

STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL HEALTH REGULATIONS – SHARP JA EXPERIENCE

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Background: Joint Action on Strengthened International Health Regulations and Preparedness in the EU (SHARP JA) was implemented from 2019 to 2023. Work package 8 of this project dealt with training and local exercises, and exchange of working practices.

Methods and Objectives: The objective of this paper is to present the trainings conducted during the SHARP JA with the aim to strengthen implementation of international health regulations (IHR) for serious cross-border health threats in the JA partner countries. Method of this paper was a review of published and unpublished reports and training materials developed under the WP8 activities.

Results: The following trainings were conducted - IHR Basic Online-Training, In(tra)-Action Reviews (IAR) in an Online Setting, Online Tabletop exercise on Risk communication – “Vaccination Exercise”, International Tabletop Exercise Points of Entry – Control Measures, Contact Tracing, Public Health Disaster Recovery Training, Workshop on Public Health Surveillance – lessons learned from COVID-19/Public Health Emergencies Detection and Surveillance, Training on the EU Common Ship Sanitation Database – Digital tool for supporting International Health Regulations implementation at Points of Entry, Chemical Safety and Chemical Threats. In total, 21 workshops/trainings, 3 national exercises, and 2 study visits were organised in online and on-site settings with total number of 943 participants from 31 countries.

The target audience for the trainings were the public health professionals from different sectors, actively involved in the implementation of IHR core capacities, risk communication experts, field epidemiologists from different sectors, laboratory experts, representatives of local, intermediate and national level authorities, National focal points for the IHR, persons working at a competent authority at a country central level (Ministry of Health, National Public Health Institute or other) dealing with chemical safety, etc.

Conclusions: WP8 conducted online and on-site basic and advanced trainings that contributed to strengthening the competencies of public health professionals in the JA-SHARP partner countries.

Keywords: IHR, SHARP JA, Training