

**AOB - Proposal for a European Research & Innovation Partnership for pandemic preparedness  
under Horizon Europe**

*Information from the Commission*

Disasters, whether natural or man-made, call for better preparation to prevent and reduce the loss of life, harm to health and the environment and economic and material damage. As part of the Covid-19 pandemic lesson-learning, a Research & Innovation Pandemic Preparedness Partnership is proposed under the Horizon Europe Programme in order to:

- improve the EU's preparedness to prevent, predict and respond to emerging infectious health threats
- develop a Strategic Research and Innovation pandemic preparedness agenda with the Member States
- build a coherent European Research Area (ERA) in pandemic preparedness to quickly mobilise R&I in emergency situations

These objectives will steer the Partnership to focus on the following activities:

1. Generate new scientific knowledge to better understand the pathogens (virus, bacteria, etc.), their characteristics and transmission, and their interaction with hosts and the environment;
2. Design and develop countermeasures, such as vaccines, diagnostics or therapeutics, personal protective equipment or monitoring tools at population level;
3. Inform public health policy decisions with scientific evidence, thus improving their quality and increasing trust, including digital solutions to better monitor pandemics, better modelling of the impact of public health measures, or new strategies for a more agile public health response in emergency situations;
4. Support for setting up EU-wide infrastructures for improved data collection, timely translation of research findings into emergency response actions and increasing operational readiness of clinical trial sites across Europe.

This partnership responds to the request for better coordination, as expressed in the context of the ERAvsCorona Action Plan<sup>1</sup> and as recommended in the scientific opinion on 'Improving pandemic preparedness and management'<sup>2</sup>.

The partnership is planned as a co-programmed partnership. A Coordination and Support Action to prepare the partnership will be included in the Work Programme 2021 of Horizon Europe. Preparatory work is ongoing and provides an opportunity for Member States to take an active leadership role.

The partnership will work in synergy with the proposed new EU Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority (HERA), and in close collaboration with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and European Medicines Agency (EMA), and other relevant actors. It could ensure the medium term sustainability of actions of the current Covid-19 response and upcoming work on preparing for SARS CoV-2 variants (HERA incubator), in particular on common data portals, EU-wide Vaccine trial networks and establishing the safety and efficacy of pharmaceuticals. In the longer term, the work of the HERA incubator will act as the vanguard for

<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/research\\_and\\_innovation/research\\_by\\_area/documents/ec\\_rtd\\_era-vs-corona\\_0.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/research_and_innovation/research_by_area/documents/ec_rtd_era-vs-corona_0.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/a1016d77-2562-11eb-9d7e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-171481573>

HERA, once operational. It is important for the partnership to take into account in its work the EU legal framework on cross border health threats, and the WHO International health regulations, and provide support to the implementation of that legislation and treaty.