



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

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

Luxembourg, 28 May 2020

## Health Security Committee

### Audio meeting on the outbreak of COVID-19

#### Summary Report

**Chair:** Wolfgang Philipp, SANTE C3

**Audio participants:** AT, BE, BG, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, NO, CH, UK, AL, ME, RS, DG SANTE, DG ECHO, DG HOME, ECDC, EMA, CHAFAEA, WHO

#### Key Conclusions

1. Testing strategies: Adequate testing capacity is a key prerequisite of the implementation of exit measures. The Health Security Committee (HSC) discussed strategies and capacities for testing and contact tracing. The Commission has provided guidance and outlined actions to take in these fields<sup>1</sup>. The ECDC published report on travel-related measures to reduce spread of COVID-19, including screening of travellers and testing requirements<sup>2</sup>. The Commission has been further asked the ECDC to monitor the implementation of EU recommendations and guidelines on testing. A strategy for monitoring will be presented to the HSC. Member States noted the need for further guidance on community testing. Questions of immunity and mass testing also remain of interest. The immune response to SARS-CoV-2 is still unclear, as current evidence is limited. These questions can be further raised with the Advisory Panel of the Commission. The results of a short survey with the HSC on testing approach and needs were circulated.

#### Follow up:

- *The HSC to send comments to the Commission on specific questions for further guidance from ECDC and the Advisory Panel by 2 June 12:00.*
- *ECDC to present more detailed guidance and monitoring framework for testing strategy.*

2. EU vaccination plan for COVID-19: The HSC agreed to support the development of an EU vaccination plan or strategy, as was agreed by health ministers on 7 May. An EU vaccination strategy will provide a framework for orientation towards the development of national vaccination strategies. A blueprint for the plan is being prepared and shared with the HSC for comments. The ECDC presented considerations in prioritizing access to COVID-19 vaccines, including targeting priority groups. Considering the uncertainty regarding the availability of

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/covid19\\_-\\_eu\\_recommendations\\_on\\_testing\\_strategies\\_v2.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/covid19_-_eu_recommendations_on_testing_strategies_v2.pdf)  
[https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/testing\\_kits\\_communication.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/testing_kits_communication.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/Considerations-related-to-measures-for-travellers-reduce-spread-COVID-19-in-EUEEA.pdf>

vaccines - several candidates are under clinical trial- , the availability of sufficient doses of vaccines will be an important factor in these considerations.

Follow up:

- *The HSC to send any further comments on the ECDC paper by 2 June 12:00.*
- *The Commission circulate a draft Blueprint for the comments of the HSC.*

3. Exit strategies: Countries provided an update on de-escalation measures. DK is continuing the reopening of society, cultural activities, number of restrictions are still in place and distancing as well. The UK is moving to step 2 in terms of easing lock-down, with opening primary schools and nurseries, and with phased opening of non-essential retails from June.

Follow up:

- *The HSC continues to exchange information on de-escalation measures and the impacts of those measures in details.*

4. AOB – Travel restrictions: The HSC discussed the possibility of developing a common position about travel restrictions from high risk countries during the process of de-escalation of confinement and control measures, raised by ES and DE. Several countries supported a coordinated approach at EU level. The wider questions of the operation of the Schengen zone and movement within the EU is also being considered in detail between the Commission and Member States in the HOME Affairs group, with the involvement of ECDC. A questionnaire has been developed for Member States' views, considering the timing to lift restrictions, and underlying criteria.

Follow up:

- *The HSC to provide further comments to the Commission by 2 June 12:00, to further discuss positions in a dedicated meeting on travel restrictions planned on 3 June.*