Decision on setting up a special committee on ‘COVID-19 pandemic: lessons learned and recommendations for the future, its responsibilities, numerical strength and term of office

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The European Parliament adopted by 642 votes to 10, with 39 abstentions, a decision on setting up a special committee on ‘COVID-19 pandemic: lessons learned and recommendations for the future, its responsibilities, numerical strength and term of office.

The **38-member special committee** on the **COVID-19 pandemic**: lessons learned and recommendations for the future will examine the European response to the pandemic in the areas of health, democracy and fundamental rights, economy and society, and the EU's global relations.

In particular, it will cover the following issues:

- the response of the EU, its institutions and agencies, to the pandemic, building on the Health Union package to strengthen the EU’s crisis prevention, preparedness and response to cross-border health threats;

- the impact on healthcare provision of staff shortages and the availability of medicines and medical devices, including protective equipment, and the impact of the pandemic on care services, care-home residents, workers, informal carers and their dependants;

- the impact of the pandemic on the rise of digital health, telemedicine and teleconsultation, remote monitoring, connected devices, digital health platforms and health apps;

- the EU COVID-19 vaccine strategy and how it was able to ensure the delivery of safe and effective vaccines, including the negotiation of Advanced Purchase Agreements and Joint Purchase Agreements, the transparency and enforcement of contracts and licensing agreements, and vaccine production, storage and distribution;

- the role and mandate of the European Health Emergency preparedness and Response Authority (HERA), the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC);

- vaccine hesitancy and the spread of misinformation in fighting the pandemic;

- the inter-linkage of animal health and human health, notably in relation to zoonotic diseases;

- the necessity and proportionality of Member States’ border closures and other restrictions on the free movement of persons and the internal market;

- the impact on the individual and fundamental rights of vulnerable groups and on inequality in general, on gender equality and on the education of children and young people;

- measures to ensure health-related EU strategic autonomy and the resilience of supply chains;

- the impact on those sectors hardest hit by the pandemic, such as culture, hospitality, tourism and transport;

- the role of the EU and its Member States in addressing the inadequate supply and inequitable access to COVID-19 vaccines and medical products worldwide, including in the context of the World Health Organisation (WHO), the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and other multilateral initiatives such as COVAX.

The special committee has a 12-month mandate, at the end of which it will submit a report to Parliament with recommendations for action or initiatives, as appropriate.