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EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS JOINT ACTION
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PREPAREDNESS AND ACTION AT POINTS OF ENTRY
(PORTS, AIRPORTS, GROUND CROSSINGS)

EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS: STRENGTHENING CORE CAPACITIES AT AIRPORTS

Deliverable D6.1

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Work Package 6: Air Transport

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SUMMARY OF DELIVERABLE 6.1 COMPONENTS

This is Deliverable 6.1 “**Strengthening Core Capacities at Airports**” of the EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS Joint Action. The EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS Joint Action (EU HG JA) has received funding from the European Union (EU), in the framework of the Third Health Programme (2014-2020).

This deliverable was slightly modified from the initial work plan of the EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS Joint Action (Grant Agreement Nr. 801493) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic through a Grant Agreement amendment. Due to the emergence of COVID-19 and the Joint Action’s operation in emergency mode as of January 2020, the deliverable was modified to prioritize supporting Member States’ responses in the context of COVID-19 and the air transport sector.

The deliverable components are summarized hereafter including where each component can be viewed/accessed, and where publicly available, in full extent in this document.

1. Best practices on core capacities implementation (air sector)

Under the framework of the EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS Joint Action, **web-based catalogues of best practices for points of entry** have been developed and address all types of health threats, public health emergency contingency planning, risk communication and advice for public health event management at points of entry.

Specific practices on core capacities implementation at **airports** related to event detection, surveillance, management and contingency planning have been identified and included in the EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS catalogue of best practices.

Best practices for the web-based catalogues were identified in 2018 and 2019 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic through: questionnaires disseminated to countries participating in the Joint Action; expert opinions from EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS technical working groups; reviews of previous project results.

The aim of the catalogues of best practices is to share experiences among Member States and not to set a gold standard as practices that work best for one Member State may not be as applicable in another Member State. Furthermore, collected answers are considered working practices, whether or not they have a firm evidence-base.

For further information about requesting access to the EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS catalogues of best practices, please contact: info@healthygateways.eu

2. Training for preparedness and response to public health events at airports

Under the framework of Work Package 6, technical content for training materials/resources were developed for a 3-day face to face European level Training of the trainers' course (including online pre-course e-learning sessions) for: "Preparedness and response to public health events at airports" conducted in September 2019. The purpose of the course was to increase competence and capacity for managing public health events in air transport including risk assessment, decision-making and crisis communication. The training course addressed issues of decision making for implementing evidence-based health measures proportionate to the health risks. A total of 64 persons attended the training course, with 43 trainees from 20 EU countries, 6 trainees from 4 non-EU countries, 23 presenters/facilitators/observers and 3 persons providing administrative support.

Training resources developed for "*Preparedness and response to public health events at airports*" are available in a dedicated course in the e-learning platform of EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS: <https://elearning.shipsan.eu/course/view.php?id=38>

Access to the e-learning platform can be provided by contacting: info@healthygateways.eu

Furthermore, under the EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS framework in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the following online self-paced asynchronous courses were developed:

- "*Preparedness and response at points of entry in the European Union (EU)/EEA Member States (MS) in the context of COVID-19*"
- "*Preparedness and response at airports in the European Union (EU)/EEA Member States (MS) in the context of COVID-19*"

Training resources are available in the e-learning platform of EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS:

- "*Preparedness and response at points of entry in the European Union (EU)/EEA Member States (MS) in the context of COVID-19*": <https://elearning.shipsan.eu/course/view.php?id=44>
- "*Preparedness and response at airports in the European Union (EU)/EEA Member States (MS) in the context of COVID-19*": <https://elearning.shipsan.eu/course/view.php?id=46>

Access to the e-learning platform can be provided by contacting: info@healthygateways.eu

3. Tabletop / simulation exercises at local (airport) level

This component conducted under the framework of EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS Milestone 6.11 and titled “*Tabletop / simulation exercise at airports (local level): Instructions for developing tabletop / simulation exercises for testing local public health emergency contingency plans for airports*” aims to support stakeholders to design table top or simulation exercises that examine and improve the applicability of existing public health emergency contingency plans, protocols, procedures and capabilities for managing COVID-19 events in the air transport sector.

Several templates and instructions are provided to plan, implement and evaluate exercises in the aviation setting. It is intended that templates will be modified to specific local contexts and priorities.

A preliminary assessment to revise complete public health emergency contingency plans and three scenarios have been developed. The first two scenarios focus on response capacities to COVID-19 related events at airports and in airplanes and aim to exercise for example communication links and collaboration among different involved stakeholders. The third exercise scenario targets exercising the implementation of exit screening measures in case of a new SARS-CoV-2 variant of concern.

The document “*Tabletop / simulation exercise at airports (local level)*” (and its annexes) can be found at the following link:
https://www.healthygateways.eu/Portals/0/plcdocs/EUHG_M6.11_TTE_local_airports.docx

4. Multi-sectorial tabletop exercise for all points of entry (including airports) at national level

Under the framework of EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS Milestone 9.6, a document was produced titled "*Multi-sectorial tabletop exercise for all points of entry at national level: Instructions for organisers*", for the development of a multi-sectorial tabletop exercise to be conducted involving all types of points of entry and response measures at local and national level, as well as existing structures including the IHR NFP, EWRS NFP and laboratories of the country. Countries can use this document and the suggested scenario package included in order to implement an exercise at a national level.

The working group responsible for the exercise development concluded to develop a package focusing on contact tracing procedures for COVID-19. The scenario and the instructions document can be amended as appropriate by the exercise organiser in accordance with the local context, rules, regulations and practices.

This document describes in detail the design of an exercise, suggested participants and scenario packages, example time schedules for the exercise and considerations for evaluation.

Additionally, the document provides in annexes other relevant materials and templates that can be used and adapted by countries to reflect their needs/context when developing exercises. The document includes the following as annexes:

- Annex 1: EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS guidance document for "Organising a tabletop/simulation exercise"
- Annex 2: Participant instructions template
- Annex 3: Suggested scenarios package for facilitators/controllers
- Annex 4: Exercise evaluation package
- Annex 5: Exercise report template

The document "*Multi-sectorial tabletop exercise for all points of entry at national level*" (and its annexes) can be found at the following link:

https://www.healthygateways.eu/Portals/0/plcdocs/EUHG_M.9.6.Exercise_national_PoE.docx

5. Tool for contingency plan development and assessment at airports

In accordance with the EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS Grant Agreement, a tool for public health emergency contingency plan (PHECP) development and assessment was to be developed for airports. The purpose of this tool is to suggest concrete steps for developing or assessing current airport-specific contingency plans, not to replace them. The target group is personnel working at local authorities in EU MS responsible for preparedness and response at designated airports in accordance with Decision 1082/2013/EU and the IHR (2005).

A first draft of the tool for contingency plan development and assessment for airports was developed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, based on best practice identification results and considering the existing guidance from WHO, CAPSCA, ICAO and IATA.

For further information regarding the tool, please contact: info@healthygateways.eu

6. Model for a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at local (airport) level

In accordance with the EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS Grant Agreement, a model Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was developed in order to foster collaboration at a local (airport) level. The model MoU includes the rules of cooperation among the different competent authorities at airports, at local level that need to be involved in response to public health events (among appropriate human and animal health, law enforcement, and defense personnel), as described in the World Health Organization (WHO) Tool for Joint External Evaluation (JEE).

The model MoU is intended to be used by countries in order to assess existing contingency plans or to develop ones, as required by International Health Regulations (IHR) Annex 1B. This will help countries to achieve the relevant indicators described in the WHO Tool for JEE. The model can be adapted or modified based on each countries' national context.

The EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS "Model for a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at local (airport) level" can be found at the following link:
https://www.healthygateways.eu/Portals/0/plcdocs/EUHG_M6.8_ModelMoU_airports.pdf

7. Guidance for preparedness and response to the outbreak of COVID-19

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS Joint Action developed several interim advice documents after a request from the European Commission's Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE), related to preparedness and response to cases of COVID-19 at points of entry in the European Union (EU)/EEA Member States (MS).

In this context, working groups established from members of the EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS consortium developed and published the following advice documents related to the air transport sector:

- ***Exit and entry screening at points of entry (Version 1)*** – published 6 February 2020
- ***Considerations for implementing a common strategy for testing of travellers for SARS-CoV-2 at international airports in EU MS (Version 2)*** – published 17 October 2020

The EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS advice documents for preparedness and response to the outbreak of COVID-19 can be found at the following link:
<https://www.healthygateways.eu/Novel-coronavirus#Interim>