



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Health systems, medical products and innovation
Performance of national health systems

Expert Panel on effective ways of investing in health

Drafting group meeting on European solidarity in public health emergencies (Virtual meeting)

29 January 2021

Minutes

1. Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved without changes.

2. Nature of the meeting

The first drafting group meeting on European solidarity in public health emergencies took place on 29 January 2021 via MS Teams. The meeting, which was chaired by PD Dr Dorothea Stahl, Chair of the drafting group, was a non-public meeting.

Prof. Martin McKee informed Secretariat that he is an unpaid member of a group promoting a European Health Union and co-author of its manifesto.

No declarations of interest that could in any way interfere with the topic discussed were submitted from any member.

3. List of points discussed

Content of the mandate

The mandate was circulated prior to the meeting. COM (DG SANTE) highlighted the important developments and actions in the health area which Commission is undertaking including; Building a European Health Union: Reinforcing the EU's resilience for cross-border health threats; Guidelines on EU emergency assistance in cross-border cooperation in healthcare related to the COVID-19 crisis; Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe.

COM (DG ECHO) shortly introduced the key elements of the Union Civil Protection Mechanism. It was stressed that the opinion should take these Commission actions into

consideration. The drafting group will be informed regularly on the latest relevant developments.

Members discussed the mandate and suggested that the target audience should be policy makers at different levels. They identified building blocks around the following questions the Panel should answer in this opinion:

- ‘How can we plan and prepare for EU solidarity in health emergencies? How can we strengthen cross-border cooperation in future public health emergencies?’
- ‘What are the limitations to EU level actions, how can we overcome these limitations and what can be done to promote EU solidarity?’
- ‘What transformation needs to take place at EU, national and regional level in order to operationalise EU solidarity in public health emergencies?’

The members stressed the need to define the concept of European solidarity and put it in practice for future challenges. They discussed among others the importance of clearly defined criteria for activating an EU response, emphasized gaps in pan European data systems and the importance of interoperability. They suggested that lessons learnt from the response to the Covid-19 pandemic illustrated with best practices should be included in the opinion.

Members agreed on the proposed structure which would include EU solidarity in health emergencies: concept, values, mechanisms, definition of solidarity and why it is an important value in Europe, in what (health) areas is solidarity at EU level needed and why is this a sensitive topic. Several members suggested to include experiences of EU solidarity (international collaboration) during the COVID-19 pandemic and how to strengthen EU solidarity in future health emergencies.

Further, the current existing mechanisms in place and the recently proposed changes to the EU level health emergency framework to support cross border cooperation would be analysed. Limitations and gaps of implementation would be identified and recommendations proposed on future needs. Members stressed the importance of sustainability of transformations that need to take place at EU, national and regional level to operationalise EU solidarity.

Planning and organisation of the work in the drafting group

Members confirmed PD Dr Dorothea Stahl as a chair of the drafting group and Dr Dionne Kringos and Prof. Christos Lionis as co-rapporteurs.

Schedule for the opinion and the drafting group meetings

Drafting group members agreed on the following schedule:

Discussion and reporting on ongoing work in plenaries: 10 February, 28 April

Drafting group meetings: 17 February (tbc), 12 March, 26 March, 19 April

Public hearing: May

Finalisation and publishing of the opinion: June

4. Conclusion

The members agreed to provide their initial contribution to the outline and report to the Panel in the upcoming plenary meeting. The Chair thanked everyone for active participation and valuable discussion to move forward with the opinion.

5. Next meeting

The draft opinion will be discussed in the next plenary meeting on 10 February 2021 via MS Teams.

6. List of participants

EXPH Members

DE MAESENEER Jan
GARCIA-ALTES Anna
GRUSON Damien
KRINGOS Dionne
LEHTONEN Lasse
LIONIS Christos
MCKEE Martin
MURAUŠKIENE Liubove
NUTI Sabina
ROGERS Heather-Lynn
SICILIANI Luigi
STAHL Dorothea
WIECZOROWSKA-TOBIS Katarzyna
ZALETEL Jelka

COM

JULLY Alexandre (DG ECHO)
DROGOWSKA Joanna (DG ECHO)
MATTHEWS Maya (DG SANTE)
DAJKA Bela (DG SANTE)
VOLOSINOVA Viera (DG SANTE)