

COCIR Contribution to the public consultation on the extension of the ECDC mandate¹

Introduction

COCIR – the European Trade Association representing the leading industries in the medical imaging, radiotherapy, electromedical and health ICT sectors, notes the European Commission [EC] [initiative](#) to extend the ECDC scope and mandate towards a [European Health Union](#), in line with the principles of subsidiarity, proportionality and One-Health. We believe that **ECDC can contribute to a richer and more structured data collection** from the Member States, than what we experienced during the pandemic.

The lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic have further illustrated the need to improve surveillance, preparedness, Early-Warning and response to cross-border health threats. COCIR values the current EC proposal to entrust ECDC with the pivotal role of **monitoring health threats, recommending response actions, as well as further ‘supporting the work of the Health Security Committee (HSC), the Council and other Union structures for coordinating responses to serious cross-border threats to health within its mandate’** via digital transformation.

ECDC mission

With a view to establishing a functioning European Health Data Space, COCIR supports the ECDC mission to ensure the EU lawful, secure and safe **connectivity and interoperability** not only of **digital health systems and infrastructures** but also of **health datasets, data commons and data stewardship**. In this context, we highlight the **medical technologies industry’s unique** ability, expertise, and willingness to leverage its know-how and contribute to the substantiation of a real and impactful European Health Union, both in the frame of consultations and stakeholder platforms.

Data collection in health crisis

Indeed, as technology providers, **COCIR member industries can offer a complementary view on the kind of data that should be collected in case of health crisis**. With this information in mind, manufacturers could then easily adapt their supply to the real needs. We believe that critical medical equipment, such as hospital ventilators and patient monitors, should be made available across the world, prioritizing those countries and regions that need it the most, using a fair, ethical and transparent approach to allocate supply to acute patient demands based on data such as the disease risk-classification of a country/region. In the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, the fair allocation principles agreed at EU level could have countered the lack of solidarity demonstrated sometimes during the crisis.

Health Research

In addition to the significance of **multi-disciplinarity** in addressing future health challenges, the proposed regulation draws special attention to **health data** access, availability, and exchange as key elements in public **health research, planning and forecasting**.

With this in mind, COCIR urges the EC to also **consult the medical technologies industry experts when setting the EU research needs and priorities** in addressing global health threats.

Network of Union reference laboratories

COCIR applauds the proposal for ECDC to build up the key competences for health protection in Member States via a new **network of Union reference laboratories** for public health.

In line with the EU Common Approach, we also favour **synergies** with relevant stakeholders, such as the Commission and its Agencies, the HSC, the **eHealth Network**, Member States, EU Space Programme and **ERNs-European Reference Networks**, as a vector of tangible outcomes in the health crisis prevention and response planning. However, we believe that the **medical technologies industry should also be closely integrated** in this endeavour not only via regular consultations but also via formalised and active participation.

¹ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 establishing a European Centre for disease prevention and control COM(2020) 726 final - 2020/0320 (COD) – [Link](#)

Medical technologies' added value

In the same vein, we highlight the **added value of medical technologies** industries in reinforcing health systems' capacity for **surveillance, diagnosis, and prevention** of communicable disease outbreak at Union level. We believe that **leveraging ICT, such as AI, medical imaging systems** can greatly contribute to **identifying high-risk population** groups in need of **targeted prevention**. In times of crisis they can also **support healthcare professionals, both in the context of EU Health Task Force and beyond, with urgent decision-making** without jeopardising patient safety

ECDC and NCDs

On a final note, we would like to suggest **expanding the scope of ECDC to non-communicable diseases** (NCDs). The COVID-19 pandemic had an impact not only on acute care but on the whole ecosystem. Concentrating the efforts of health systems on COVID-19 patients has resulted in delayed diagnosis and care for others. Thus, it is critical to understand the consequences and ensuring that the full picture of the problem is considered.

[COCIR](#), together with its members, will continue to contribute to this European Commission initiative, providing our full support. Moreover, we call on the European Commission to organise a specific stakeholder consultation with our member industries and look forward to becoming informed on the results of the consultation and planned next steps.