



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

HEALTH & FOOD SAFETY DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Health systems, medical products and innovation

**Performance of national health systems**

## **EXPERT GROUP ON HEALTH SYSTEMS PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

### **26<sup>TH</sup> MEETING**

**23 FEBRUARY 2022, 10:00 – 12:30**

*VIRTUAL MEETING*

### **MEETING MINUTES**

Participants: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, France, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies, OECD and the European Commission (SANTE, RTD)

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#### **1. OPENING OF THE MEETING**

**The co-chair (Andrzej Rys, European Commission)** opened the meeting and thanked the subgroup on prevention for launching the work on the priority topic. He introduced two new colleagues: Laura Peter (European Commission) who has taken over the HSPA Secretariat, and Rachel Greenley (European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies) who will assist in drafting the report on health promotion and disease prevention in health system performance assessment.

#### **2. 2021 PRIORITY TOPIC – PREVENTION**

**Laura Peter (European Commission)** presented the results of the mapping exercise of indicators on health promotion and disease prevention. In the last HSPA plenary meeting on 28 September 2021, it was decided to keep the scope of prevention broad and not limited to health services. In this regard, the subgroup on prevention developed a questionnaire to Member States on which indicators they collect to measure health promotion and disease prevention (see Annex).

Fifteen countries responded (AT, BE, HR, CZ, EE, DE, FR, HU, IE, LT, LU, NO, RO, SI, ES). Overall 861 indicators were listed, while the range goes from 16 to 190 indicators per country. It was stressed that there were some limitations of the survey, in particular missing information and no standardised labelling.

The results of the questionnaire showed that most prevention indicators concern primary prevention, are collected at national level, are publicly available and are collected annually. Many of the indicators are related to national targets as well as HSPA framework.

It was also interesting to see the wide range and diversity of indicators, in particular those not directly related to the health system (e. g. farmland-bird-index).

Laura Peter thanked the Member States that responded to the questionnaire. This is a collection of very rich information which can be used for the report. She also concluded that there is potential to explore the use of European level prevention indicators in HSPA frameworks, especially for those countries still developing their HSPA.

**Rachel Greenley and Marina Karanikolos (European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies)** presented the first draft of the outline of the HSPA report on health promotion and disease prevention.

The objectives of the report will be knowledge sharing as well as showcasing concrete examples and methodologies for measuring and monitoring health promotion and disease prevention in HSPA. The expected outcome is to support policy making and benchmarking.

The report will include a chapter on the indicator mapping as well as a chapter based on case studies and the work of a Policy Focus Group. Marina Karanikolos suggested to breakdown the indicators in the following areas; health status, lifestyle, healthcare, environment, economy and education.

Rachel Greenley presented several ideas for case studies, while Austria already signalled their willingness and interest to participate in one. She also showcased potential questions to be raised in a Policy Focus Group.

In the discussion which followed, one suggestion was to differentiate in the report between interesting case studies directly linked to the health system and those with a broader scope such as health literacy and environmental indicators. The report could consider the utilisation of these indicators and how they fit into HSPA frameworks, while looking at best practices and examples from countries.

The co-chair asked for any comments to the outline to be sent by 9 March 2022.

There was no decision on the scope and timing of the Policy Focus Group.

### **3. ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE HSPA EXPERT GROUP WORK**

**Co-chair Kenneth Grech** provided feedback from the meeting of the Council Working Party on Public Health (High Level) on 9 December 2021, where the HSPA Expert Group was discussed. The Slovenian Presidency circulated a paper for discussion in that meeting to prompt an exchange of views on how to support further the work of the HSPA Expert Group and to

explore the potential of the Group to address strategic approaches to health system innovation and transformation, as per the Council Conclusions of December 2021. Kenneth Grech explained that the idea of a more strategic approach was in general welcomed by Member States, which stressed the importance of not creating a new group. The existing HSPA Expert Group was an obvious choice for this more policy-based work since there is no other comparable group which discusses health system topics with Member States on a regular basis.

A few members of the group reacted to support the direction for more strategic and policy-oriented work in the group, while others stressed the need to link to other relevant existing initiatives and structures in order to avoid overlap and be able to specify relevant policy work. The Members of the Expert Group requested to see a draft of the revised Terms of Reference when available.

**Andrzej Rys** explained that the European Commission is revising the Terms of Reference and is already in touch with the former Slovenian and the current French Presidency. A finalised draft will be shared with the Expert Group as soon as possible.

#### **4. AOB AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING**

**Federico Pratellesi (European Commission)** thanked the Expert Group for their support in the drafting process of the Country Health Profiles 2021 and explained the opportunity for national dissemination events and voluntary exchanges. **Guillaume Dedet (OECD)** informed that downloads of the Country Health Profiles from the OECD webpage increased by 20 % compared to the same time period after publication of the 2019 Profiles.

Members asked about the further procedure for the next priority topic on value-based healthcare. **Kenneth Grech** stressed that the possibility of a parallel work on two priority topics mainly depends on the effort of the Member States themselves. It was decided to discuss this point in the next HSPA Expert Group meeting.

No date was set for the 27<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting. It was decided to wait and see how the COVID situation evolves, and then also to decide on the format of the next meeting (physical or virtual, potentially combined with the Policy Focus Group). The HSPA co-chairs and HSPA Secretariat will send provisional dates in due course.