

# Preparing Europe for COVID-19 variants: HERA incubator

FEBRUARY 2021

The European Union is working at full speed to ensure that **all Europeans have access to COVID-19 vaccines** as soon as possible. The authorised vaccines are effective against the current virus.

At the same time, we must be prepared to **tackle new variants** of the virus and to rapidly develop and produce on a large scale vaccines effective against those variants.

This is why the European Commission is launching the **HERA incubator**. It will bring together science, industry and public authorities, and leverage all available resources to enable Europe to respond to this threat.



## KEY ACTIONS TO BOOST PREPAREDNESS AND INCREASE THE CAPACITY TO DEVELOP VACCINES ADAPTED TO VARIANTS



### 1. DETECT AND ANALYSE NEW VARIANTS OF THE VIRUS

Boost **capacity to characterise** the variants (genome sequencing)

Enable seamless **sharing of information** on new variants with all stakeholders working on the development of adapted or new vaccines

Identify and **agree on escape variants** of high concern



## 2. DEVELOP VACCINES AGAINST NEW VARIANTS OF THE VIRUS FOR WHICH EXISTING VACCINES MAY NOT BE SUFFICIENTLY EFFECTIVE

**Support companies** working on the adaptation of vaccines or development of new vaccines

**Facilitate clinical trials:** launch of EU-wide network of clinical trials (VACCELERATE)

**Support new technologies** to develop adapted or new vaccines



## 3. PRODUCE AT SCALE AND SPEED VACCINES ADAPTED TO VARIANTS

**Upgrade existing Advanced Purchase Agreements (APAs)** or **conclude new APAs** with manufacturing companies working on adapted vaccines

**Companies to present credible plan** showing real capacity to produce vaccines in EU and supply required quantities sufficiently fast

## TO DELIVER, THE EU WILL:

### SPEED UP REGULATORY PROCEDURES

- **Accelerate approval** of adapted vaccines
- Explore introduction of **emergency authorisation of vaccines** at EU level
- Provide **guidance on data** requirements
- Support **research to include children in clinical trials**

### RAMP UP INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION

- **Monitor supply chains**, address production bottlenecks
- **Support manufacturing** of vaccines against new variants
- **Develop a voluntary licensing mechanism** to facilitate technology transfer
- **Enhance manufacturing capacity** through the “EU Fab” project

This emergency programme will tackle the short to medium-term threat and simultaneously prepare for the future. It will serve as the vanguard for the **European Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority** (HERA). HERA will provide a structural system to enable the EU to anticipate and tackle better future pandemics.