

COVID-19 EU update

European Commission:

- On 10 September, the Commission and the WHO launched and co-hosted the first meeting of the [High Level Facilitation Council](#), leading the work of the global collaborative framework Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (the ACT-A) to speed up the development and deployment of vaccines, tests and treatments against COVID-19, as well as to improve health systems.
- On 10 September, the Commission presented its [assessment](#) of the implementation and effectiveness of the [Code of Practice on Disinformation](#). The assessment concludes that the Code has proven to be a valuable instrument, providing a framework for a structured dialogue between relevant stakeholders to ensure greater transparency of platforms' policies against disinformation within the EU. The assessment also highlights certain shortcomings due to the Code's self-regulatory nature. The Commission also published a [Joint Communication – Tackling COVID-19 disinformation: getting the facts right](#) dedicating a [specific page](#) on the issue.
- On 9 September, the Commission concluded exploratory talks with BioNTech-Pfizer to purchase a potential vaccine against COVID-19. It is the sixth company with which the Commission has concluded talks, following Sanofi-GSK, Johnson & Johnson, CureVac and Moderna. The first contract, signed with AstraZeneca, entered into force on 27 August.
- On 4 September, the Commission adopted [a proposal for a Council Recommendation](#) to ensure that any measures taken by Member States that restrict free movement due to the coronavirus pandemic are coordinated and clearly communicated at EU level. The Commission's proposal sets out four key areas where Member States should work closer together:
 - **Common criteria and thresholds** for Member States when deciding whether to introduce travel restrictions;
 - Mapping of common criteria using **an agreed colour code**;
 - **A common framework for measures applied to travellers from high-risk areas**;
 - **Clear and timely information to the public about any restrictions**

European Parliament:

- On 7 September 2020, the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety debated the EU vaccines strategy, including the state of play on the Vaccines Advance Purchase Agreements, with Sandra Gallina, Deputy Director-General of the Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety. It was underlined the need for transparency to achieve trust in future COVID-19 vaccines and regretted that more information on the Commission's work related to the purchase agreements for COVID-19 vaccines had not been shared proactively by the Commission. More info [here](#).
- The Regional Development Committee of the European Parliament beefed up the deployment of exceptional additional EU resources and measures, known as REACT-EU, for fostering crisis repair. The REACT-EU instrument proposed by the Commission before the summer mobilises additional investment and offers great flexibility for Member States to address the immediate effects of the crisis. More info [here](#).

Council of the European Union:

- On 11 September, the Council agreed to add €6.2 billion to the EU 2020 budget to address the impact of the COVID-19-crisis and to fund inter alia the vaccine strategy. The Council adopted draft amending budget No 8 for 2020 by written procedure. [Read more](#)

- Two days earlier, EU ambassadors had already agreed the Council's position on the 2021 EU draft budget. In total, the Council's position for next year's budget amounts to €162.9 billion in commitments and €164.8 billion in payments. The 2021 budget will be complemented by actions to support the COVID-19 recovery, which will be funded by Next Generation EU, the EU's €750 billion pandemic recovery plan. More info [here](#).

ECDC:

- ECDC provides a new set of data on the state of play on the COVID-19 pandemic in the EU: over the last week, the Centre published new data addressing different aspects of the pandemic. It includes information on [daily rate of new COVID-19 cases' notification](#) per subnational regions. You can also find a similar repository on a [weekly rate](#). Besides, new data is available regarding [the national 14-day notification rate of new COVID-19 cases and deaths](#). Lastly, ECDC shares information on [hospital and ICU admission rates and current occupancy for COVID-19](#).

WHO/WHO-Europe:

- On 17 September, the WHO will organise the World Patient Safety Day. This year's theme is "Health Worker Safety: A Priority for Patient Safety" because the COVID-19 pandemic has unveiled the huge challenges and risks health workers are facing globally including health care associated infections, violence, stigma, psychological and emotional disturbances, illness and even death. Besides offering [campaign materials](#), the WHO is also organising a [webinar](#) "One world: Global solidarity for health worker safety and patient safety" on the same day at 14:00–17:00 (CEST).
- On 14-15 September 2020, health ministers and high-level representatives of the 53 Member States of the WHO European Region, along with partner organizations and civil society, will meet virtually for the [70th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe \(RC70\)](#), the Region's annual decision-making meeting. A new vision for health in Europe is on the agenda, as well as the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic. This year's session is the first Regional Committee under Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge, the new WHO Regional Director for Europe. Dr Kluge will put his vision for health across Europe the new European Programme of Work (EPW), "United Action for Better Health in Europe" to Member States for their approval.

Data Protection and COVID-19:

- The EDPS released recently a [video](#) of the online conference on "*Data Protection in the age of Covid-19. Yesterday - Today - Tomorrow*" organised by the EDPS and EDPB trainees. Please see the discussion here.

Human Rights and COVID-19:

- The UN's independent expert on extreme poverty said in a [report](#) published today that while governments have adopted more than 1,400 social protection measures since the outbreak of COVID-19 they were largely insufficient, and warned the worst impacts on poverty were yet to come.

Other sources/webinars:

- The Health Policy Platform will host the webinar on ["EU Vaccine Strategy" on Friday 18 September at 14.00 CET Brussels](#) time informing about the general Commission strategy on vaccination for COVID-19 and on the initiatives taken over the last weeks to secure a supply of safe and efficacious

future vaccines. May you have any question, do not hesitate to contact the Health Policy Platform team at : SANTE-HPP@ec.europa.eu.