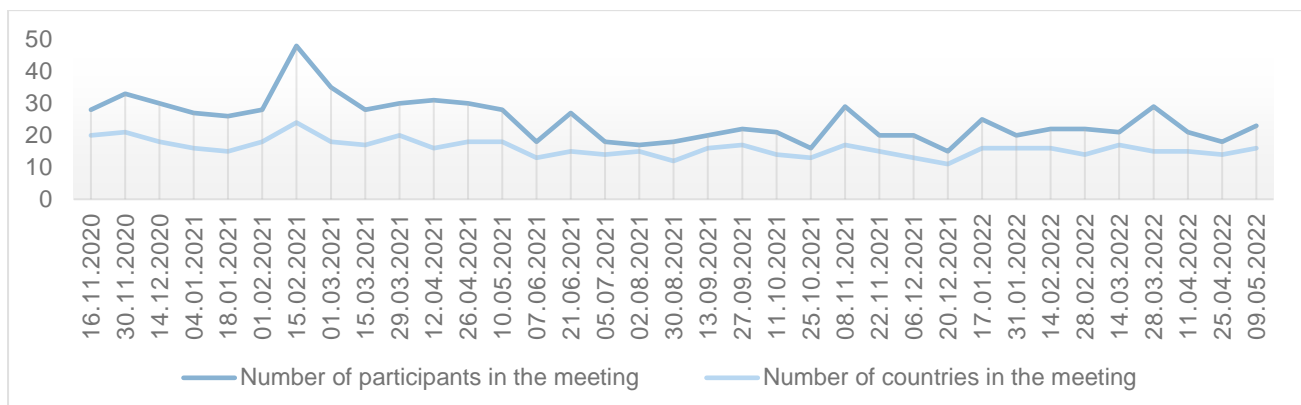


WP8: RAPID EXCHANGE FORUM

The COVID-19 pandemic demanded a **quick exchange** between experts and institutions supporting the national governments in the crisis response. Thus, devoted members of the Joint Action on Health Information ([JA InfAct](#)) started in April 2020 to meet regularly online to foster **cross-country exchange**. In these meetings, partners could approach each other for questions and shared views in a **trusted environment** on an ad-hoc basis. This initiative became an integral part of [PHIRI](#), the Population Health Information Research Infrastructure, allowing a quick exchange of data, indicators, good practices and experiences in the COVID-19 crisis response in a structured and efficient way.

The Rapid Exchange Forum offers a structured and highly needed platform for regular quick exchange of fellow countries, policy advisors, commission services and researchers in the joint efforts to manage the COVID-19 pandemic.

The bi-weekly 1 hour online meetings, in a moderated, structured format, with the aim to obtain up-to-date information on topics that serve as a basis for **health policy decision making**, have 2 parts: 1 pre-agreed current COVID-19-topic (topics are contributed by the participating countries and chosen via a survey ex-ante to each meeting) and ad-hoc questions. Responses by the countries (backed up by evidence like national reports, guidelines, etc.) are compiled and shared via a devoted platform immediately after the meeting. Every 3 months, a [Rapid Exchange Forum – Special Edition](#) is organized and experts of **international organizations** are invited to present relevant findings and recent international activities related to COVID-19. Attendees are project partners, national experts (advisors to ministers and heads of agency), representatives of expert networks (e.g. Healthy Cloud), EU services (ECDC, JRC) and different health stakeholders (e.g. ELIXIR).



NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF COVID-19 TOPICS

A [needs assessment](#) performed in early 2021 among 24 countries provided an overview of the current and future priorities of European countries regarding the management of the COVID-19 pandemic. The current main priority topic across countries was **vaccination strategies**. In contrast to current priorities, indicated future priorities are more diverse among countries and include the areas of **testing, health data, monitoring and vaccination**. Country responses on the rating of national pandemic management and good practices/lessons learned show consistency.

REAL-TIME MONITORING OF POLICY MEASURES

On the [Health Information Portal](#), a dedicated section on COVID-19 displays the different policy **measures currently in place** across European countries. This process is designed to be **bottom up**: the countries update their information themselves on a dedicated secured platform, and subsequently the information is reviewed and uploaded to the Health Information Portal.

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