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2 October 2019  
Helsinki, Finland

## **EUR 9.9 million investment in European health security** **SHARP Joint Action for health aims to ensure a safer environment for all EU citizens**

(Helsinki, Finland) The SHARP Joint Action for Health launched on 2 July 2019 in Vilnius

Twenty-six partners, including National Public Health Hungary, will collaborate to deliver a European Joint Action (JA) for Health called, SHARP, which stands for Strengthened International HeAlth Regulations and Preparedness in the EU. This JA is part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Health Programme of the EU.

The aim of SHARP is to strengthen the implementation of Decision 1082/2013/EU on serious cross-border threats to health which supports EU level preparedness and responses to health threats. It also supports the implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005). This EUR 9.9 million, 3-year Joint Action is co-funded by the Health Programme of the European Union (80%) and by partners' own contribution (20%).

“There is a real opportunity to identify and address gaps in our ability to prevent, detect and respond to threats to human health that come from biological outbreaks, chemical contamination and environmental and unknown threats to human health. By working together, the SHARP partners and the EU Commission will strengthen our existing capacity and support those countries where greater gaps may exist,” said SHARP Coordinator Mika Salminen, Director of the Department of Health Security at the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare.

“The implementation of this Joint Action will facilitate the exchange of good practices among all participating EU countries, strengthening capacity and capability across the whole European region in preventing and responding to a range of threats to human health.” said Guy Dargent, Senior Scientific Project Officer at Chafea, EC. “This will ensure a safer environment for all EU citizens.”

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### **Editor's notes:**

SHARP implements actions mentioned in the European Commission's (EC), Annual Work Plan 2018 of the EU Health Programme 2014 - 2020, managed by DG SANTE and CHAFAEA. Collaborating partners include the ECDC and the WHO EURO regional office, which will both act as advisors for SHARP

SHARP has the following objectives:

- Strengthening IHR implementation and preparedness with increased capacity in high level protection of health and security in EU Member States
- Improving implementation of Decision 1082/2013/EU on serious cross-border threats to health
- Strengthening the resilience and response capacities of health systems; ensured coherence and interoperability for preparedness and response planning to health threats at national, EU and regional level

SHARP consists of ten work packages focusing on integration in national policies and sustainability; strengthening of IHR core capacities; preparedness and response planning; laboratory preparedness, () training; chemical safety and threats; and case management, infection prevention and control preparedness. The partnership of the Joint Action consists of 26 Associated Partners and 35 Affiliated Entities. 30 countries (24 EU members, 3 EEA/EFTA members and 3 European neighbourhood countries) participate in the Joint Action.

SHARP is coordinated by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland, and led by a Steering Committee consisting of the work package leaders. Partner organisations come from the following countries:

- Austria
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Croatia
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Ireland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Malta
- Moldova (Republic of)
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Serbia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- United Kingdom

The SHARP participants will liaise with and collaborate with the ECDC, the WHO EURO regional office, and other Joint Actions, including the Healthy Gateways Joint Action focusing on Points of Entry.

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## Media contacts:

Leah Morantz, Public Health Wales, [leah.morantz@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:leah.morantz@wales.nhs.uk)

Aura Soininen, Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), [aura.soininen@thl.fi](mailto:aura.soininen@thl.fi)