



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Public health
Health security and Vaccination

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Louis Lescrooge
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Email transmission only

Dear Mr Lescrooge,

Thank you for your email to President von der Leyen from 4 October, sharing your ideas on the current COVID-19 pandemic.

The European Commission is coordinating a common European response to the coronavirus outbreak. We are taking resolute action to reinforce our public health sectors and mitigate the socio-economic impact in the European Union. We are mobilising all means at our disposal to help our Member States coordinate their national responses and are providing objective information about the spread of the virus and effective efforts to contain it.

The COVID-19 pandemic is an unprecedented challenge, with far-reaching impacts on public health, our societies and economy. The Commission continues to work closely with the EU Member States, together with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), to provide coordination, guidance and support. Public health matters (the responsibility for the organisation of and the delivery of healthcare services), however, are the competence of EU Member States and it is national governments that decide on the specific measures based on each country's national epidemiological and social situation.

The current coronavirus pandemic is accompanied by a disinformation “infodemic”, which spreads false information and undermines the trust in the national, European and world organisations involved in the response to COVID-19. The European Commission is committed to fighting disinformation, together with online platforms. More on the some of the main myths around coronavirus, including the one on Bill Gates, can be found here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/health/coronavirus-response/fighting-disinformation_en.

It is important to rely only on authoritative reliable sources for up-to-date information on the COVID-19 pandemic. We suggest that you follow the advice of [public health authorities](#), and the websites of relevant EU and international organisations such as [ECDC](#) and [WHO](#). You can also help by not sharing unverified information coming from dubious sources.

As regards prevention, disinfection with disinfecting agents such as bleach or others is only one of the non-pharmaceutical measures that can be employed to control the spread of the virus. There is a difference between disinfection of persons and environmental disinfection, e.g. of surfaces. To note that antibiotic agents do not work against viruses and should not be used against COVID-19 to avoid the development of antibiotic resistance. You can find more on the latest guidance on non-pharmaceutical interventions from ECDC here: <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/covid-19-guidelines-non-pharmaceutical-interventions>.

We would like to assure you that we are fully committed to taking all steps to protect the health of our citizens. You can find further information on the activities of the European Commission regarding the COVID-19 response here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/health/coronavirus-response_en.

Yours faithfully,

Wolfgang Philipp
Head of Unit