



European Health Union: first State of Health Preparedness Report shows EU's strong progress

Brussels, 30 November 2022

Today, the Commission published its first State of Health Preparedness Report. The Report highlights the progress made in the fields of preparedness and response since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing in particular on medical counter measures.

In this regard, the Report builds on the lessons learned during the pandemic and the work undertaken to strengthen preparedness and response. It also identifies new challenges facing public health authorities and outlines the concrete actions that the Commission will take to directly address them.

A lot has already been achieved. Through the establishment of the Health Emergency and Response Authority (HERA), the Commission has taken important steps in all areas of health preparedness, including detection, prevention, research, international cooperation, response, investment, and fight against disinformation.

More work still needs to be done, however. Building on the three priority health threats identified in July 2022 (pathogens with high pandemic potential; chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats, and threats resulting from antimicrobial resistance), the Report sets out key actions to further improve EU's preparedness in the next year.

What comes next?

The next steps for better preparedness in medical countermeasures focus on **four axes** with concrete actions for 2023.

Development of medical countermeasures: HERA INVEST will be set up with a budget of €100 million to support innovative and strategic projects developing medical countermeasures against [priority cross-border health threats](#).

The Commission will also invest up to €80 million in **"COVID-19 Vaccines 2.0"** projects to foster the development of next generation vaccines, with the aim of finding promising technologies that can be used beyond COVID-19.

Threat assessment and intelligence gathering: HERA will develop the **Medical Countermeasures Intelligence (MCMi) Platform**. This intelligence gathering and threat assessment tool will better link health threats detection to the availability and accessibility of medical countermeasures addressing these threats in the EU.

Resilient supply chains and production capacity: among others, **EU FAB** will be further strengthened to ensure that the EU has the capacity to quickly manufacture lifesaving medical countermeasures in times of crisis. The development of a dynamic purchasing system will also facilitate access to medical countermeasures for Member States.

International coordination and global collaboration: viruses have no borders. Serious cross-border health threats, like COVID-19, may reach the EU from abroad and vice versa. The EU's strategic partnerships with third countries need to be fostered and expanded. The State of Health Preparedness Report should therefore be read in conjunction with the new [EU Global Health Strategy](#), which puts the EU in the centre of international efforts to strengthen preparedness for future health emergencies.

For all these actions, the HERA Work Plan 2023 outlines in more detail what will be achieved.

Background

The State of Health Preparedness Report was first announced in the 2021 Commission Communication "Drawing the early lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic". It is an annual Commission report which examines the EU's changing health risk landscape and its state of preparedness. It covers pandemics and other health emergencies, along with other scenarios the EU

may face such as chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) attacks or accidents, or other environmental or technological disasters.

The availability and accessibility of medical countermeasures is only one part of the preparedness work. Future reports will therefore also focus on other areas which are key to strengthen the EU's strategic health preparedness and response system.

[HERA](#) is a crucial pillar of the [European Health Union](#) and a fundamental asset to strengthen the EU's health emergency response and preparedness. HERA was established in September 2021 to replace ad hoc approaches to pandemic management by a permanent structure with adequate tools and resources to better plan EU actions in case of health emergencies. A core goal of HERA is to ensure the development, manufacturing, procurement, and equitable distribution of key medical countermeasures whenever there is need for it. To achieve this, HERA assesses potential serious-cross border health threats and gathers the necessary intelligence.

More information

[Factsheet State of Health Preparedness Report and HERA Work Plan](#)

[State of Health Preparedness Report](#)

[EU Global Health Strategy](#)

[HERA website](#)

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Quotes:

As we have painfully witnessed during the pandemic, health crises know no border and spread fast. It is critical we continue our work in preparedness and countermeasures. With this Report, we know where we stand and most importantly, we have a plan on where we want to go. This clearly shows the EU is delivering and is making sure we stand ready, should a new crisis unfold.
Margaritis Schinas, Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life - 30/11/2022

The pandemic underlined that preparedness is key to protecting our citizens from global health crises. Since 2020, the EU has greatly reinforced its health security architecture and response through a strong European Health Union, with the creation of HERA as its centrepiece. In the years ahead, we will continue to reinforce the EU's collective preparedness capabilities in close collaboration with Member States, and work with international partners to ensure that when the next crisis arrives, we will be ready to tackle it quickly and decisively, as a Union. This is what our citizens expect from us, and what we must deliver.
Stella Kyriakides, Commissioners for Health and Food Safety - 30/11/2022

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