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REPORT EXTRACT IN RESPECT OF A DG HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY
OVERVIEW REPORT
ON THE REVIEW OF MEMBER STATES' ONE HEALTH NATIONAL ACTION PLANS
AGAINST ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises a review of European Union Member States' One Health antimicrobial resistance (AMR) national action plans (NAPs) as of 1 September 2021. It was conducted by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety between 1 September 2021 and 31 May 2022. The report also lists the Commission's actions to assist Member States in their fight against AMR.

The general objective of this review was to determine the extent to which Member States have developed NAPs, including how the One Health dimension and governance mechanisms are reflected therein. The review maps the strategic approaches taken by Member States to tackle AMR and examines the policy objectives per area. It also identifies gaps and good practices in the existing NAPs, which may inform future Commission initiatives on AMR.

The Commission found that NAPs are in place in all Member States, with most based on a One Health approach, at least to some extent. The NAPs vary considerably in content and detail, which may reflect the stage at which each country is in their fight against AMR. Nevertheless, many Member States should work more on the One Health dimension, particularly regarding the environment, which is often missing or not well developed. The inclusion of the environment has been recognised internationally as being key to fully address health risks at the animal-human-ecosystems interfaces.

The review has found some good examples of the prioritisation process to determine the main areas, actions and indicators within the NAPs, based on a situational analysis. However, this is

often not well described in the NAPs, which limits the transparency and understandability of the decision-making process as well as the rationale for excluding certain areas from the NAPs, such as plant health.

All NAPs contain a strategic part describing the Member States' visions to tackle AMR but other core components, such as the operational, monitoring and evaluation parts, are generally not well developed, nor available in other documents cross-linked to the NAPs. Furthermore, budgeting information is mostly absent from the NAPs. These issues raise concerns about the sustainable implementation of the NAPs and the arrangements in place in Member States to ensure that their strategic objectives are achieved effectively.

Governance aspects, including oversight, are more prominent in the more recent One Health NAPs. There are some good examples where the setting up of a governance structure has been given high priority by being included as a strategic objective of the NAP itself.

Intersectoral Coordination mechanisms (ICMs) are referred to in most One Health NAPs, and several Member States indicated that they are in the process of renewing their ICMs or similar structures. Greater clarity in the composition and mandate of the ICMs would be helpful since they are essential for the development and implementation of One Health NAPs.

The strategic objectives of the Global Action Plan are addressed in the NAPs, albeit in varying levels of detail. Overall, the emphasis is on actions in the human and animal health sectors with limited references to environmental aspects, which are not currently included in the scope of most NAPs. The report refers to how these GAP objectives (awareness and training, strengthening knowledge through surveillance, infection prevention and control, optimisation of use of antimicrobials, research, collaborative work and innovation) are addressed in the NAPs and where further efforts could contribute to the optimisation of use of antimicrobials and thus lower AMR.

The Member States' progress in the fight against AMR has been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has diverted resources for the development and implementation of NAPs. Member States have an opportunity to apply the lessons learned from the pandemic in their One Health NAPs, since almost half are in the process of developing or updating them at present.

The findings of this report should help Member States identify and develop synergies in the context of the One Health dimension, as well as addressing gaps and strengthening their existing NAPs.