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Answer given by Ms Kyriakides
on behalf of the European Commission
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The global outbreak of Mpox clade II prompted the World Health Organization (WHO) to declare a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) between July 2022 and May 2023. Some cases of clade II still occur in the EU¹.

The WHO declaration of a PHEIC due to Mpox in August 2024 was prompted by a surge of cases in Africa due to both clades I and II as well as the detection of a new subclade (Ib). The vast majority of Mpox cases are occurring in the Democratic Republic of Congo². The only case of Mpox in Europe caused by Clade Ib was reported by Sweden in a person returning from Africa³. No secondary cases have occurred to date among the patient's contacts.

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control published a risk assessment⁴ and guidance documents⁵ including the recommendation to raise awareness among travellers and to upgrade the surveillance systems for early detection of imported cases. The decision of whether to implement systematic screening of travellers falls within the competence of national authorities, which exchange views on a regular basis in the Health Security Committee⁶.

Public research can contribute to the development of new medicines and other medical countermeasures, both for off-patent compounds and new developments. The European Medicines Agency (EMA) offers scientific and regulatory support to public research to ensure high-quality evidence, including in the case of Mpox.

Moreover, over the past years, the Commission and EMA have made efforts to facilitate the repurposing of authorised medicines. The aim is to support not-for-profit organisations and academia in gathering or generating sufficient evidence on the use of an established medicine for a new indication⁷.

¹ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mpox>; <https://monkeypoxreport.ecdc.europa.eu/>

² <https://www.afro.who.int/health-topics/mpox-monkeypox>

³ <https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/the-public-health-agency-of-sweden/communicable-disease-control/disease-information-about-mpox/one-case-of-mpox-clade-i-reported-in-sweden>

⁴ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/risk-assessment-mpox-epidemic-monkeypox-virus-clade-i-africa>

⁵ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/mpox>

⁶ https://health.ec.europa.eu/health-security-and-infectious-diseases/crisis-management/list-authorities-represented-health-security-committee/health-security-committee-reports_en

⁷ <https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/news/repurposing-authorised-medicines-pilot-support-not-profit-organisations-and-academia>