

Facing current and upcoming threats: Supporting pan-European preparedness and planning for future challenges

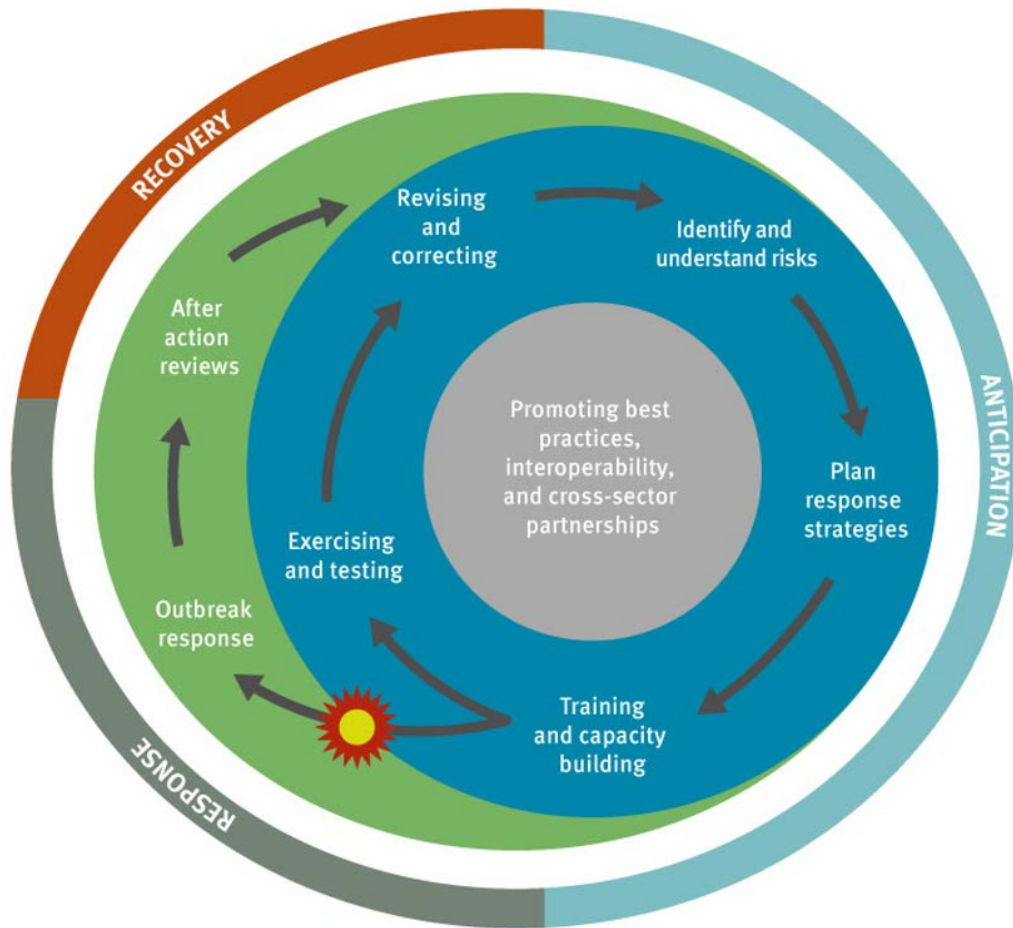
Marie Heloury & Jonathan Suk, ECDC
PHIRI, European Public Health Week, 20 May 2022

Outline



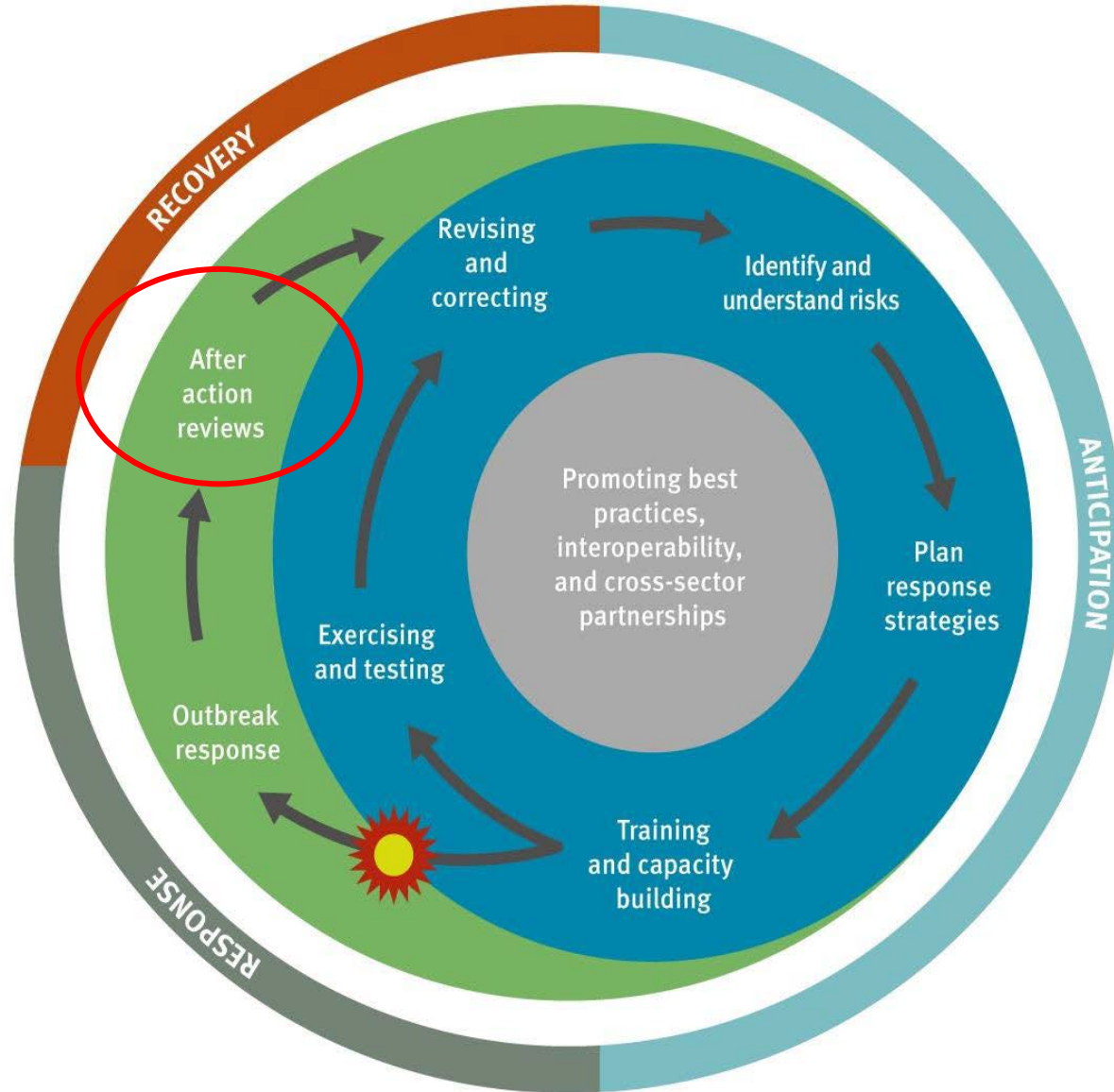
1. **Lessons Learnt** from COVID-19
2. **Transitioning** beyond the acute phase of the pandemic
3. **The future** of preparedness and response

Defining preparedness and response



Public health emergency **preparedness** involves a coordinated and continuous process of **planning** and implementation that relies on measuring performance and taking corrective **action** and in outbreak events to **respond** in a timely, coordinated and adequate manner.

Preparedness and response work @ECDC



Anticipation – Response – Recovery

Anticipate

- a) Mapping, assessing and prioritising risks and vulnerabilities
- b) Conduct routine active surveillance of CDs
- c) Support strategic preparedness planning
- d) Strengthen cross-border and cross-sectoral collaboration
- e) Simulation exercises
- f) Capacity building

Respond

- g) Early warning and epidemic intelligence
- h) Rapid (threat-) risk assessments
- i) Ad *hoc* technical guidance
- j) Field support

Recover

- k) After action reviews (case studies)
- l) Lessons learning exercises/ Response evaluation
- m) Revision and amendment of Plans

Approaches to assessing lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic



Lessons learned work to support national and EU/EEA **preparedness planning** covering all phases of preparedness cycle: Anticipation, Response, Recovery through:

After Action Reviews

- Development of protocols, support countries for training and workshops
- Particular focus on critical areas such as long-term care facilities, schools, evidence-based decision-making

Preparedness indicators and assessments

- Development of preparedness indicators
- Analysis of preparedness and response planning and implementation

Case studies

Simulation exercises

Capacity building through targeted training

ECDC-JRC Response Measures Database

- Collection of non-pharmaceutical interventions (NPIs)
- >5,000 NPIs in 30 countries since January 2020
- National & sub-national NPIs
- Updated every 2 weeks
- [Public website](#) →













Austria

Current Measures EU Measures Terminology General Info

Contact Form

All Measures Case management and quarantine General Hygiene and safety measure Internal travel International travel Physical distancing

Table Chart

Level 1	Coverage	Level 2	Level 3	Start Date	End Date	Targets	Notes	View
	 National	Protective mask use community	Closed public spaces	05 Mar 2022		General population	05/03/2022 There is still a recommendation to wear an FFP2 respirators in closed rooms. Masks are on...	
	 Kärnten	Protective mask use community	Other	08 Feb 2022		General population	Carinthia reintroduced the mandatory wearing of masks in tourist hotspots from 9pm to 2am.	
	 National	Protective mask use community	All public spaces	11 Jan 2022	04 Mar 2022	General population	11/01/2022 Wherever the recommended minimum distance of two meters from people outside the household...	
	 National	Stay at home orders	Not applicable	27 Dec 2021	31 Dec 2021	General population	Curfew from 10 pm to 5 am, this also applies to New Year's Eve.	

Addressing gaps in preparedness and response

Areas where key shortcomings have been identified in recent health emergencies and the COVID-19 pandemic

- Health systems resilience: health system's ability to transform, scalability of capacities and plans
- Interface between crisis management and public health preparedness/health systems
- Unclear decision-making processes/bodies and governance of response
- Risk communication and community engagement

Ongoing global and EU initiatives to address those shortcomings

- 2021 Revision of JEE tool
- WHO Universal Health and Preparedness Review (UHPR) – 2022 pilot missions
- OECD/European Observatory EU4Health project on Health System Resilience
- **European Health Union for a more coordinated and structured Union-level approach to future health crises – amended legislative package expected to be adopted in 2022**

Risk communication and community engagement



- Link behaviour science results with policy and risk communication activities
- Develop capacity for behavioural studies and insights and capacity to implement in emergencies
- Develop scale up capacity for community engagement and risk communication
- Improve health literacy in EU/EEA countries
- Increase qualitative research capacity and acceptance
- Coordinate mis- and dis-information management in EU/EEA countries
- Networks at the i
useful in a public

PERSPECTIVE

Behavioural insights and the evolving COVID-19 pandemic

Marijn de Bruin^{1,2}, Jonathan E Suk³, Marianna Baggio⁴, Sarah Earnshaw Blomquist⁵, María Falcon⁶, Maria João Forjaz^{7,8}, Karina Godoy-Ramirez⁵, Mariken Leurs¹, Carmen Rodriguez-Blazquez⁷, María Romay-Barja^{9,10}, Ellen Uiters¹, John Kinsman³

Transitioning beyond the acute phase of the pandemic



European Commission - Press release



COVID-19: Commission calls on Member States to step up preparedness for the next pandemic phase

Brussels, 27 April 2022

The Commission is today proposing a set of actions to manage the current phase of the COVID-19 pandemic and prepare for the next one. By working together, the EU has so far saved hundreds of thousands of lives thanks to COVID-19 vaccines, kept its single market operational, minimised travel restrictions and mobilised manufacturing capacity of critical products when supply chains were disrupted. In the new phase of the pandemic, where preparedness and response need to be sustained, coordination will be, once more, essential. The Commission therefore calls on Member States to take actions before autumn to ensure vigilance and continued coordination of health preparedness and response.

PERSPECTIVE

Public health considerations for transitioning beyond the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic in the EU/EEA

Jonathan E Suk¹, Anastasia Pharris¹, Julien Beauté¹, Edoardo Colzani¹, Howard Needham¹, John Kinsman¹, Rene Niehus¹, Rok Grah¹, Ajibola Omokanye¹, Diamantis Plachouras¹, Agoritsa Baka¹, Bastian Prasse¹, Frank Sandmann¹, Ettore Severi¹, Erik Alm¹, Emma Wiltshire¹, Bruno Ciancio¹

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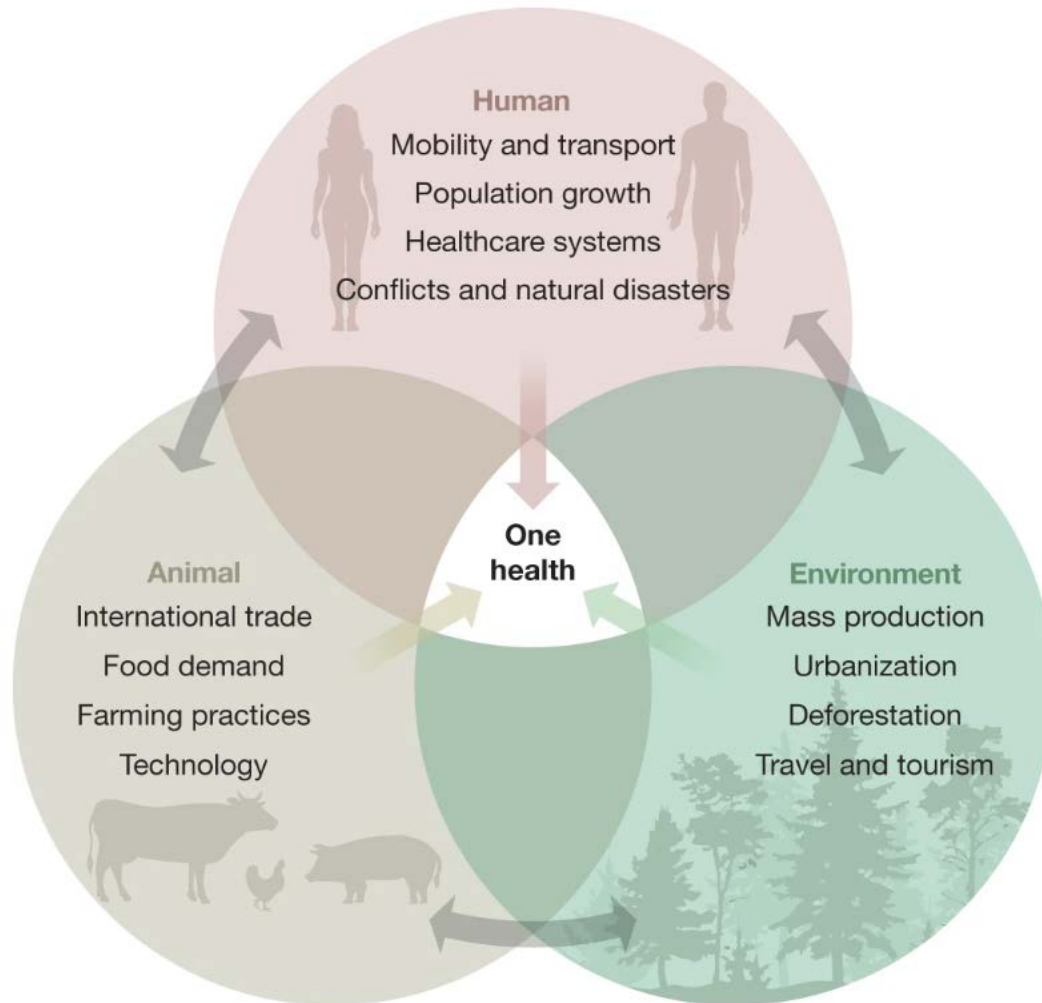
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Suk Jonathan E, Pharris Anastasia, Beauté Julien, Colzani Edoardo, Needham Howard, Kinsman John, Niehus Rene, Grah Rok, Omokanye Ajibola, Plachouras Diamantis, Baka Agoritsa, Prasse Bastian, Sandmann Frank, Severi Ettore, Alm Erik, Wiltshire Emma, Ciancio Bruno. Public health considerations for transitioning beyond the acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic in the EU/EEA. Euro Surveill. 2022;27(17):pii=2200155. <https://doi.org/10.2807/1560-7917.ES.2022.27.17.2200155>

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- Transition beyond the acute phase is important turning point
- There is no *a priori* definition or criteria for when the pandemic is no longer acute in the EU/EEA and globally
- Pivoting to **transition phase** primarily focused on **managing severe outcomes** is a risk management decision, principally based upon evaluating what levels of **tolerable residual risk** are acceptable to society

Preparedness and response strategies must be cross-sectoral



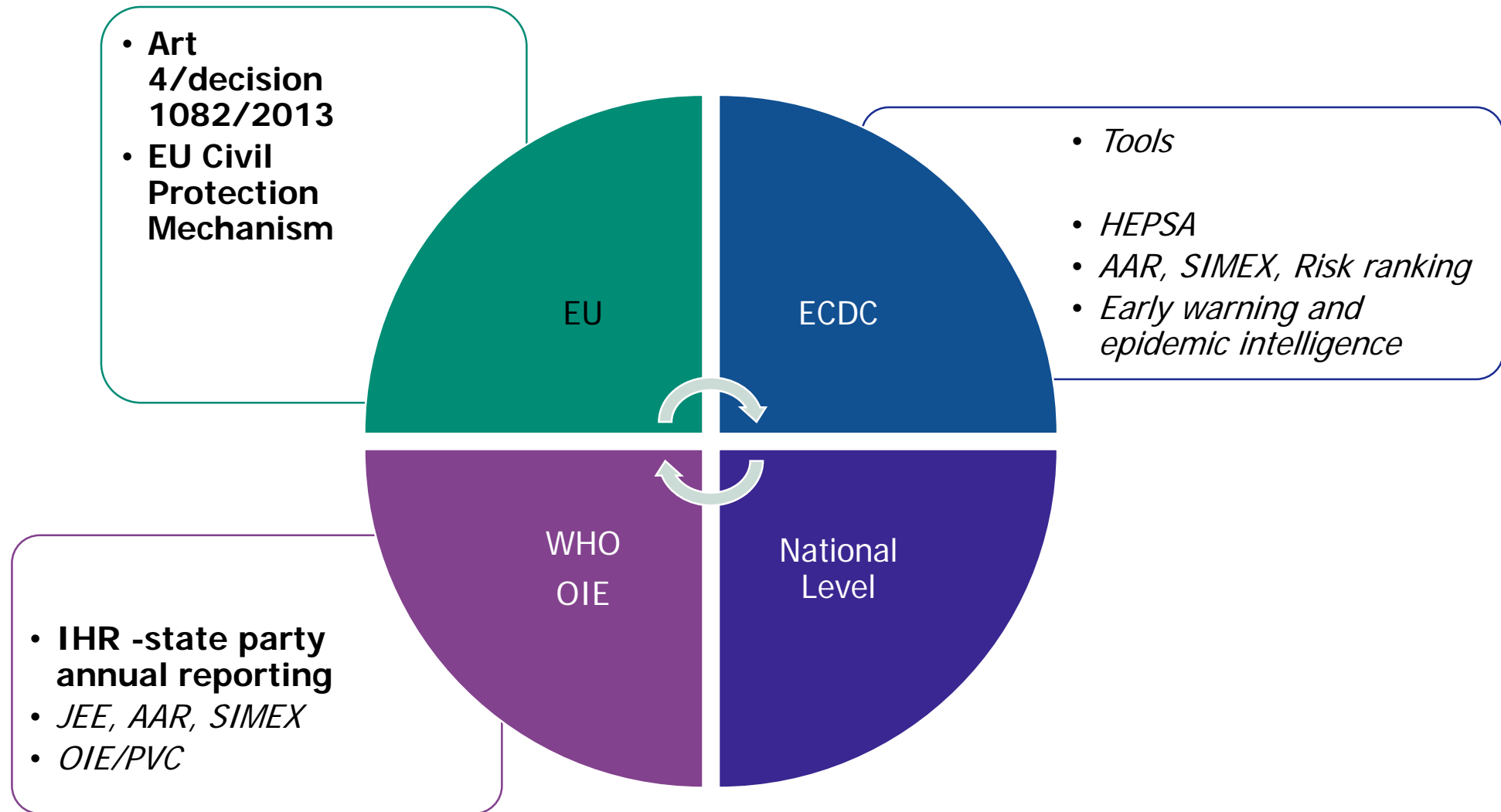
“The challenges posed by twenty-first century epidemics are real and changing: future epidemics will be fuelled by conflict, poverty, climate change, urbanization and the broader demographic transition.

In our response we must consider epidemics not as discrete events, but rather as connected cycles for which we can prepare, even if we cannot predict specific outbreaks.”

Wide range of potential risks



Pre-pandemic governance mechanisms



ECDC perspective on new indicators

- Complement quantitative and means-based indicators with **result-based** and **performance-based** indicators
- Include indicators for health system **resilience** and **surge capacity**
- Minimise reporting burden: complement existing (global) monitoring/reporting frameworks
- Focus on indicators relevant to the European context
- All hazard preparedness, not limited to respiratory diseases

Examples of potential new indicators

Capacity-based indicators	Performance-based indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Health facility density and distribution- Hospital bed and ICU density- Health worker density and distribution- IHR Core Capacity Index / JEE Scores- EU Laboratory Capability Monitoring System- Training and capacity building activities- Availability of national preparedness plans- For large-scale emergencies: establishment of a dynamic national response governance structure and of multi-disciplinary decision-making bodies and processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Certain standard elements to be included in any national preparedness plan- Adaptability, flexibility and scalability of national alert levels and response capacities- Qualifiers for national risk communication and community engagement strategies- Number of Simulation Exercises, Stress Tests, or After-Action Reviews conducted per year, availability of outbreak investigation protocols for standard threats...- Surveillance system performance

Towards an increased focus on country support and rapid response

- **Shortcomings in EU mechanisms for managing threats**, lack of readily available human resources for timely deployment
- ECDC mandated to establish the **EU Health Task Force**: provide effective **operational response and crisis preparedness support** to **EU/EEA MSs** and wider global health security

Support in-country response during emergencies: rapid field deployment, outbreak investigations, field epidemiological, vaccine efficacy studies, provision of software

Targeted country support for emergency preparedness strengthening: protocols and plans, simulation exercises, after and intra action reviews and capacity building

Conclusions



- SARS-CoV-2 is here to stay, representing yet another long-term challenge to public health & healthcare systems
- To be better prepared for different infectious disease risks, we have now unique & important opportunity to learn lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic
- Amended global health governance frameworks shall broaden the scope of possibilities for renewed work in preparedness and response
- Strengthened collaboration between countries and international coordination towards improved health security at European and global level is essential

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