

Salmonella cases no longer falling in the EU

The declining trend of salmonellosis cases in the EU has levelled off according to the annual report on zoonotic diseases published today.

Cases of *Salmonella* Enteritidis acquired in the EU have increased in humans by 3% since 2014 says the report, which is compiled by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). In laying hens, the prevalence increased from 0.7% to 1.21% over the same period.

“The increase shown by our surveillance data is worrying and a reminder that we have to stay vigilant,” said Mike **Catchpole**, **ECDC’s Chief Scientist**. “Even in a state of high awareness and with national control programmes for *S. Enteritidis* in place, there is a need for continuing risk management actions at the Member State and EU level,” he added.

Marta Hugas, **EFSA’s Chief Scientist**, said: “The decrease of *Salmonella* has been a success story in the EU food safety system in the last 10 years. Recent *S. Enteritidis* outbreaks contributed to a change in this trend in humans and poultry. Further investigations by competent authorities in the field of public health and food safety will be crucial to understand the reasons behind the increase.”

There were 94 530 human cases of salmonellosis reported in the EU in 2016. *S. Enteritidis* – the most widespread type of *Salmonella*, accounted for 59% of all salmonellosis cases originating in the EU and is mostly associated with the consumption of eggs, egg products and poultry meat.

Campylobacter and Listeria

Campylobacter, the most reported food-borne pathogen in humans, was detected in 246 307 people, an increase of 6.1% compared with 2015. Despite the high number of cases, fatalities were low (0.03%). Levels of Campylobacter are high in chicken meat.

Listeria infections, which are generally more severe, led to hospitalisation in 97% of reported cases. In 2016, listeriosis continued to rise, with 2 536 cases (a 9.3% increase) and 247 deaths reported. Most deaths occur in people aged over 64 (fatality rate of 18.9%). People over 84 are particularly at risk (fatality rate of 26.1%). *Listeria* seldom exceeded legal safety limits in ready-to-eat foods.

Salmonella food-borne outbreaks increasing

The 4 786 food-borne disease outbreaks reported in 2016 represent a slight increase in comparison with 2015 (4 362 outbreaks), but the figure is similar to the average number of outbreaks in the EU during 2010–2016.

Outbreaks due to *Salmonella* are on the rise, with *S. Enteritidis* causing one in six food-borne disease outbreaks in 2016. *Salmonella* bacteria were the most common cause of food-borne outbreaks (22.3%), an increase of 11.5% compared to 2015. They caused the highest burden in terms of numbers of hospitalisations (1,766; 45.6% of all hospitalised cases) and of deaths (10; 50% of all deaths among outbreak cases).

Salmonella in eggs caused the highest number of outbreak cases (1 882).

Read the full report: [The European Union summary report on trends and sources of zoonoses, zoonotic agents and food-borne outbreaks in 2016](#)

Notes to the editor

The **EFSA-ECDC report on trends and sources of zoonoses** is based on 2016 data collected from all the 28 European Union Member States. Nine other European countries reported on some of the indicators (Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Liechtenstein, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

Salmonella Enteritidis is the *Salmonella* serotype responsible for most salmonellosis cases and *Salmonella* food-borne outbreaks. It had been declining constantly since 2007 when the EU surveillance began and control measures in poultry were implemented. Data related to *S. Enteritidis* in this press release excludes cases associated with travel outside the EU.

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