



Round Table Report

11 February 2021

For restricted use

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

Active threat

COVID-19 associated with SARS-CoV-2 – multi-country (world) – 2019-2021

Update: Since week 2021-4 and as of week 2021-5, 3 024 301 new cases of COVID-19 (in accordance with the applied case definitions and testing strategies in the affected countries) and 86 305 new deaths have been reported.

New cases have been reported from America (1 350 429), Europe (1 145 811), Asia (434 441), Africa (93 372) and Oceania (248). The five countries reporting most new cases are: United States (687 440), Brazil (318 757), Spain (166 280), United Kingdom (142 608) and France (139 934).

New deaths have been reported from America (42 046), Europe (34 668), Asia (5 858), Africa (3 730) and Oceania (3). The five countries reporting most new deaths are: United States (20 127), Mexico (7 631), Brazil (7 071), United Kingdom (6 640) and Germany (4 555).

Summary: Since 31 December 2019 and as of week 2021-5, 106 472 660 cases of COVID-19 (in accordance with the applied case definitions and testing strategies in the affected countries) have been reported, including 2 323 103 deaths.

Cases have been reported from:

Africa: 3 673 181 cases; the five countries reporting most cases are South Africa (1 476 135), Morocco (475 355), Tunisia (217 086), Egypt (169 640) and Ethiopia (142 338).

Asia: 20 438 608 cases; the five countries reporting most cases are India (10 838 194), Iran (1 466 435), Indonesia (1 157 837), Israel (700 479) and Iraq (628 550).

America: 47 620 931 cases; the five countries reporting most cases are United States (27 008 565), Brazil (9 548 079), Colombia (2 161 462), Argentina (1 985 501) and Mexico (1 936 013).

Europe: 34 681 426 cases; the five countries reporting most cases are Russia (3 983 197), United Kingdom (3 959 784), France (3 337 048), Spain (2 989 085) and Italy (2 636 738).

Oceania: 57 809 cases; the five countries reporting most cases are Australia (28 850), French Polynesia (18 185), Guam (7 649), New Zealand (1 964) and Papua New Guinea (894).

Other: 705 cases have been reported from an international conveyance in Japan.

Deaths have been reported from:

Africa: 95 128 deaths; the five countries reporting most deaths are South Africa (46 290), Egypt (9 651), Morocco (8 394), Tunisia (7 214) and Algeria (2 914).

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Asia: 343 886 deaths; the five countries reporting most deaths are India (155 080), Iran (58 469), Indonesia (31 556), Iraq (13 120) and Pakistan (12 026).

America: 1 107 060 deaths; the five countries reporting most deaths are United States (463 482), Brazil (232 170), Mexico (166 731), Colombia (56 290) and Argentina (49 398).

Europe: 775 813 deaths; the five countries reporting most deaths are United Kingdom (112 798), Italy (91 273), France (78 965), Russia (77 068) and Spain (62 295).

Oceania: 1 210 deaths; the five countries reporting most deaths are Australia (909), French Polynesia (133), Guam (130), New Zealand (25) and Papua New Guinea (9).

Other: 6 deaths have been reported from an international conveyance in Japan.

EU/EEA:

As of week 2021-5, 20 478 718 cases have been reported in the EU/EEA: France (3 337 048), Spain (2 989 085), Italy (2 636 738), Germany (2 288 545), Poland (1 552 686), Czechia (1 037 405), Netherlands (1 006 717), Portugal (765 414), Romania (746 637), Belgium (727 148), Sweden (594 662), Austria (421 452), Hungary (377 655), Slovakia (264 083), Croatia (235 473), Bulgaria (223 734), Ireland (203 568), Denmark (201 621), Lithuania (187 039), Slovenia (174 000), Greece (163 946), Latvia (72 088), Norway (64 772), Luxembourg (51 848), Estonia (48 267), Finland (47 969), Cyprus (31 759), Malta (18 813), Iceland (6 020) and Liechtenstein (2 526).

As of week 2021-5, 495 672 deaths have been reported in the EU/EEA: Italy (91 273), France (78 965), Spain (62 295), Germany (61 675), Poland (39 132), Belgium (21 441), Romania (18 961), Czechia (17 333), Netherlands (14 412), Portugal (14 158), Hungary (13 155), Sweden (12 148), Bulgaria (9 331), Austria (7 940), Greece (5 972), Slovakia (5 271), Croatia (5 198), Slovenia (3 891), Ireland (3 686), Lithuania (2 955), Denmark (2 216), Latvia (1 347), Finland (701), Luxembourg (593), Norway (582), Estonia (466), Malta (282), Cyprus (212), Liechtenstein (52) and Iceland (29).

EU:

As of week 2021-5, 20 405 400 cases and 495 009 deaths have been reported in the EU.

Other News:

According to [Public Health England](#) (PHE), the New and Emerging Respiratory Virus Threats Advisory Group (NERVTAG) has named one additional SARS-CoV-2 Variant Under Investigation and one additional Variant of Concern.

The new Variant Under Investigation VUI202102/01 carries the E484K spike protein mutation and a small number of other mutations. It was first detected on 10 January by PHE while investigating a hospital cluster of five cases in Liverpool. So far, 55 cases of this variant have been found.

The new Variant of Concern VOC202102/02 is derived from the VOC202012/01 SARS-CoV-2 B.1.1.7 variant first identified in the United Kingdom (UK) in late 2020, and it also carries the E484K mutation. So far, 21 cases of this variant have been detected in the UK, predominantly in the South West of England.

Although it is not yet proven that the E484K mutation alone leads to a more severe illness or enhanced transmissibility, it has been [reported](#) to cause a weaker neutralisation by antibodies in the laboratory.

Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC):

On 30 January 2020, the World Health Organization declared that the outbreak of COVID-19 constitutes a PHEIC. On 11 March 2020, the Director-General of the [WHO](#) declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic. The [third](#), [fourth](#), [fifth](#) and [sixth](#) International Health Regulations (IHR) Emergency Committee meeting for COVID-19 were held in Geneva on 30 April, 31 July, 29 October 2020, and 14 January 2021, respectively. The committee concluded during these meetings that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to constitute a PHEIC.

Assessment: For the last available risk assessment, please visit [ECDC's dedicated webpage](#).

Actions: ECDC has published the 13th update of its [rapid risk assessment](#). A [dashboard](#) with the latest updates is available on ECDC's website. ECDC's [rapid risk assessment](#) on the risk of the increase of COVID-19 infection related to end-of-year festive season was published on 4 December 2020. ECDC's [rapid risk assessment](#) on the risk related to the spread of new SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern in the EU/EEA was published on 29 December 2020, and a [first update](#) published on 21 January 2021.

Resurgence of Ebola virus disease in North Kivu – Democratic Republic of the Congo – 2021

Source: [WHO Regional Office for Africa, Media 1, Media 2](#)

Update: Media citing health authorities and the WHO have reported a second case of Ebola virus disease in the Biena health zone of the North Kivu province, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The case was a 60-year-old female who has died since and was buried in the traditional way without safety precautions, and who had links with the first case reported on 7 February 2021.

Summary: Two cases have been reported in the North Kivu province in the Biena health zone. The first case of Ebola virus disease was detected in Butembo, a city which lies in the province of North Kivu in the eastern part of the DRC, where a large outbreak was declared over in June 2020. The announcement came on 7 February 2021 by the DRC Ministry of Health, and an outbreak was declared. This constitutes the twelfth outbreak of Ebola virus disease.

Ebola was laboratory confirmed on 6 February in samples taken from the 42-year old female patient who had sought treatment at a local healthcare centre, due to having Ebola-like symptoms. Her husband was an Ebola survivor whose biological samples tested negative twice since 28 September 2020, and she died on 4 February.

Both cases were reportedly buried in the traditional way without safety precautions.

North Kivu Provincial health authorities are currently leading the response and are supported by the WHO and the DRC Ministry of Health. The first case is being investigated by WHO epidemiologists on-site, and so far 117 contacts have been identified. We do not have information on contacts of the second case. Samples from the first confirmed case are undergoing genetic sequencing to determine the Ebola strain as well as whether the case is linked to the previous outbreak.

Background: Between May and July 2018, the ninth Ebola outbreak in the DRC occurred in Mbandaka, Bikoro and in the Equateur province, leading to a total of 54 cases, including 33 deaths. The 10th Ebola outbreak occurred in the eastern part of the country, where these two most recent cases have been detected, and which resulted in 3 470 cases, including 2 287 deaths. It was first declared an outbreak in August 2018 and was [declared over](#) on 25 June 2020. The 11th outbreak of Ebola virus disease in the DRC was declared on 1 June 2020 and took place on the western side of the country in [Equateur Province](#). It culminated to 130 cases and 55 deaths, and was [declared over](#) by the minister of health on 18 November 2020.

Assessment: The risk of a flare-up of cases in the DRC remains. In addition, as the virus is present in the animal reservoir in many parts of the country, Ebola outbreaks are recurrent. The currently available information is not sufficient to assess the likelihood of further or more widespread transmission with high confidence. Continuing response measures and follow-up of survivors are essential to detect and interrupt transmission early on. Response measures might be challenging amid other outbreaks in the country. As the current response is mostly conducted by locals, combined with the vaccine availability, this leads to a low likelihood of EU/EEA citizens being infected in the DRC, provided they adhere to recommended precautionary measures. For the general EU/EEA citizens, there is a very low likelihood of exposure, especially with current travel limitations. The likelihood of introduction and further spread of the Ebola virus within the EU/EEA remains very low.

Action: ECDC will follow the situation through Epidemic Intelligence. Options for response measures are described in the ECDC [rapid risk assessment](#) on the 10th Ebola outbreak in the DRC updated on 7 August 2019.

Other News

Yersiniosis – Sweden – 2021

Source: [Swedish Public Health authorities](#)

Swedish public health authorities reports an increased number of yersiniosis cases in the regions of Stockholm, Västra Götaland and Halland.

Since 11 January and as of 2 February 2021, 48 yersiniosis cases have been reported nationwide. Among these cases, 33 have been reported in the regions of Stockholm, Västra Götaland and Halland. The number of cases reported this year represents more than the double of cases reported during the same period in the preceding years. The age distribution of the cases indicates that the majority are female cases (n=34), while the 11-40 years age group is the most affected (n=32).

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Swedish public health agency is currently investigating this event, including whole genome sequencing analysis in order to identify the potential source of infection.

Assessment: Yersiniosis is the fourth most commonly reported foodborne zoonotic disease in the EU/EEA. In 2019, 29 countries reported 7 048 confirmed yersiniosis cases in the EU/EEA. Among the two pathogenic species that are notified at the EU/EEA level, *Y. enterocolitica* caused the majority (99%) of human infections followed by *Y. pseudotuberculosis*. The main food sources of yersiniosis have been contaminated pork and fresh produce. The ability of *Yersinia* spp. to survive and grow at low temperatures is of considerable significance for food hygiene, particularly in ready-to-eat food products with long cold storage and which are not heat treated prior to consumption. The risk of a yersinia multi country outbreak is through common contaminated food source on the market in several countries. So far, the outbreak in Sweden is considered a national outbreak and more information is needed to identify the potential source of infection.

Action: ECDC is monitoring the ongoing situation through epidemic intelligence activities.

Risk assessment under production

Fourteenth Rapid Risk Assessment on SARS-CoV-2 in the EU/EEA in the context of increased circulation of variants of concern and vaccine rollout, to be circulated to EC and MS on 11 February and published to the ECDC website on 15 February.

Joint ECDC and EFSA rapid outbreak assessment to be produced on *Salmonella* Enteritidis contamination in poultry products from Poland to be published 25 February 2021.

Expert deployment

One EPIET fellow has been deployed in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina until 21 March 2021, to work with GOARN on the Go.Data implementation to strengthen the COVID-19 surveillance and response.

The Round Table Report contains information that could be considered sensitive or is still under verification. Its distribution is restricted to intended users only.

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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: -