



ECDC Management Board

Minutes of the Fiftieth Meeting 25 November 2020 (via audio conference)

Adopted by the ECDC Management Board at its Fifty-first meeting, 24 March 2021

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Summary of Proceedings – ECDC Management Board Meeting

The Fiftieth meeting of the ECDC Management Board convened as a virtual meeting due to the COVID-19 pandemic on 25 November 2020. During the meeting, the Management Board:

- ❖ adopted the programme of the meeting;
- ❖ adopted the minutes of the Forty-ninth meeting of the Management Board;
- ❖ re-elected Dr Anni Virolainen-Julkunen as Chair, and Ms Zofija Mazej Kukovič as Deputy Chair of the ECDC Management Board;
- ❖ approved the Roadmap for implementing the ECDC Strategy 2021-2027;
- ❖ approved Key Performance Indicators for the ECDC Strategy 2021-2027;
- ❖ took note of the summary of discussions held at the 44th meeting of the ECDC Audit Committee, and formally appointed Mr Jeroen Lettens, DG SANTE, European Commission, as member of the Audit Committee representing internal audit expertise;
- ❖ approved the ECDC Anti-Fraud Strategy 2021-2023;
- ❖ approved the ECDC Single Programming Document 2021;
- ❖ approved the Budget and Establishment Table 2021;
- ❖ discussed the ECDC Single Programming Document 2022;
- ❖ took note of the European Commission's COVID-19 lessons learned package (e.g. Amendment of ECDC Founding Regulation, changes in Decision 1082/2013);
- ❖ discussed the results of the strategic review of the ECDC response to the COVID-19 pandemic and proposal for actions;
- ❖ took note of the annual address of the ECDC Staff Committee to the Management Board;
- ❖ took note of the update on ECDC Compliance.

Opening and welcome from the Chair (and noting the Representatives)

1. Anni Virolainen-Julkunen, Chair of the ECDC Management Board, welcomed all the participants to the Fiftieth meeting of the Management Board, which convened via audio conference. A special welcome was extended to Stine Ulendorf Jacobsen, newly appointed alternate, Denmark; Mari-Anne Härma, newly appointed alternate, Estonia; Francine L'Ortye, alternate, The Netherlands; Rui Portugal, newly appointed member, Portugal; Cristina Abreu Santos, newly appointed alternate, Portugal; Paul Iordache, newly appointed alternate, Romania; Sandra Gallina, newly appointed member, European Commission, and Ásthildur Knútsdóttir, newly appointed member, Iceland.

2. Apologies had been received from Liechtenstein. The Chair informed the Management Board that the members of the ECDC Staff Committee would participate as observers during the discussions on the results of the strategic review of the ECDC response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Welcome from the Director, ECDC

3. Andrea Ammon, Director, ECDC, warmly welcomed the Management Board members and thanked them for taking the time to participate in the meeting despite the high work load that all Member States were facing due to the ongoing pandemic.

Adoption of the draft programme (and noting the declarations of interest and proxy voting, if any) (*Document MB50/01*)

4. The draft programme was adopted without changes.

5. Following the adoption of the programme, the Chair asked each member whether s/he wished to add any oral declaration(s) of interest to her/his Annual Declaration of Interest (ADoI) submitted previously. None were declared.

The Management Board adopted the draft programme.

Adoption of the draft minutes of the 49th meeting of the Management Board (Stockholm, 17 June 2020) (*Document MB50/02*)

6. The Chair noted that Germany had requested a few minor amendments, which had been taken into account in the minutes circulated to the Board ahead of the meeting. There were no further comments on the draft minutes.

The Management Board adopted the minutes of the Forty-ninth meeting of the Management Board.

Election of the Chair and Deputy Chair of the ECDC Management Board (*Document MB50/03*)

7. The Chair invited Audrius Ščeponavičius, Member, Lithuania, to chair the session as the longest serving member of the Board due to the fact that both herself, and the current Deputy Chair were standing as candidates.

8. Audrius Ščeponavičius recalled the procedure for the elections, which was carried out electronically using the EUSurvey tool. He noted that the following nominations had been received: Anni-Virolainen Julkunen, MB Member, Finland: nomination for the position of Chair received from Germany, and the candidate had given her consent to this nomination; Zofija Mazej Kukovič, MB Member, European Parliament: nomination for the position of Deputy Chair received from Germany, and the candidate had

given her consent to this nomination. In accordance with Article 2 (2c) of the MB Rules of Procedure, the candidates provided a short presentation of themselves prior to the voting. Ásthildur Knútsdóttir, Member, Iceland, and Andrea Iber, Head of Legal Services and Procurement, ECDC, were appointed as tellers.

9. Following the voting, the election results were announced: for the Chair, 28 positive votes, one abstention, and three missing votes due to members not being able to cast their vote (not present at the time of voting or due to technical issues), for the Deputy Chair, 27 positive votes and five missing votes due to members not being able to cast their vote.

10. The re-elected Chair and Deputy Chair thanked the Board members for their continued trust and support.

The Management Board re-elected Dr Anni Virolainen-Julkunen as Chair, and Ms Zofija Mazej Kukovič as Deputy Chair of the ECDC Management Board.

Roadmap for implementing the ECDC Strategy 2021-2027 (Document MB50/04)

11. Andrea Ammon, Director, ECDC, presented the roadmap for implementing the ECDC Strategy 2021-2027. She explained that the roadmap resulted from a reflection about what is required to achieve the objectives outlined in the strategy. On this basis, specific work packages and corresponding resource needs had been identified and spread over the strategy's time horizon. These work packages will be used in the following years to provide strategic guidance to the annual planning process. The key milestones in the roadmap are organised per strategic objective of the strategy (SO 1-5). The roadmap will be reviewed in 2024 following the mid-term evaluation of the strategy's implementation.

12. Andrea Ammon then described the immediate next steps noting that, following MB approval, the roadmap will go through a visual update and will be communicated to partners and stakeholders. An annual status report will be provided to the Management Board. She added that there was of course a certain level of uncertainty over the roadmap due to the proposed changes in the ECDC mandate, and a review of the roadmap will need to be done following the final decision on ECDC's mandate/tasks.

13. Following the presentation, the floor was opened for comments. One MB member mentioned that the document was precise and complete, and added that he appreciated the reference to new technologies and foresight. Lastly, he noted that the roadmap indicated that a COVID-19 vaccine coverage monitoring system would be in place in 2022, and asked what was planned in 2021 given that vaccination was expected to start early next year. One of the MB members representing the European Commission mentioned that the EU reference laboratory network and substances of human origin (SoHO) were examples of areas where it would be necessary to come back to the roadmap to ensure that the legal proposals were taken into account. The Deputy Chair welcomed the document noting that it was important to have at least an initial roadmap to support the implementation of the strategy, whereas the initial plan was to have the ECDC Strategy and the roadmap at the same time on the table. Lastly, the Chair asked what the expected deadline was for reviewing the roadmap due to the legislative changes under discussion.

14. Responding to the question on the vaccine monitoring system, Andrea Ammon clarified that what was indicated in the roadmap was the endpoint; ECDC is currently working on setting up the monitoring system for COVID-19 vaccines, where EMA will be responsible for the vaccine safety part and ECDC for the effectiveness part. The aim is to step by step cover other vaccines as well. Concerning the timeline for reviewing the roadmap, she suggested to remain flexible as this will depend on how fast the legislative process will go. As soon as there was a clear indication on ECDC's tasks, work could start to identify what ECDC would like to achieve in the concerned areas.

15. The Chair agreed that some flexibility was indeed necessary, and the topic could be inserted on the agenda of the Management Board when appropriate. Following the discussion, the Management Board approved the roadmap in its current form.

The Management Board approved the Roadmap for implementing the ECD Strategy 2021-2027.

Key Performance Indicators for the ECDC Strategy 2021-2027 (Document MB50/05)

16. Andrea Ammon, Director, ECDC, recalled that the draft Strategic Key Performance Indicators (SKPI) had been discussed during the last Management Board meeting in June. Based on this discussion, the SKPIs had been revised with the aim of decreasing the burden for external stakeholders, and by selecting indicators easy to monitor and obtain. The next steps include integrating the SKPI monitoring into the ECDC monitoring scheme to ensure proper reporting and timely measures in case of deviations. Specific work will be done in 2021-2022 to automate the measurement of all indicators. The first reporting of the SKPIs is planned to be done by the end of 2022.

17. In the discussion that followed, one MB member asked for a clarification on the post COVID-19 enhanced preparedness framework referred to under SO2. One of the MB members representing the European Commission thanked ECDC for developing the SKPIs, which allowed for monitoring the implementation of the strategy on an intermediate term. He stressed the importance of ensuring coherence with the key performance indicators of the SPD, and the need to review the KPIs in the light of the McKinsey report on ECDC's response to COVID-19 as well as the European Commission legal package. Lastly, he asked for a clarification on why the indicator for SO1 (scientific excellence) was combined with SO2 in the table.

18. Responding to the question on the post COVID-19 preparedness framework, Andrea Ammon explained that this related to the gaps in preparedness identified during the pandemic, and the work to be carried out to fill these gaps. Part of this work had already started through the after action reviews, but the further actions would need to be worked out in more detail with the relevant counterparts, and taking into account the Commission legal package, which contained a number of suggestions for strengthening preparedness.

19. In response to the question on the combined indicator for SO1 and SO2, Maarit Kokki, Head of the Executive Office, ECDC, explained that in the internal discussions on the indicators it had been found that there were many interlinkages between SO1 and SO2, and thereby composite indicators were preferable. This would also reduce the burden of getting data.

20. The Chair noted that the first reporting on the SKPIs was planned to take place in 2022, and asked how this related to the roadmap and the need for a flexible approach in light of the foreseen legal changes.

21. Andrea Ammon replied that everything that was presented for 2021 and 2022 was indeed provisional due to the current uncertainties. She suggested looking at the indicators after the first year to see whether any adjustments were needed, and to include a review of the feasibility and robustness of the indicators when the first reporting is done at the end of 2022.

22. Following these clarifications, the Management Board approved the Strategic Key Performance Indicators as presented.

The Management Board approved the Key Performance Indicators for the Strategy 2021-2027.

European Commission's COVID-19 lessons learned package (e.g. Amendment of ECDC Founding Regulation, changes in Decision 1082/2013)

23. John F Ryan, MB Member, European Commission, presented the main elements of the European Health Union package announced on 11 November 2020. It contains a set of proposals to strengthen the EU's health security framework, and reinforce the crisis preparedness and response role of key EU agencies building on the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic. The presentation focused mainly on the new

proposal for a Regulation on serious cross-border threats to health given that the main changes to the ECDC Founding Regulation had been presented during the Extraordinary Management Board meeting¹ held on 20 November 2020. He encouraged the MB members to look at both legal texts to get a full understanding of the proposal. He noted that the Commission proposal was now being discussed by the Council, and would thereafter be submitted to the European Parliament. The Commission was hoping for an early adoption of the text as it was linked to the resources in the health and research programmes, and if the first year was not used to spend some of this budget it would be a year wasted.

24. The Chair thanked the European Commission for the presentation. She mentioned that the Council Working Party on Public Health had met the previous week and further meetings were planned in the next few weeks. She asked the MB Alternate from Germany to inform the Management Board of the exact date of the next meetings as soon as these were known. In the discussion that followed, several MB members welcomed the proposal to put in place a more proactive and reinforced joint procurement mechanism. Some questions were raised regarding the transparency of the auditing on preparedness and response plans, and whether Public Health Institutes were involved in the negotiations. The Deputy Chair stressed the importance of making the most important data from ECDC available in all EU languages, and asked what the plans were in this regard. She further commented that a majority of EU citizens wished to see more EU coordination on important topics, and increased solidarity within the EU. She welcomed the joint procurement of protective equipment related to COVID-19 as well as vaccines, which clearly showed the European solidarity. Similarly, Germany had expressed solidarity in spring 2020 by offering to treat critically ill patients from other EU countries in German hospitals. Another common topic was contract tracing, which is an important tool for preventing the spread of the virus. At the same time, many citizens have concerns about how their data is going to be used. She asked if the Commission had a communication plan to address the lack of trust among citizens related to contact tracing. Lastly, she asked for a clarification on the role of ECDC in the monitoring of stem cells.

25. Concerning the transparency of audit reports, John F Ryan mentioned that this was a point of discussion as it was important to find a transparent process while avoiding the risk of delays in the reporting. Regarding the involvement of Public Health Institutes he mentioned that some of the operational aspects will be laid down in Implementing Acts, and Member States will have the possibility to check these once they are being developed. As regards languages, he agreed that it was important to provide key information in all EU languages to the extent possible. He recalled, however, that the Centre's language regime had been debated in the Management Board for several years, and advised not to reopen this discussion. Concerning the issue of trust, he commented that the European Commission will launch a specific communication initiative on COVID-19 vaccination. Regarding stem cells, he clarified that the legislation on substances of human origin (SoHO) did not change as such, but the legal proposal gave ECDC the responsibility of hosting the network of national services supporting transfusion, transplantation and medically assisted reproduction. Lastly, he noted that he was available bilaterally in case any MB member needed further clarifications on the legal texts.

26. The Chair thanked John F Ryan for his comprehensive presentation and the MB members for their comments and questions.

The Management Board took note of the European Commission's COVID-19 lessons learned package (e.g. Amendment of ECDC Founding Regulation, changes in Decision 1082/2013).

Results of the strategic review of the ECDC response to the COVID-19 pandemic and proposal for actions (*Document MB50/06*)

27. Andrea Ammon, Director, ECDC, presented the recommendations arising from the strategic and performance review of the ECDC response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The analysis was carried out by McKinsey during August-October, and the final report was delivered in November 2020.

¹ This meeting was held as a closed session, and thereby no formal meeting minutes have been produced by ECDC Secretariat.

28. The Director described briefly the methodological approach followed, which included desk research, internal and external stakeholder consultations (interviews and surveys), as well as international benchmarking and learnings. 54 survey responses from across all Member States were analysed, and representatives from 63% of EU/EEA Member States were interviewed. Limitations were the relatively low response rate in the external stakeholder survey (24%), potential selection bias, the short project duration, and the fact that evaluation was carried out while the pandemic and ECDC's response activities were still ongoing. She then presented the main recommendations categorised into the following areas: 1) PHE response activities, including surveillance, 2) PHE – preparedness, organisation, and processes, 3) assets and capabilities, 4) collaboration and coordination of stakeholders, and 5) mandate and scope of ECDC.

29. In an internal exercise, the ECDC Director and Heads of Unit had prioritised the recommendations according to their impact and feasibility. Based on this, eleven high priority recommendations had been identified; these covered both the quality and timeliness of ECDC outputs and the need to adapt them to their target audience, and more organisational aspects related to the PHE. As for the next steps, it is suggested to develop one joint plan of actions covering both the recommendations of the third external evaluation and the COVID evaluation, and to report back on the implementation at each MB meeting.

30. Following her presentation, Andrea Ammon invited the Management Board members to provide their comments on the report findings and proposed actions. More specifically, she asked the Board members to give their views on one of the recommendations of the report stating that "ECDC has an independent, strong voice and position, coordinated with the WHO, but not bound or delayed by WHO coordination". The MB members were also asked to reflect on whether ECDC should have knowledge of the entire health system of Member States or only of the communicable disease prevention and control system, and how this was best achieved. Lastly, she noted that an additional Management Board meeting could be arranged in December if it was felt that a more thorough discussion was needed on the findings of the report.

31. The floor was opened for comments. Several MB members complimented ECDC for carrying out the strategic review in such a short time while still in the midst of the pandemic. Concerning WHO, the MB members stressed the need for coordination, but some felt that there could be situations where it was necessary for the EU to act on its own (e.g. in case of an outbreak where the EU was highly affected). Regarding the second question, one of the members representing the European Commission noted that the monitoring of health systems' capacity relevant to the management of communicable disease threats and other special health issues was listed as one of ECDC's tasks in the proposed legal texts; ECDC's responsibility was thus clearly going beyond collecting only disease data. Some MB members agreed that it was important to have knowledge of the health system capacity in the Member States in order to understand response measures, possible delays, etc. One way of acquiring this information could be to have liaison officers in the Member States to facilitate the knowledge transfer, and to engage with the European Observatory of Health Systems and Policies. Some MB members felt though that the most important was to understand the communicable disease prevention and response part, as it would be difficult to grasp the entire functioning of the health systems in all Member States. One MB member stressed that monitoring health systems in a context broader than communicable disease prevention and control was not desirable as it was too complex. Referring to the collection of different types of surveillance data, one MB member mentioned that what had been missing during the current outbreak was for instance a place for comparing incidence rate between Member States, and a forum where the modelling exercise could take place and be improved.

32. The discussion also touched upon other findings of the report, such as the need for increased coordination at EU level, and the possibility of ECDC to provide stronger recommendations. The Chair pointed out that these issues were linked to the Commission legal package and would need to be discussed in other fora as well. Referring to the recent discussions about COVID-19 infections in minks and also concerns among owners of domestic animals, one of the members representing the European Commission pointed out that the One Health approach seemed to be missing in the report. Concerning staffing issues, she noted that, according to the report, the processes for hiring or contracting staff were poorly adapted for a crisis situation, and this seemed to be an issue that needed to be prioritised.

33. Andrea Ammon thanked for the comments. She clarified that a new temporary disease programme on COVID-19 and influenza had been created in September, and this would also need to be evaluated at a later stage. Concerning staffing issues, she pointed out that ECDC followed the existing rules for

procurement as well as the Commission Staff Regulations, and therefore could not act on its own in this domain. She agreed that the link to animal health was an important aspect, and added that ECDC and EFSA had published a joint Risk Assessment on COVID-19 in minks.

34. In summarising the discussion, the Chair suggested to revert back to the Management Board regarding a possible additional MB meeting to discuss the results of the report in more depth. It was clarified that an additional meeting could be convened on the request of one third of the MB members.

The Management Board discussed the results of the strategic review of the ECDC response to the COVID-19 pandemic and proposal for actions.

Annual address of the ECDC Staff Committee to the Management Board (*Document MB50/07*)

35. Lars Söderblom, member of the Staff Committee, ECDC, thanked the Management Board for the opportunity to present the work of the ECDC Staff Committee in its second annual address to the MB. The presentation focused on ECDC's working conditions and challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the beginning of the year, the Centre has been operating under Public Health Emergency (PHE) conditions. At the same time, ECDC had to rapidly transition into remote working mode. The Centre also had to reorganise its work programme and staffing arrangements twice during the pandemic. The staff directly and indirectly involved in the PHE have experienced a high work load combined with tight deadlines. The long working hours have resulted in accrued annual leave days and flexi time for many staff, and concerns have been raised that the standard Commission rules do not seem to be fit-for-purpose to manage staff in times of PHE. He then updated the Management Board on the work of the Health and Well-being process initiated in 2019, and noted that the planned next phase of involving staff in focus groups and interviews had been put on hold due to the ongoing pandemic. This work will resume as soon as the circumstances allow.

36. In the discussion that followed, several MB members expressed their high appreciation of the work of the ECDC staff during the pandemic. One of the MB members representing the European Commission acknowledged the additional work load ECDC was facing since spring, and added that the staff had shown a high level of dedication and resilience. It was important to remember though that ECDC had been established for this exact reason, i.e. to deal with public health emergencies. The European Commission had also reinforced ECDC's budget to allow for 20 additional Contract Agent posts for two years (2020 and 2021).

37. Andrea Ammon mentioned that she was in contact with the Staff Committee through monthly meetings. It has been seen also during previous PHEs that some staff members tend to work too much, and line managers have therefore encouraged their staff to take their annual leave days. The possibility to telework from abroad has also been extended during the pandemic. The Director was pleased that, on average, staff had taken one month leave during summer; this was positive as it was important for staff to get some rest after the heavy work load in spring.

38. The Chair thanked the Staff Committee for its presentation. She encouraged the staff to keep up the good work as Member States were highly dependent on the ECDC support. She expressed her support for the Staff Committee view that flexible arrangements were important given that staff may have different needs.

The Management Board took note of the annual address of the ECDC Staff Committee.

Summary of discussions held at the 44th meeting of the ECDC Audit Committee (Stockholm, 24 November 2020), including its recommendations

39. Johan Carlson, Chair of the Audit Committee, summarised the discussions from the 44th Audit Committee (AC) meeting, which took place on 24 November 2020. Concerning the regular update on audit activities, he noted that no new final observations had been received from the Internal Audit Service (IAS). Two observations had been formally closed by the IAS. The AC noted that some delays had occurred in addressing open recommendations, but was generally pleased with the progress made considering the current circumstances. Five observations were currently open, with all five having target dates in Q4 2020. The AC had also received a progress report on the implementation of the 2020 budget, and had received clarifications on the estimated budget implementation at year-end 2020, with the majority of C8 commitments (carry-forward from 2019) most likely being implemented, but the C1 appropriations (2020 budget) perhaps not being able to reach the high commitment rates of the previous years. A number of procurements/contracts were still being finalised, and ECDC was working hard on implementing as much as possible of the funds.

40. Johan Carlson then informed the Management Board of two pending AC membership issues: firstly, there was a need to formally appoint Mr Jeroen Lettens, Head of Unit of the Finance, budget and controls Unit, DG SANTE, European Commission, as member of the Audit Committee representing internal audit expertise. Secondly, a replacement was sought for one member who left the Audit Committee (Amalia Serban, former MB Member, Romania). Johan Carlson invited any interested MB members to contact him directly or to get in touch with the Secretariat.

41. The Management Board expressed its support for the appointment of Mr Lettens as member of the Audit Committee.

The Management Board took note of the summary of discussions held at the 44th meeting of the ECDC Audit Committee, and appointed Mr Jeroen Lettens, DG SANTE, European Commission, as member of the Audit Committee representing internal audit expertise.

a) ECDC Anti-Fraud Strategy 2021-2023 (Document MB50/08)

42. Stefan Sundbom, Internal Control Coordinator, Executive Office, ECDC, recalled that the previous ECDC Anti-Fraud Strategy (AFS) 2018-2020 had been approved by the Management Board in June 2018. He then described briefly the implementation of the AFS action plan 2018-2020, and the conclusions of the fraud risk assessment carried out in 2020. The assessment had shown that the fraud risks remain largely the same, i.e. no major fraud risks were identified that would make it likely that the risk of significant undetected fraud is anything else than low. However, considering the COVID-19 situation, it was concluded that specific attention should be given to IT Security. For 2021-2023, ECDC has decided to concentrate its efforts on achieving the following strategic objectives: 1) Internal anti-fraud training; 2) Perform an annual review and refine the fraud risk assessment over time, and 3) Select an area annually in which to further analyse and potentially improve the controls in place.

43. Johan Carlson summarised the discussions in the Audit Committee mentioning that the AC had received clarifications regarding the methodology used for the fraud risk assessments (self-assessments validated by HoUs and Director), the coverage of the anti-fraud training provided (all staff included in the training through presentations in Unit Meetings) and on potential conflicts of interests in procurement (declarations signed). ECDC had clarified that the detailed results of the fraud risk assessments are not normally sent to the AC, but additional information could be provided if requested. The AC further welcomed the additional focus on IT security. In conclusion, the AC recommended the Management Board to adopt the ECDC Anti-Fraud Strategy 2021-2023.

44. Following the presentation and AC conclusions, the Management Board approved the ECDC Anti-Fraud Strategy 2021-2023.

The Management Board approved the ECDC Anti-Fraud Strategy 2021-2023.

b) Report on the implementation of the Work Programme 2020 (Document MB50/08)

45. Maarit Kokki, Head of the Executive Office, ECDC, briefed the Management Board on the current level of implementation of the work programme 2020, noting that 10% of the activities had been completed, 71% were on schedule, and 16% were delayed. She recalled that the Management Board had approved the additional COVID-19 work programme in May 2020, and the COVID-related activities were now integrated in the SPD 2020. There were no further changes to the Financing Decision compared to the last changes approved by the MB in October.

46. Johan Carlson summarised the discussions of the Audit Committee noting that the AC had appreciated the update on the work programme implementation and the explanations given. ECDC had clarified that it was hopeful to be able to implement 80-85% of the Work Programme in 2020, which the AC felt was a good result given the current circumstances.

The Management Board took note of the Report on the implementation of the Work Programme 2020.

c) ECDC Single Programming Document 2021 (Document MB49/08)

47. Andrea Ammon, Director, ECDC, presented the main highlights of the ECDC Single Programming Document 2021 noting that 2021 will be the first year of implementing the ECDC Strategy and its strategic roadmap. The budget for 2021 is estimated to EUR 81.6 million (65.6 M€ + 16 M€ additional), and the staff is increased to 281 statutory plus 38 temporary (COVID-19 and International projects) and 31 additional staff. She stressed that the budget is conditional to the approval of the Multi-Annual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027 and the approval of the EU Budget 2021. In 2021, recommendations of the third external evaluation of ECDC and the COVID-19 evaluation are planned to be implemented through a dedicated action plan.

48. The Director then presented the priority areas for 2021. Further support will be provided to the European Commission and Member States to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as for strengthening the preparedness and response for cross-border health threats in general. ECDC will also focus on AMR, vaccine coverage, and support to the European Commission and the Member States in addressing the Sustainable Development Goals in the area of HIV, TB and hepatitis. In addition, ECDC will focus on strategic partnerships to create synergy and avoid duplication of work, and on further enhancing ECDC's performance and monitoring. Efforts will be made to assess and integrate innovative technological and scientific advances. In conclusion, she noted that in total 213 comments had been received from the Member States, European Commission and other key stakeholders. All changes from the previous version of the document were marked in yellow.

d) Budget and Establishment Table 2021 (Document MB50/11)

49. Anja Van Brabant, Accounting Officer and Head of Section, Finance and Accounting, Resource Management Services, ECDC, recalled that the Draft Budget 2021 had been approved in January 2020 through written procedure as part of the Single Programming Document 2021 (Annex II & III). The initial total amount requested was EUR 60 million. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, a reinforcement of ECDC's resources was agreed upon for both 2020 and 2021. The total budget for 2021 thereby increased to EUR 65.6 million and the human resources by 20 Contract Agent posts. The Budget 2021 evolution by title compared to the initial 2020 budget will be as follows: 5.7% increase in title 1 (staff expenditure), 6.3% increase in title 2 (infrastructure & administrative costs), and 13.5 % increase in title 3 (operational costs).

50. Concerning recent developments, Anja Van Brabant explained that the European Health Union package, adopted by the European Commission College on 11 November, had resulted in an increase of EUR 16 040 000 in the ECDC budget for 2021. In addition, the establishment plan was modified and an additional 31 FTE (11 AD, 7 AST and 13 Contract Agents) are foreseen in the Amending letter to the Draft Budget 2021.

51. Anja Van Brabant then presented the proposed actions considering that the Management Board approval of the 2021 budget was required in order for ECDC to start implementing the SPD in January 2021. The MB was therefore requested to approve the budget 2021 as it currently stands, pending the final adoption of the Single Programming Document 2021 by the MB, and the final adoption of the MFF 2021-2027 and the EU budget 2021 by the Budgetary Authority. After this, an amending budget will be prepared with a proposed distribution of additional budget and posts and will be submitted to the MB for approval via written procedure.

52. Johan Carlson reported that the Audit Committee had discussed the availability of the additional funds for 2021 and the timeline for the amending budget for 2021. The European Commission had clarified that the funds will be available when the EU budget for 2021 has been approved. ECDC was requested to clarify to the MB the timeline regarding the amending budget, including the MB approvals needed. In conclusion, the AC recommended the Management Board to approve the proposed Establishment Table 2021 as presented in the document circulated to the Board. He suggested that an additional Audit Committee meeting could be convened, if necessary, to support ECDC in the allocation of the additional budget.

53. With these clarifications, the Management Board approved the ECDC Single Programming Document 2021, including the Budget and Establishment Table 2021, pending the final adoption of the EU budget 2021 by the Budgetary Authority.

The Management Board approved the ECDC Single Programming Document 2021. The Board also approved the proposed Budget and Establishment Table 2021.

ECDC Single Programming Document 2022 (*Document MB50/12*)

54. Andrea Ammon presented briefly the ECDC Single Programming Document 2022, and noted that the document has been aligned with the ECDC Strategy 2021-2027. She stressed that there were many unknowns affecting the SPD 2022: the development of the COVID-19 situation, the budget, which will depend on the final MFF 2021-2027, and the final text and calendar of approval of the new ECDC mandate. The estimated budget for 2022 is set at the same level as for 2021, i.e. EUR 81.6 M (65.6 M€ + 16 M€ additional) and the staff will also remain the same (281 statutory staff + 38 temporary + 31 additional). Priority areas will be to scale up the level of support to the European Commission and the Member States to strengthen their surveillance, emergency preparedness and response to cross-border health threats including the lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic, to assess and integrate innovation for communicable diseases, including the digitalisation of surveillance system, to increase ECDC knowledge and understanding of the Member States in order to better target interventions, and to address priority conditions and issues at European level, such as AMR, vaccine coverage, the effects of climate change, and support in addressing the Sustainable Development Goals for HIV, TB and hepatitis.

55. In conclusion, the Director mentioned that 80 comments had been received from Member States, European Commission and other ECDC stakeholders on the SPD 2022. These were all gathered in the repository of comments with the respective ECDC replies. She recalled that the final draft SPD including annexes will be sent to the Management Board for approval via written procedure in mid-January 2021. Following MB approval, the document will be sent to the EU institutions by 31 January 2021 as per the usual procedure.

56. Following the presentation, a few points were raised by the Management Board. Referring to a remark from ECHA regarding inter-agency cooperation, one MB member commented that cooperation with other relevant EU agencies was indeed very important. This also related to zoonosis, and she inquired whether anything specific was planned in this area. One of the MB members representing the European Parliament asked for a clarification on what "novel effective solutions" were referred to on p. 11, where the digitalisation of surveillance systems and use of contact tracing Apps were discussed.

57. Responding to the question on zoonosis, Andrea Ammon mentioned that ECDC was looking at ways how to intensify the work on climate change and its effects on public health, and one possible area of work was for instance spatial surveillance. However, the possibility to expand on this topic will depend also on how the pandemic will evolve, and how much resources will be available for such work. Concerning

digitalisation, she noted that in the future contact tracing Apps could fulfil other functions as well, such as conveying different public health messages. As an example, different Apps to facilitate HIV and hepatitis testing already exist, and it could be further explored how mobile Apps can support the public health work.

58. The Chair thanked the Director for the presentation and mentioned that MB members had the opportunity to provide further comments, if any, at the occasion of the upcoming written procedure in January 2021.

The Management Board discussed the ECDC Single Programming Document 2022.

Update on ECDC Compliance

59. Andrea Iber, Head of Section Legal Services and Procurement, Resource Management Services, ECDC, provided a brief update on the implementation of the ECDC Independence. She mentioned that, following the MB mandate renewal, 95% of the Annual Declarations of Interest (ADoI) had been collected from MB Members and Alternates, which was significantly higher than in the same period of the previous year. For AF Members and Alternates, 93% of the DoIs had been collected, which was also an increase compared to the previous year. These improvements were of course positive, but she stressed that the aim was to achieve 100% compliance. She then gave an overview of the mitigation measures in 2020 concerning MB and AF as well as expert meetings and Rapid Risk Assessments. The COVID-19 pandemic had caused additional challenges due to the increased difficulty to monitor compliance with ECDC Independence Policy for non-staff participating in ECDC virtual meetings. Lastly, she noted that work was ongoing to make the eDoI app more user-friendly as well as to automate several steps of the Conflict of Interest check process. Preparations were also made for future linking of the eDoI app with a module in CRM for organisation of ECDC meetings with the aim of streamlining the CoI check process.

The Management Board took note of the update on ECDC Compliance.

Any other business

60. The Chair thanked all the Board Members for their active participation and valuable contributions. She added that she would revert back to the Management Board in due course regarding a possible additional Management Board meeting to discuss the proposed actions arising from the strategic review of ECDC's response to COVID-19.²

61. The next regular Management Board will take place remotely on 24 March 2021.

² This meeting did not take place; discussions on the actions arising from the strategic review of ECDC's response to COVID-19 will continue in 2021.

Annex: List of Participants

Country/Organisation	Representative	Status
Belgium	Lieven De Raedt	Member
Bulgaria	Angel Kunchev	Member
Croatia	Bernard Kaić	Member
Cyprus	Maroussa Konnari Jeronymides	Alternate
Czech Republic	Jozef Dlhý	Alternate
Denmark	Bolette Søborg	Member
Denmark	Stine Ulendorf Jacobsen	Alternate
Estonia	Heli Laarmann	Member
Estonia	Mari-Anne Härma	Alternate
Finland	Anni Virolainen-Julkunen (<i>Chair</i>)	Member
Finland	Taneli Puumalainen	Alternate
France	Geneviève Chêne	Member
France	Anne-Catherine Viso	Alternate
Germany	Gesa Lücking	Alternate
Greece	Panagiotis Arkoumanas	Member
Hungary	Ágnes Dánielisz	Member
Ireland	Colette Bonner	Member
Ireland	Daniel Shine	Alternate
Italy	Francesco Maraglino	Member
Italy	Sandro Bonfigli	Alternate
Latvia	Jana Feldmane	Member
Lithuania	Audrius Ščeponavičius	Member
Luxembourg	Jean-Claude Schmit	Member
Malta	Patricia Vella Bonanno	Member

Country/Organisation	Representative	Status
The Netherlands	Ciska Scheidel	Member
The Netherlands	Francine L'Ortye	Alternate
Poland	Dariusz Poznański	Member
Portugal	Rui Portugal	Member
Portugal	Cristina Abreu Santos	Alternate
Romania	Paul Iordache	Alternate
Slovakia	Jan Mikas	Member
Slovenia	Mojca Gobec	Member
Spain	Pilar Aparicio Azcárraga	Member
Sweden	Johan Carlson	Member
Sweden	Andreas Johansson	Alternate
European Parliament		
	Zofija Mazej Kukovič	Member
	Maria Eleni Koppa	Member
European Commission		
DG SANTE	Sandra Gallina	Member
DG SANTE	John F. Ryan	Member
DG SANTE	Isabel de la Mata	Alternate
DG RTD	Barbara Kerstiens	Member
EEA Countries		
Iceland	Ásthildur Knútsdóttir	Member
Norway	Øystein Riise	Member