

European partnership launches major initiative to strengthen pandemic preparedness through clinical trial networks

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30 January 2025, Brussels – How can Europe prepare for the next pandemic? In collaboration with 24 partners, ANRS Emerging Infectious Diseases and Inserm (Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale) launch PROACT EU-Response, a new project under the EU's Horizon Europe framework to strengthen Europe's readiness for health emergencies. This project unites experts and communities to develop an integrated strategy for pandemic preparedness, enabling rapid clinical trials and mitigating health and societal impacts during crises.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the profound impact health crises can have on society, underscoring the urgent need for proactive measures. Building on the success of the [EU-Response project](#), the European Proactive Adaptive Clinical Trials Network within EU-Response (PROACT EU-Response) project – coordinated by the ANRS Emerging Infectious Diseases and the Inserm and in collaboration with 24 partners – will further bolster Europe's pandemic preparedness by bringing together leading experts in clinical research, laboratory sciences, social sciences, and civil society to create a coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach to combat future pandemics.

Pr Yazdan Yazdanpanah, Director of ANRS Emerging Infectious Diseases and Coordinator for EU-Response, underlined *“The creation of a European clinical trial network for Pandemic Preparedness through the PROACT EU-Response project and the EU-Response network represents a strategic initiative to foster coordinated, timely, and evidence-based research and innovation across Europe. It will allow us to overcome the fragmentation inherent in current pandemic preparedness efforts, which no single organisation or existing association alone can address.”*

PROACT EU-Response implements a comprehensive approach to pandemic preparedness and focuses on six key objectives:

1. **Expanding clinical trial networks:** Establishing and supporting clinical centres across Europe to implement trials focusing on respiratory viral infections.
2. **Enhancing laboratory capacities:** Building a laboratory network for pathogen identification and biomarker development for disease monitoring.
3. **Optimising trial methodology:** Strengthening logistical and methodological frameworks for trials.

4. **Developing preparedness tools:** Creating resources to ensure a smooth transition from inter-pandemic to pandemic response.
5. **Incorporating social sciences:** Understanding the societal contexts of health crises through dedicated research.
6. **Empowering communities:** Engaging patients and citizens in health education and awareness to cultivate resilience and informed decision-making.

By aligning these objectives with frontline research and civil society engagement, the project will contribute to reduced mortality and morbidity, enhanced health systems resilience, and reduced economic costs during future health crises.

“PROACT in EU-RESPONSE is a thrilling initiative funded by the EU that will federate 20 countries. Thanks to the commitment of all the partners, we aim at better preparing Europe for responding to future pandemics. This is a huge responsibility and a great honor to be part of such a dedicated group!” emphasised Karine Lacombe, Coordinator for PROACT EU-Response.

PROACT EU-Response will run from January 2025 to December 2029, with funding from the European Union’s Horizon Europe programme. The project represents a critical investment in Europe’s health and research infrastructure, ensuring readiness to face the next pandemic.

About EPF: The European Patients’ Forum (EPF) is an umbrella organisation of patient organisations across Europe and across disease areas. Our nearly 80 members include disease-specific patient groups active at the EU level and national coalitions of patients representing 19 countries and an estimated 150 million patients across Europe. www.eu-patient.eu

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Questions or inquiries? Get in touch with EPF Communications Manager Flavia Topan (flavia.topan@eu-patient.eu).

About ANRS Emerging Infectious Diseases: this agency of Inserm is tasked with facilitating, evaluating, coordinating and funding research into HIV/AIDS, viral hepatitis, sexually transmitted infections, tuberculosis and emerging infectious diseases.

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PROACT EU-Response partners

