

**Towards a strong EU Health Union?
Striking a balance between
subsidiarity in the field of health and
cooperation to tackle common challenges**

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The **European Social Insurance Platform (ESIP)**, representing statutory social security institutions across the Union, in Switzerland and in the UK, **welcomes the recent EU proposals to strengthen the crisis-preparedness mechanism.**

Amid concerns on the impact of the pandemic, an EU framework for increased preparedness will pave the way towards a stronger, more resilient Europe that protects the health of its citizens. “We support a European unified approach to tackle cross-border crises, that **respects Member States’ competences in the field of health on the one hand, and avoids fragmentation on the other**”, said Ilka Wölfle, President of the European Social Insurance Platform. “We hope this will increase levels of resilience and care across the EU”.

While Member States are and should remain responsible for the definition of national health policies, we believe that **cooperation and solidarity** are essential to steer recovery from the current crisis and increase preparedness for future health emergencies.

The extension of the mandate as well as resources of the European Medicines Agency (**EMA**) and of the European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (**ECDC**) is therefore timely and crucial. ESIP welcomes the proposals to improve the ECDC surveillance system, as well as to strengthen the role of the EMA in monitoring and mitigating medicine shortages. Regarding clinical trials, we recognise the need to boost the swift market entry of effective treatments and vaccines in times of crisis. Nevertheless, the highest levels of safety and transparency need to be ensured, also with a view to the use of data. Furthermore ESIP acknowledges the proposal for a **new Regulation on cross-border health threats** providing the legal basis for improved EU-level decision-making regarding risk management and takes note of the proposed **medical countermeasures**, several of which correspond to the recommendations set out in our recent [position paper on medicines shortages](#).

We will follow developments on the recent Commission’s proposals and further elaborate our views on the EU health competences, also in light of the upcoming Conference on the Future of Europe.

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