

COVID-19 EU update

European Commission:

- On 15 October the Commission presented the key elements to be taken into consideration by Member States for their COVID-19 vaccination strategies to prepare the European Union and its citizens for the time when a safe and effective vaccine is available. Moreover, the Commission outlines priority groups to consider for vaccination, see [Vaccination Strategy](#) and [EU Coronavirus Response](#).

European Parliament:

- On 14 October 2020, the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted its report on the “EU4Health Programme”. MEPs want to raise the budget for health back to EUR 9.4 billion, as originally proposed by the Commission, to enhance health promotion and make health systems more resilient across the EU. More details [here](#).
- On 15 October 2020, MEPs from the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee argued that the response to the current COVID-19 crisis must make the EU more resilient. Governments' spending decisions should focus on putting more funds into reversing climate change and boosting digitalisation. More info [here](#).

Council:

- On 13 October 2020, the Council adopted a recommendation on a coordinated approach to travel measures, i.e. establishing common criteria and framework on travel measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A common colour-coded map broken down by region will be produced weekly by the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). More info available [here](#).
- Health ministers will meet 30 October. The meeting will discuss how to reform the World Health Organization. The presidency is currently drafting a text that would lay out the EU's vision for reforming the organisation.

European Council:

- On 15 October 2020, the Heads of States of Member States adopted the [conclusions](#) on COVID-19 and climate change. More details [here](#).

ECDC:

- Following the [Council Recommendation on a coordinated approach to the restriction of free movement in response to the COVID-19 pandemic](#), the ECDC published its [first set of color-coded maps](#) presenting the pandemic development across Europe. The maps will constitute the base for any new restriction of free movement in response to the COVID-19 pandemic taken by Member States and will be updated weekly. The maps are based on data reported by EU Member States to the European Surveillance System (TESSy) or that are available to ECDC from official sources.
- ECDC presents a new set of data related to the pandemic development. You can download a data on [hospitalisation and Intensive Care Unit \(ICU\) admission rates and current occupancy for COVID-19](#), on [the daily subnational 14-day notification rate of new COVID-19 cases](#) and on [the national 14-day notification rate of new COVID-19 cases and deaths](#).

WHO/WHO-Europe:

- [Solidarity Therapeutics Trial produces conclusive evidence on the effectiveness of repurposed drugs for COVID-19 in record time](#): A large, multi-country trial coordinated by the World Health Organization found that four antiviral drugs, including Gilead's widely used remdesivir, did not reduce the risk of death or the length of hospital stay due to COVID-19. The researchers called the results of the trial examining the re-purposed drugs "unpromising" and said they refute earlier studies that the four medications can substantially reduce COVID-19 deaths, help people stay off ventilators or decrease the length of hospital stays, the researchers wrote in a pre-print published late Thursday. The results have not yet been published in a peer-reviewed journal.

OECD:

- [E-commerce in the time of COVID-19](#): The policy briefing includes an overview of examples of eCommerce platforms supporting the efforts to tackle the pandemic: "For example, in the United Kingdom, eBay has been working with several government agencies to build and test a new portal, of exclusive access to healthcare professionals, which aims to supply personal protective equipment to NHS primary and social care workers. In South Africa, Uber has partnered with the Western Cape Department of Health and The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to deliver medications to those most vulnerable to COVID-19."
- [Transparency and policy co-ordination: Valuable lessons on averting a food crisis](#): This data discussion highlights key findings of the 2020 report on [The role of transparency in avoiding a COVID-19 induced food crisis](#), setting the current increase in food prices in a historical context and highlighting the need for data collection, analysis and communication to avoid bottlenecks in food availability and price stability.