



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Public health, country knowledge, crisis management  
**Crisis management and preparedness in health**

Luxembourg, 24 February 2020

## Health Security Committee

### Summary

### **Outbreak of acute respiratory syndrome associated with a novel coronavirus (COVID-19)**

**Chair:** Wolfgang Philipp, SANTE C3

**Audio participants:** AT; BE; BG; CZ; DE; DK; EE; ES; FI; FR; GR ; HR ; HU; IE; IS; IT; LU; LV; MT; NL; NO; PL; PT; SE; SI; SK; DG SANTE; DG ECHO; DG HR MS; DG RTD; Council; ECDC; EMA; EEAS; EASA; WHO Euro; WHO HQ

#### **Key Conclusions**

1. Update on situation in Italy: IT updated the Health Security Committee on the clusters of outbreak within certain areas of Northern Italy and on the response measures taken, including travel bans, surveillance, isolation, quarantine, closure of public spaces and other social distancing measures. No exit screening currently done in Italy. Italy informed on the number of cases in hospital, in intensive care units and in self-isolation. Members of the Health Security Committee exchanged questions and discussed the current developments, including travel restrictions, points of entry measures. Several countries update and revise their travel advice and one country is requesting citizens returning from the affected areas in Italy to report to authorities and stay 14 days in self-isolation. Italy will revert back to the Health Security Committee on further information on details of the clusters, maps of distribution and further response measures in view of developments, in particular regarding the situation in Ski resorts in the Alps. Countries were reminded to share information with the PREPARE network on the hospitals treating COVID-19 cases. Countries were also reminded to share information on planned measures with the HSC before decisions are implemented to have a coordinated approach.
2. ECDC Risk Assessment: The ECDC presented the updated risk assessment and explained its rationale. The risk of the occurrence of similar clusters, similar to the ones in Italy, associated with COVID-19 in other countries in the EU/EEA and the UK is currently considered to be moderate to high. ECDC will continue updating the assessment, published on ECDC's website, in regular intervals in light of the evolving situation. A further meeting of ECDC's Advisory Forum this afternoon will finalize the updated case definition. Outcomes of this meeting and the agreed case definition will be shared with the Health Security Committee as soon as possible. .

3. Scenarios, measures and next steps: The Commission prompted members of the Health Security Committee to consider questions on preparedness and response planning within countries, including on measures at points of entry, capacities for contact tracing, laboratory capacities and management of cases considering the evolving situation and changes in scenarios. The Commission will share questions to follow up on the points on capacities, in particular regarding the health care sector with members of the Health Security Committee and expects detailed feedback describing relevant capacities and relevant needs. Countries were reminded on contributions the regular Integrated Situation Awareness and Analysis (ISAA) reports. The European Medicines Agency provided an update on the clinical trials into therapeutics in China and also by the National Institutes of Health which are currently ongoing, as well as an overview of the work being undertaken on vaccines. The Commission updated members of the Health Security Committee on the work of the Joint Procurement for personal protective equipment and called on countries to confirm to the Commission their exact needs latest today so to move forward with next steps.