are needed to identify human-to-human transmission immediately and implement public health measures to prevent further spread.

Similar to 2016, where ECDC has flagged the importance of early sharing of information related to human cases of A(H1N1)v, we underline again the responsibility to inform health authorities as early as possible and report human cases of avian and swine influenza viruses through EWRS and IHR.

Action: ECDC is monitoring this event through influenza surveillance and epidemic intelligence activities. ECDC monitors zoonotic influenza strains in order to identify significant changes in the epidemiology of the virus.



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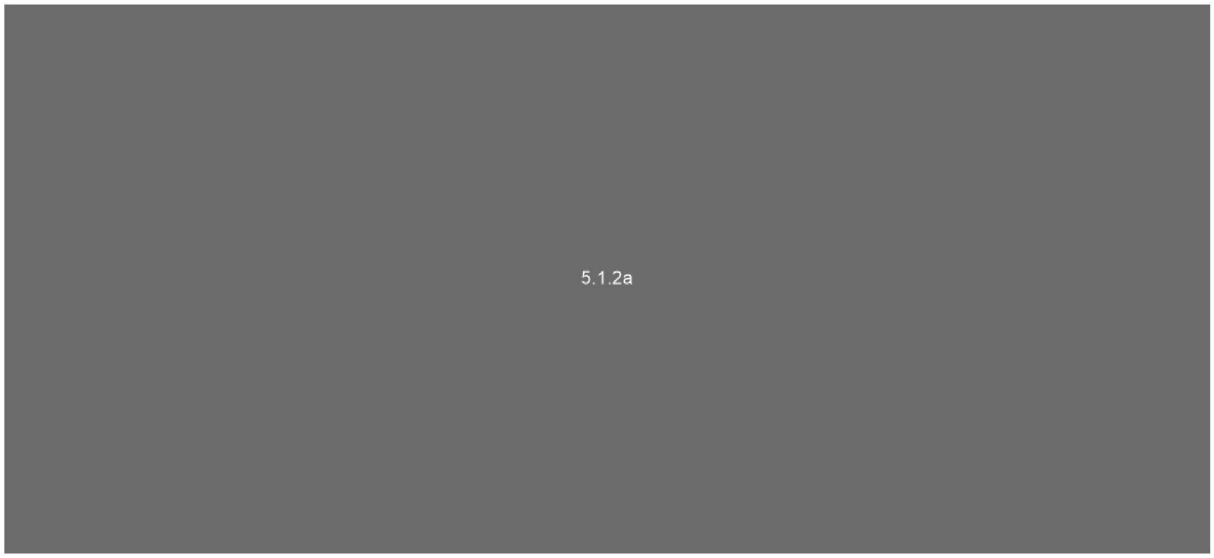

Risk assessment under production

Joint ECDC and EFSA rapid outbreak assessment to be produced on *Salmonella* Enteritidis contamination in poultry products from Poland to be published in week 03-2021.

Participants

Senior Management: -
EI and Response Head of Section: -

Duty Officers:
24/7: -
Threat Detection: -
Rapid Assessment and Outbreaks: -
Communication: -

Representative of:
Epidemic Intelligence: -
Response: -
Vaccine Preventable Diseases: -
Emerging and Vector-borne Diseases: -
Food and Water-borne Diseases: -
Influenza: -
Microbiology Coordination: -

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