

COVID-19 outbreak: the presidency steps up EU response by triggering full activation mode of IPCR



Over the last weeks, the Council has taken a number of steps to coordinate the EU's response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The current scale of the outbreak has demonstrated the need to coordinate even more our actions at EU level.

The Croatian presidency therefore decided on 2 March 2020 to escalate the Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR) arrangements from information sharing mode to full activation mode.

IPCR full activation allows for an increased focus on identifying major gaps across sectors and elaborating concrete EU response measures at presidency-led roundtables. These crisis meetings bring together representatives of the office of the President of the European Council, the European Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS), affected member states and other relevant parties. Roundtable participants prepare, develop and update proposals for actions to be discussed and decided upon by the Council.

Background

The IPCR arrangements strengthens the European Union's ability to take rapid decisions when facing major cross-sectoral crises requiring a response at EU political level. They provide the necessary support from EU institutions and services in the context of a crisis and its evolution. These arrangements are based on the principle of subsidiarity, fully respecting member states' responsibilities in a crisis situation. They do not replace existing arrangements at sectorial level.

The IPCR arrangements were approved by the Council on 25 June 2013. In December 2018, the Council adopted a decision which codified them into a legal act. On 28 January 2020, the Croatian Presidency activated the EU's IPCR arrangements in information sharing mode, triggering the production of integrated reports by the Commission and the EEAS and the creation of a dedicated page on the IPCR web platform, on which information on the COVID-19 outbreak is shared.