



CORONAVIRUS: EU RESPONSE

European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) UPDATE

As of **4 March 2020**, **3 351 cases** have been reported in the EU/EEA, the UK, Monaco, San Marino and Switzerland: Italy (2502), France (212), Germany (196), Spain (151), United Kingdom (51), Switzerland (37), Norway (33), Netherlands (28), Austria (24), Sweden (24), Iceland (16), Belgium (13), San Marino (10), Croatia (9), Denmark (8), Finland (7), Greece (7), Czech Republic (5), Portugal (4), Romania (4), Estonia (2), Ireland (2), Andorra (1), Latvia (1), Lithuania (1), Luxembourg (1), Monaco (1) and Poland (1).

As of 4 March 2020, **85 deaths** have been reported in the EU/EEA, the UK, Monaco, San Marino and Switzerland: Italy (80), France (4) and San Marino (1).

Worldwide, on 4 March there were **93 076 cases** and **3 202 deaths**.

The risk associated with COVID-19 infection for people in the EU/EEA and UK is currently considered to be **moderate to high**, based on the probability of transmission and the impact of the disease.

Risk assessment for Europe:

- There is a growing number of countries with widespread community transmission globally and in Europe, and these are exporting cases with subsequent transmission to previously unaffected areas.
- Up to now, the control measures have been able to only slow, but not stop further spread;
- Cases with mild symptoms are numerous and able to transmit the infection. Cases with mild symptoms are not always aware of their potential infectivity, and some people with mild symptoms have sought medical care, thereby infecting health care workers;
- Previously unaffected areas are reporting cases with no history of travel to countries or areas where there is known community transmission.

A significant increase in COVID-19 cases in the coming weeks would have a **high impact on public health and on healthcare systems**. Increasing numbers of imported cases and local transmission chains would require additional resources for case management, surveillance, and contact tracing.

Risk communication to the public and to healthcare professionals would tie up further resources. Further increased transmission could result in a **significant increase of hospital admissions** at a time when healthcare systems may already be under pressure from the current influenza season. This situation would be further exacerbated if substantial numbers of **healthcare workers became infected**. Bottlenecks may also emerge in terms of **diagnostic capacity**. Containment measures intended to slow down the spread of the virus in the population are therefore extremely important.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE

The European Commission launched on Monday 2 March the **corona response team** with **five commissioners** on board:

1. Janez **Lenarčič**, in charge of crisis management,
 2. Stella **Kyriakides**, in charge of health issues,
 3. Ylva **Johansson**, for border-related issues,
 4. Adina **Vălean**, in charge of mobility and
 5. Paolo **Gentiloni**, for macroeconomic aspects.
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The response team will be working on **three main pillars**:

1. Medical field - covering prevention and procurement to relief measures, information and foresight. In cooperation with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and the European Medicines Agency.
 2. Mobility - from transport to travel advice and Schengen-related questions.
 3. Economy - looking in-depth at various business sectors – such as tourism or transport, trade, as well as value chains and macro-economy.
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A **dedicated webpage** on COVID-19 was launched on 2/03 and provides information on key activities across medical, civil protection, mobility, economy and statistics angles, as well as links to Member States' dedicated websites, most recent studies and other relevant information.

The Commission has launched an **accelerated joint procurement procedure for personal protective equipment** (eye, body, hand and respiratory protection) with 20 Member States in order to facilitate access to personal protective equipment and to minimise potential shortages. The contract should be finalised next month.

At the Monday 2/03 Health Security Meeting (EC + MS) the ECDC noted that that **all countries should activate** their **pandemic preparedness plans** and proceed with their implementation as well as coordination by a multisectoral crisis committee.

With the activation of the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism** by France in late January, 558 people, including 447 EU citizens, were already flown in from the Wuhan region on three flights co-financed by the EU – two organised by France and one by Germany - on 31 January and 2 February 2020.

The **EU's Emergency Response Coordination Centre** is liaising with all EU Member States to facilitate the delivery of needed personal protective equipment to China (over 25 tonnes already delivered).

To boost global preparedness, prevention and containment of the virus the Commission also announced an **aid package worth €232 million**. Part of these funds will be allocated immediately to different sectors, while the rest released in the coming months:

- €114 million to support the WHO (pending agreement of the EU budgetary authorities);
- €15 million for Africa;
- €100 million for research on epidemiology, diagnostics, therapeutics and clinical;
- €3 million for the EU Civil Protection Mechanism for repatriation flights from China.