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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Campylobacteriosis cases stable, listeriosis cases continue to rise, say EFSA and ECDC**

**Campylobacteriosis infections reported in humans have now stabilised, after several years of an increasing trend, but it is still the most commonly reported foodborne disease in the EU. Listeriosis and VTEC infections in humans have increased, while reported salmonellosis and yersiniosis cases have decreased. These are some of the key findings of the *European Union Summary Report on Trends and Sources of Zoonoses, Zoonotic Agents and Food-borne Outbreaks in 2013*.**

“The stabilisation of campylobacteriosis cases and the continuing downward trend of salmonellosis is good news, but we should not lower our guard as reporting of other diseases such as listeriosis and VTEC infections is going up,” says Marta Hugas, Director of EFSA’s Risk Assessment and Scientific Assistance Department, who stresses the importance of monitoring foodborne illnesses in Europe.

#### **Campylobacteriosis stabilised**

Last year’s report showed that human cases of campylobacteriosis decreased slightly for the first time in five years. The 2013 figures have stabilised to the levels reported in 2012. Nevertheless, with 214,779 cases, campylobacteriosis remains the most commonly reported foodborne disease in the EU. In food, the causative agent, *Campylobacter*, is mostly found in chicken meat.

#### **Listeriosis and VTEC infections on the rise**

Listeriosis cases increased by 8.6 percent between 2012 and 2013 and have been increasing over the past five years. Although the number of confirmed cases is relatively low at 1,763, these are of particular concern as the reported *Listeria* infections are mostly severe, invasive forms of the disease with higher death rates than for the other foodborne diseases. “The rise of reported invasive listeriosis cases is of great concern as the infection is acquired mostly from ready-to-eat food and it may lead to death, particularly among the increasing population of elderly people and patients with weakened immunity in Europe”, says Mike Catchpole, the Chief Scientist at ECDC. Despite the rise of listeriosis

43 cases reported in humans, *Listeria monocytogenes*, the bacterium that causes  
44 listeriosis in humans and animals, was seldom detected above the legal safety  
45 limits in ready-to-eat foods.

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47 Reported cases of verocytotoxin-producing *E. coli* (VTEC) infection rose by 5.9  
48 percent – possibly an effect of increased awareness in Member States following  
49 the outbreak in 2011, which translated into better testing and reporting. No  
50 trends were observed on the presence of VTEC in food and animals.

## 51 **Salmonellosis and yersiniosis on the decline**

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53 Salmonellosis cases fell for the eighth year in a row, with 82,694 cases – a 7.9  
54 percent decrease in the EU notification rate compared with 2012. The report  
55 attributes the decrease to *Salmonella* control programmes in poultry and notes  
56 that most Member States met their reduction goals for prevalence in poultry for  
57 2013. In fresh poultry meat, compliance with EU *Salmonella* criteria increased –  
58 a signal that Member States’ investments in control measures are working.

59 Yersiniosis, the third most commonly reported zoonotic disease in the EU with  
60 6,471 cases, has been decreasing over the past five years and declined by 2.8  
61 percent compared with 2012.

62 The EFSA-ECDC report covers 16 zoonoses and foodborne outbreaks. It is  
63 based on data collected by 32 European countries (28 Member States and four  
64 non-Member States) and helps the European Commission and EU Member  
65 States to monitor, control and prevent zoonotic diseases.

- 66 • [The European Union Summary Report on Trends and Sources of](#)  
67 [Zoonoses, Zoonotic Agents and Food-borne Outbreaks in 2013](#)

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### 69 **Notes to editors:**

- 70 • Zoonoses are diseases that can be transmitted directly or indirectly  
71 between animals and humans. Zoonotic foodborne diseases are  
72 transmitted by consuming contaminated foodstuffs.
- 73 • The report also gives information about foodborne outbreaks. In 2013,  
74 *Salmonella* remained the most frequently reported cause of foodborne  
75 outbreaks with known origin.

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