



ECDC Management Board

# Minutes of the Sixty-fifth Meeting Stockholm, 25-26 November 2025

*Adopted by the ECDC Management Board at its Sixty-sixth meeting, 26-27 March 2026*

## Contents

Opening and welcome from the Chair (and noting the Representatives) .....	3
Welcome from the Director, ECDC.....	3
Adoption of the draft programme (and noting the declarations of interest and proxy voting, if any) ( <i>Document MB65/01</i> ).....	3
Adoption of the draft minutes of the 64 <sup>th</sup> meeting of the Management Board (Stockholm, 17-18 June 2025) ( <i>Document MB65/02</i> ).....	3
Update from the ECDC Director .....	3
Update on issues on the ECDC work from the geopolitical situation .....	4
Outcomes and Next Steps from the Fourth Joint Strategy Meeting and 20-year ECDC Anniversary Event ( <i>Document MB65/08</i> ).....	4
Memorandum of Understanding between ECDC and WHO Regional Office for Europe ( <i>Document MB65/03</i> ) .....	4
Update from the European Parliament.....	5
Update on the Vector-borne diseases .....	5
ECDC Single Programming Document 2026-2028 ( <i>Document MB65/04</i> ) .....	6
ECDC Single Programming Document 2027-2029 ( <i>Document MB65/05</i> ) .....	6
Summary of discussions held at the 59 <sup>th</sup> meeting of the ECDC Audit Committee (Stockholm, 24 November 2025), including its recommendations .....	7
<i>a) Monitoring of the implementation of the Work Programme 2025 (Document MB65/06)</i> .....	7
<i>b) Progress Report – Overview of 2024 Budget Implementation</i> .....	7
<i>c) Budget and Establishment Table 2026 (Document MB65/07)</i> .....	8
<i>d) Reporting on additional topics discussed in the Audit Committee</i> .....	8
i) Changes in the Court of Auditors approach to auditing EU agencies .....	8
ii) Preliminary conclusions of the on-going risk assessment performed as part of the work for the IAS Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2026-2028 .....	8
iii) Update on Audit Observations and Status of Audit Observations .....	8
<i>e) Reporting back from the Management Board working group on revision of the Management Board Rules of Procedure and Audit Committee Mandate</i> .....	9
Day 2 – Opening and welcome by the Chair .....	9
Status Update and Future Planning for the ECDC Public Health Emergency Preparedness Assessments ...	9
Annual address of the ECDC Staff Committee to the Management Board .....	10
Update from the European Commission including an update on the External Evaluation .....	10
Update on the upcoming Cypriot Presidency of the Council of the EU .....	10
Any other business.....	11
Annex: List of Participants .....	12

## Summary of Proceedings and action points – ECDC Management Board Meeting

The 65<sup>th</sup> meeting of the ECDC Management Board (MB) convened on 25-26 November 2025 in Stockholm, Sweden. During the meeting the MB:

- ❖ adopted the programme of the meeting;
- ❖ adopted the minutes of the 64<sup>th</sup> meeting of the MB;
- ❖ approved the Single Programming Document 2026-2028 with minor changes;
- ❖ approved the Budget and Establishment Table 2026;
- ❖ approved the Memorandum and Understanding between ECDC and WHO Regional Office for Europe;
- ❖ discussed the draft Single Programming Document 2027-2029;
- ❖ took note of the update from the ECDC Director;
- ❖ took note of the update on issues on the ECDC work from the geopolitical situation;
- ❖ took note of the Outcomes and Next Steps from the Fourth Joint Strategy Meeting;
- ❖ took note of the update on the Vector-borne diseases;
- ❖ took note of the summary of discussions held at the 59<sup>th</sup> meeting of the ECDC Audit Committee (AC);
- ❖ took note of the monitoring of the implementation of the Work Programme 2025;
- ❖ took note of the Progress report – Overview of 2025 budget implementation;
- ❖ took note of the reporting back from the MB working Group on revision of the MB rules of Procedure and AC Mandate;
- ❖ took note of and discussed the status update and future planning for the ECDC Public Health Emergency Preparedness Assessments (PHEPA) including presentations from assessed Member States. The MB agreed to continue the discussion on this matter at the following MB meeting in March 2026;
- ❖ took note of the annual address of the ECDC Staff Committee;
- ❖ took note of the update from the European Parliament;
- ❖ took note of the update from the European Commission including on the fourth external evaluation of ECDC;
- ❖ took note of the update from the upcoming Cypriot Presidency of the European Council.

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

1. Gesa Lücking, Chair of the Management Board (MB), welcomed the participants to the 65<sup>th</sup> meeting of the MB, which took place in Stockholm, Sweden. A special welcome was extended to the newly appointed members/alternates: Marija Bubaš, member, Croatia; Krunoslav Capak, alternate, Croatia; Mirka-Tuulia Kuoksa, alternate, Finland; Giovanni Nicoletti, alternate, Italy; Svens Henkuzens, alternate, Latvia; Gerie Jonk, alternate, the Netherlands; Andreea Anamaria Capilna, member, European Parliament.
2. Apologies had been received from Denmark, Greece, Romania (proxy to Bulgaria), and Liechtenstein.

## Welcome from the Director, ECDC

3. Pamela Rendi-Wagner, Director, ECDC, warmly welcomed the MB members noting that she was looking forward to fruitful discussions.

## Adoption of the draft programme (and noting the declarations of interest and proxy voting, if any) (*Document MB65/01*)

4. The draft programme was adopted with a minor change. 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 64<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Management Board (Stockholm, 17-18 June 2025) (*Document MB65/02*)

5. The draft minutes of the 64<sup>th</sup> meeting had been circulated ahead of the meeting. No requests for amendments were received, and the minutes were adopted without changes.

The Management Board adopted the minutes of the 64<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Management Board.

## Update from the ECDC Director

6. Pamela Rendi-Wagner, Director, ECDC, gave an update on the main activities since the last MB meeting in June. The presentation focused on recent ECDC Director's country visits to Greece, Slovakia and Germany, high-level events (e.g. the ECDC 20 year-anniversary and Fourth Joint Strategy Meeting and the ESCAIDE conference) as well as the Centre's international activities and upcoming events and engagements. With reference to a recent statement on the US CDC website on the safety of childhood vaccines, she reported that ECDC coordinated with the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and DG SANTE to ensure coordinated messages and lines to take and shared them with the respective networks of ECDC and EMA. ECDC was also in the process of updating its key facts on vaccine effectiveness and safety.
7. The MB members welcomed ECDC's prompt reaction to the US statements, but some members felt that a more proactive approach was needed to tackle misinformation. It was mentioned that the lines to take had not reached the MB members and it was suggested that similar information should in the future be channelled also to the MB and Advisory Forum (AF) members.
8. The Director thanked the MB members for their comments noting that ECDC had discussed very carefully with EMA and the European Commission what approach to take and decided that it was important to reach out to health professionals to ensure them that the evidence has not changed. She regretted that the information on the lines to take had not reached the MB members and said that these would be shared with the MB, the AF, and the ECDC Coordinating Competent Bodies (CCBs) after the meeting.

9. Responding to a question on the ECDC project on social media listening, Piotr Kramarz, Head of Unit, Scientific Evidence and Communication, ECDC, clarified that this was part of a bigger initiative on infodemic management, which looks at tools and strategies for detecting and addressing false information.

10. The Chair concluded the discussions referring to a recent study showing that there was a paradigm shift in communication with the growing use of social media and increasing misinformation. She suggested discussing the matter further in the MB meeting in June 2026 and requested ECDC to prepare a document on the Centre's communication strategy and approach to tackling mis- and disinformation.

The Management Board took note of the update from the ECDC Director.

## **Update on issues on the ECDC work from the geopolitical situation**

11. Antonis Lanaras, Head of Section, Governance and International Relations, Director's Office, ECDC, gave an update on ECDC's interactions with the US CDC. Overall, the collaboration and interactions had decreased considerably since August while some working group meetings had taken place in September and the TATFAR collaboration seemed to go forward. Some activity in EpiPulse was also observed.

12. The Chair thanked Antonis Lanaras for the update and suggested following up on the matter at the next MB meeting.

The Management Board took note of the update on issues on the ECDC work from the geopolitical situation.

## **Outcomes and Next Steps from the Fourth Joint Strategy Meeting and 20-year ECDC Anniversary Event (*Document MB65/08*)**

13. Pamela Rendi-Wagner presented the main outcomes from the Fourth Joint Strategy Meeting (JSM) and the ECDC 20-year Anniversary Event that took place on 4 November 2025 gathering representatives from the MB, the AF and the CCBs. The JSM included two panel sessions; the first one looked at the past achievements of ECDC while the second one discussed the main public health challenges in the coming years. The discussions showed that there were many important achievements to build on. At the same time, considering the public health challenges ahead, there is a need for even more collaboration and innovation and for ECDC to be more proactive and anticipatory. The importance of building trust and maintaining independence when it comes to scientific evidence and guidance was also highlighted by the participants.

14. The Chair thanked the ECDC Director and her staff for organising the event which allowed the different constituencies to get together and exchange on topics of common interest.

The Management Board took note of the outcomes and next steps from the fourth Joint Strategy Meeting and 20-year ECDC Anniversary Event.

## **Memorandum of Understanding between ECDC and WHO Regional Office for Europe (*Document MB65/03*)**

15. Antonis Lanaras introduced the topic noting that ECDC has been collaborating with WHO/Europe since the Centre's establishment. A collaboration agreement was signed in 2005 and updated in 2011, and it was now time to renew the agreement in the format of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). He then presented the legal basis for the collaboration, as well as the areas and modalities of cooperation. The MoU was presented to the MB for endorsement. He added that a draft data storage agreement had been finalised and that discussions on a data transfer agreement will ensue.

16. The MB members expressed their support for the MoU, and no objections were raised on the text. However, some members pointed out that the issue of double reporting persists and asked whether the MoU would be complemented by more concrete plans outlining the collaboration and division of work.

17. The Director responded that the aim was indeed to find more effective ways to collaborate and to complement each other rather than duplicate. Regarding the need for more detailed plans, she clarified

that the purpose of the annual collaboration meeting between ECDC and WHO/Europe was in fact to discuss and plan the joint activities including reporting. The next meeting is planned to take place in January 2026.

18. Responding to a comment on AMR and the fact that WHO/Europe seemed to be scaling down its activities in this area, Ole Heuer, Head of Unit, One Health-related Diseases, ECDC, mentioned that ECDC and WHO/Europe had been collaborating on AMR for already a decade. He was aware that the WHO/Europe workforce was being reduced but, to date, there was no indication of a transfer of tasks to the headquarters or that ECDC would need to take over. Responding to a question on the collaboration with the African region and how information was channelled to ECDC (for instance recently on Marburg disease), Vicky Lefevre, Head of Unit, Surveillance, Preparedness and Response, ECDC, said that the Centre was receiving information from the Africa CDC as well as from DG ECHO and the EU Delegation while information from the WHO Regional Office for Africa was channelled through WHO/Europe.

19. The Chair concluded that there was support from the MB for approving the MoU and requested ECDC to follow up on concerns about double reporting.

The Management Board approved the Memorandum of Understanding between ECDC and WHO Europe without modifications.

## Update from the European Parliament

20. Quique Bassat, MB Member, European Parliament, gave a brief update on recent activities in the Parliament relevant to the ECDC area of work. He highlighted the ongoing negotiations on the Critical Medicines Act, the recent exchange of views of the EP SANT and ENVI Committees with Commissioner Lahbib on civil protection and health emergency preparedness, and the results of an EP public consultation on women's health. He also mentioned the joint SANT-DEVE exchange of views that had taken place in September 2025 on the impact of the USAID funding cuts on pandemic preparedness and mortality in the world.

The Management Board took note of the update from the European Parliament.

## Update on the Vector-borne diseases

21. Ole Heuer, Head of Unit, One Health related Diseases, ECDC, gave an update on ECDC's work on vector-borne diseases. He described the shifts in disease patterns for dengue, chikungunya, West Nile virus, and tick-borne diseases observed in the last years and what ECDC is doing to reduce vector-borne disease risks and support Member States with evidence-based tools and strategic guidance.

22. In the discussion that followed, the representatives of DG SANTE and DG HERA informed the MB members of upcoming grants and Joint Actions to support Member States with vector surveillance and control. Some MB members shared that there were questions in their countries on the cost-effectiveness of vector control and how to best apply it.

23. Responding to a question on whether ECDC would publish any summarised guidance on dengue and chikungunya including advice on vaccination, Céline Gossner, Deputy Head of Unit, One Health related Diseases, ECDC, mentioned that guidance on the assessment and mitigation of the risk of locally acquired *Aedes*-borne viral diseases had been published in July 2025 and ECDC was now considering whether to publish some more detailed guidance on dengue. Diagnostic guidance will be issued by the EU reference laboratory for vector-borne diseases. Responding to a question on whether ECDC could consider compiling a list of countries for which disinfection of aircrafts and cruise ships is recommended, she confirmed that ECDC would look into this.

24. The Director commented that the most affected countries (mainly in Southern Europe) were the most experienced when it comes to surveillance and control measures and it was important to make this expertise available to the rest of Europe. She recalled that Member States can request support from the EU Health Task Force not only for outbreak support but also for preparedness.

25. The Chair agreed that this was a very complex topic and it was important for Member States to know which actions are most cost-effective.

The Management Board took note of the update on vector-borne diseases.

## **ECDC Single Programming Document 2026-2028 (Document MB65/04)**

26. Pamela Rendi-Wagner, Director, ECDC, presented the Single Programming Document (SPD) 2026-2028. During 2026, ECDC will continue contributing to strengthening EU health security by addressing the following main priorities: surveillance and digitalisation; preparedness and response; One Health and AMR; EU vaccine coverage; support to Member States and the European Commission for reaching the Sustainable Development Goals in the area of HIV, TB and hepatitis; further strengthening of EU and international partnerships. The budget for 2026 amounts to EUR 94.4 million. The number of statutory staff (353 FTEs) remains the same as in 2025. Additional resources are foreseen for external projects financed through contribution agreements with the European Commission.

27. Following the usual process, ECDC received comments on the SPD 2026-2028 from the European Commission in July 2025. In addition, comments were received from Member States and other EU agencies. The Commission Opinion as well as the list of stakeholder comments with ECDC replies had been shared with the MB as part of the meeting documentation.

28. The Chair thanked the Director for the presentation and noted that the decision on the 2026 budget would be taken under the Audit Committee summary in the afternoon.

29. In the discussion that followed, ECDC provided clarifications on the planned work relating to RSV vaccination guidance, wastewater surveillance, and surveillance of Lyme disease. Concerning event-based surveillance, it was clarified that the Epi+ project will be piloted in 2027 (the concerned sentence would be corrected as one digit was missing in the text). It was also agreed to rephrase one sentence referring to the "ongoing global health crisis" (p. 27) as what was meant was the challenge of increasing mis- and disinformation.

The Management Board approved the Single Programming Document 2026-2028 with two minor changes.

## **ECDC Single Programming Document 2027-2029 (Document MB65/05)**

30. Pamela Rendi-Wagner presented the draft Single Programming Document (SPD) 2027-2029. She first described the general context noting that there were several factors to consider such as the changing landscape of global health security, climate change, reduced trust and increase of mis- and disinformation as well as the outcomes and follow-up actions of the ongoing fourth external evaluation of ECDC and the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) cycle which will come into play in 2028. She then recalled the five priority areas for 2027 discussed during the previous MB meeting in June.

31. The budget foreseen for 2027 amounts to EUR 96,4 million while the human resources are at the same level as in 2025 and 2026 (353 FTEs and 5 Seconded National Experts). In 2027, ECDC will continue implementing the two external projects "Support for health resilience in Eastern partnership" and EWRS. A dialogue is ongoing with DG INTPA and DG ENEST regarding new contribution agreements to be signed for the implementation of Team Europe Initiative and the ECDC Accession Support Action 2026-2029.

32. In the discussion that followed, several comments were raised. Given the geopolitical situation, it was suggested to consider elaborating on aspects of ECDC's intended collaboration on the technical level with NATO. It was also suggested to make the link to IHR more prominent in the text and to provide more clarity on ECDC's impact on public health globally, including connection between ECDC's goals and impact/expected outcome on European and global level. Concerning the list of "New Tasks" (chapter 2.3.2 Outlook for the years 2027-2029 of the SPD) it was advised to review the list to ensure that it includes tasks calling for additional resources and listed in the EU secondary legislations. It was also suggested to consider toning down the emphasis given to Lyme neuroborreliosis. More generally, the need for de-

prioritisation was stressed given that resources are limited. Lastly, it was requested to include some further details about social media listening and how ECDC will use AI.

33. The Director thanked the MB members for their input. Following the meeting, the SPD document will be updated to incorporate the feedback provided and then shared with the MB members for information, while also providing the possibility to send additional comments in writing by mid-December if so wished. In January 2026, the final draft SPD 2026-2028 including annexes will be sent to the MB for approval via written procedure and subsequently shared with the EU institutions.

The Management Board discussed the Single Programming Document 2027-2029.

## **Summary of discussions held at the 59<sup>th</sup> meeting of the ECDC Audit Committee (Stockholm, 24 November 2025), including its recommendations**

34. Heli Laarmann, MB Member, Estonia, and Chair of the Audit Committee (AC) introduced the session and gave the floor to the ECDC colleagues to present the topics discussed in the AC meeting held the day before.

### ***a) Monitoring of the implementation of the Work Programme 2025 (Document MB65/06)***

35. Goritsa Zlatanova, Acting Head of Section, Planning and Performance, Resource Management Services, ECDC, presented an overview of the implementation of the work programme 2025. By October 2025, 113 outputs (85%) were ongoing and 10 (7%) had been completed. Three outputs had been postponed and five cancelled while two had not yet started. A list of all planned outputs under each of the five Strategic Objectives (SO) was provided in Annex 1.

36. The AC Chair reported that the AC members had asked about the trend in completed vs cancelled outputs and ECDC had confirmed a similar proportion as in previous years, i.e. 85% ongoing and 3,5% cancelled outputs, while cancellations were mainly of IT improvements.

37. Following the presentation, one MB member asked for a clarification on the surveillance of diseases with pandemic potential which was marked as cancelled in the list of outputs (Annex 1). Vicky Lefevre, Head of Unit, Surveillance, Preparedness and Response, ECDC, replied that there was clearly a mistake in the document as the surveillance activity was indeed continued and progressing as planned. Goritsa Zlatanova confirmed that ECDC would review the list and correct the erroneous information.

The Management Board took note of the monitoring of the implementation of the Work Programme 2025.

### ***b) Progress Report – Overview of 2024 Budget Implementation***

38. Anja Van Brabant, Accounting Officer and Head of Section, Finance and Accounting, Resource Management Services Unit, ECDC, gave an overview of the 2025 budget implementation up until 23 November 2025. She explained that EUR 91.1 million or 98.4% had been committed from the total budget of EUR 92.6 million. From the committed amount, EUR 61.9 million (66.8%) had been paid, which is a slight increase compared to the same period the previous year. Concerning the budget carried forward from 2024 (EUR 23.08 million), 93.5% had been paid so far.

39. The AC Chair reported that ECDC anticipated a very positive outcome of the budget implementation at year-end. ECDC had also referred to the recent written procedure approved by the MB and the additional EUR 700 000 requested from the EU 2025 budget to accommodate the December 2025 salaries.

The Management Board took note of the Progress Report – Overview of 2025 Budget Implementation.

### ***c) Budget and Establishment Table 2026 (Document MB65/07)***

40. Anja Van Brabant recalled that the Draft Budget 2026 had been approved by the MB in January 2025 through written procedure as part of the SPD 2026-2028. The initial total amount requested was EUR 94.6 million. Due to a decrease of the EFTA proportionality factor applicable for 2026, the ECDC budget for the financial year 2026 amounts to EUR 94.4 million, which is 2% higher than the 2025 initial budget.

41. The Establishment Plan 2026 foresees 225 Temporary Agents (TA) and 128 Contract Agent (CA) posts. In addition, the Centre will have 15 CAs to support international projects funded by EU contribution agreements. The Budget 2026 evolution by title compared to the initial 2025 budget is as follows: 5.5 % increase in title 1 (staff expenditure), 1.2 % increase in title 2 (infrastructure & administrative expenditure), and 2% decrease in title 3 (operational expenditure).

42. The AC Chair reported that ECDC had provided additional explanation about the current and new contribution agreements and the number of CAs employed through these agreements. The European Commission had clarified that the agreements do not allow for TAs to be employed, which makes it challenging for ECDC to recruit staff with the right competencies.

43. In conclusion, the AC recommended the MB to approve the Budget and Establishment Table 2026, pending the final adoption of the EU budget 2026 by the European Parliament and the Council.

The Management Board approved the Budget and Establishment Table 2026.

### ***d) Reporting on additional topics discussed in the Audit Committee***

#### ***i) Changes in the Court of Auditors approach to auditing EU agencies***

44. During the AC meeting, a representative from the European Court of Auditors (ECA) had explained that the growing number of agencies with their specificities, increasing budgets and complexity require a revision of ECA's auditing approach. Consequently, ECA will continue to provide an opinion based on reasonable assurance regarding the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of revenue, but it will only provide a limited assurance regarding the legality and regularity of payments. The AC had sought and received assurances that the new approach will continue to provide the relevant information for the discharge authority (European Parliament) and the MB.

#### ***ii) Preliminary conclusions of the on-going risk assessment performed as part of the work for the IAS Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2026-2028***

45. During the AC meeting, a representative from the Internal Audit Service had presented the preliminary topics proposed for inclusion in the IAS Strategic Internal Audit Plan (SIAP) 2026-2028: 1) IT Governance, 2) External Communication; 3) Contribution Agreements; 4) Reserve topics – Management of meetings and Epipulse integrated audit. The AC members considered the proposed topics adequate.

#### ***iii) Update on Audit Observations and Status of Audit Observations***

46. The AC Chair gave a brief overview of the matters discussed under the update on audit observations, which is provided at each AC meeting. The AC will continue to carefully monitor the progress in the implementation of any pending audit observations.

47. Following the presentation, some further information was requested and provided by ECDC on the pending audit observations and their respective timelines. The Chair requested ECDC to share a list of the open observations with the MB for information following the meeting.

The Management Board took note of the update from the Audit Committee. The Management Board requested ECDC to compile a list of the pending audit observations to be shared with the MB members for information after the meeting.

### ***e) Reporting back from the Management Board working group on revision of the Management Board Rules of Procedure and Audit Committee Mandate***

48. Charlotte Möndel, Chair of the MB Working Group and MB alternate, Germany, mentioned that the working group had discussed its proposal for a revised AC Mandate with the members of the AC. She summarised the main changes proposed, and the input provided by the AC. As a next step, the final draft will be shared with the AC Chair for review and thereafter sent to the MB for written consultation. The working group will now look at the MB Rules of Procedure, and the objective is to present both documents to the MB for adoption in March 2026.

The Management Board took note of the update from the MB Working Group for revision of the MB Rules of Procedure and Audit Committee Mandate.

## **Day 2 – Opening and welcome by the Chair**

49. Gesa Lücking, MB Chair, opened the second day of the meeting. Due to time constraints, it was agreed to cancel the information item on phishing attacks targeting ECDC partners and the Chair mentioned that a short presentation on the matter was available on the MB collaboration platform.

## **Status Update and Future Planning for the ECDC Public Health Emergency Preparedness Assessments**

50. Vicky Lefevre, Head of Unit, Surveillance, Preparedness and Response, ECDC, gave a status update of the ECDC Public Health Emergency Preparedness Assessments (PHEPA) carried out so far and presented the timeline for the remaining country visits and the action plans under the first cycle 2024-2026. Following internal review, an interim report will be released summarising the main findings from the first 15 PHEPAs. On 25 March 2026, ECDC will organise a one-day meeting for the NFPs for Preparedness to present the preliminary findings from five assessed capacities. MB members are invited to join if available.

51. Vicky Lefevre then presented the planned approach for the second cycle 2027-2029, which is envisaged to be lighter than the first one focusing mainly on the status and implementation of the action plan. It is foreseen that the country visits will last fewer days and that the assessment will be partially conducted at subnational level by assessing two in-depth capacities during a regional site visit with participation of the national stakeholders. Lastly, she presented the preliminary timetable for the country assessments 2027-2029.

52. The MB members welcomed the proposed lighter approach and the focus on the action plans. Some questions were raised on the assessment to be done at regional level. Some members commented that conducting a study visit in only one region would not be representative for the rest of the country and it might be preferable to gather representatives from all the regions to a meeting at central level instead. Vicky Lefevre clarified that the objective was not to assess the regional level as such but to look at one region as an example of how emergency preparedness is practically implemented.

53. Following the discussion, the MB representatives from Croatia and France briefly presented their experience and lessons learnt from the PHEPA missions in their respective country. Due to time constraints, the Chair suggested moving the remaining country presentations (Italy, Lithuania, Slovakia) to the next meeting in March and dedicating sufficient time for an in-depth discussion on the next PHEPA cycle.

The Management Board took note of the status update and future planning of the ECDC Public Health Emergency Preparedness Assessments (PHEPA) including presentations from assessed Member States.

## Annual address of the ECDC Staff Committee to the Management Board

54. Margot Einoder-Moreno, Member of the ECDC Staff Committee (SC), thanked the MB for the opportunity to speak on behalf of the ECDC SC. She mentioned that the Member States expect timely, trusted and coherent information from ECDC, which requires strong resilient staff to sustain high quality work. During the pandemic, the ECDC staff showed extraordinary commitment to their work, but high workload is still a reality for many staff members across the organisation. The SC works to promote staff wellbeing and a sustainable work-life balance and to foster a working culture of communication and trust. She thanked the MB members for their continued support, openness and respect.

55. The Chair thanked the SC for the address and for their important work to promote staff wellbeing.

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

## Update from the European Commission including an update on the External Evaluation

56. Lorena Boix-Alonso, DG SANTE, European Commission, informed the MB members about recent EU policy documents and strategies as well as ongoing activities as part of the implementation of the Regulation on serious cross-border threats to health (e.g. Union preparedness and response plan for health crisis, training of healthcare staff and public health staff, epidemiological surveillance, EU reference laboratories). She also briefed the MB on the proposal for the next MFF noting that health will be largely integrated into the competitiveness part through the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) but also covered under the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM+). She then gave an update on the ongoing external evaluation of ECDC launched in August 2025. She presented the evaluation methodology and timetable noting that the draft final report was expected to be delivered in March 2026.

57. Laurent Muschel, MB Member, DG HERA, gave a brief update on ongoing activities. With regards to the next MFF, he said that the surveillance and intelligence activities as well as strategic stockpiling will be covered under the UCPM+ while research funds will be covered under the ECF; it remains to be seen how much will be reserved for health.

58. Kasia Jurczak, MB Member, DG RTD, gave a brief update on recent activities in the area of research and innovation. She highlighted the Commission's Strategy for European Life Sciences launched at the beginning of July 2025. She also mentioned the European Partnership on One Health Antimicrobial Resistance and the Pandemic Preparedness Partnership, which has a strong public health strand to which ECDC will be expected to contribute.

59. Following the presentations, some MB members commented that they had expected to receive more information on the external evaluation of ECDC in the past months including what was expected from the MB members. This seemed to be a missed opportunity as MB members could have helped to disseminate information to relevant stakeholders and for instance contribute to a higher attendance at the public webinar organised in November through the EU Health Policy Platform as part of the evaluation.

60. Lorena Boix Alonso took note of the feedback and agreed that the webinar had not been very attended although it had been broadly advertised. She added that the ECDC external evaluation had been adapted to the process followed for other agencies and the same communication channels and platforms were used.

The Management Board took note of the update from the European Commission.

## Update on the upcoming Cypriot Presidency of the Council of the EU

61. Constantinos Papanтониου, MB Member, Cyprus, gave a brief presentation on the Cypriot EU Presidency starting on 1 January 2026. Under the Presidency, negotiations will continue on a number of important legislative files such as the pharmaceutical legislation, the Critical Medicines Act, the Biotech Act

and the revision of the legislation on medical devices. The Presidency will focus on mental health with a high-level meeting on the topic. The European Health Data Space will also be high on the agenda.

The Management Board took note of the update on the upcoming Cypriot Presidency of the Council of the EU.

### **Any other business**

62. The Chair informed the MB that two written procedures would be circulated for approval in the next couple of weeks: one was a revision of the MB decision from June 2020 on remunerated external experts, and the other was an ECDC Implementing Rule on Guide to missions and authorised travel.

63. The Chair then adjourned the meeting and thanked all the MB members for their active participation. She also thanked the interpreters and the MB Secretariat for their support.

64. The following MB meeting is scheduled to take place in Stockholm on 26-27 March 2026.

## Annex: List of Participants

Country/Organisation	Representative	Status
Austria	Sigrid Kiermayr	Member
Belgium	Lieven De Raedt ( <i>Deputy Chair</i> )	Member
	Naima Hammami	Alternate
Bulgaria	Angel Kunchev	Member
Croatia	Marija Bubaš	Member
	Krunoslav Capak	Alternate
Cyprus	Constantinos Papantoniou	Member
Czechia	Barbora Macková	Member
Estonia	Heli Laarmann	Member
Finland	Taneli Puumalainen	Member
	Mirka-Tuulia Kuoksa	Alternate
France	Anne-Catherine Viso	Alternate
Germany	Gesa Lücking ( <i>Chair</i> )	Member
	Charlotte Möndel	Alternate
Hungary	Ágnes Dánielisz	Member
Ireland	Richael Duffy	Member
Italy	Giovanni Nicoletti	Alternate
Latvia	Svens Henkuzens	Alternate
Lithuania	Audrius Ščeponavičius	Member
Luxembourg	Éveline Santos	Alternate
Malta	Patricia Vella Bonanno	Member
The Netherlands	Gerie Jonk	Alternate
Poland	Paweł Grzesiowski	Member
Portugal	Cristina Abreu Santos	Alternate
Slovakia	Martin Sojka	Member
Slovenia	Mario Fafangel	Member

Country/Organisation	Representative	Status
Spain	Pedro Gullón Tosio	Member
Sweden	Olivia Wigzell	Member
<b>European Commission</b>		
DG SANTE	Lorena Boix Alonso	Member
DG HERA	Laurent Muschel	Member
DG RTD	Kasia Jurczak	Member
<b>European Parliament</b>		
Quique Bassat		Member
Andreea Capilna		Member
<b>EEA Countries</b>		
Iceland	Guðlín Steinsdóttir	Alternate
Norway	Øystein Riise	Member