
European Commission's Scientific Advice Mechanism
Scientific advice on the topic

**Strategic crisis management in the EU:
Improving EU crisis prevention, preparedness, response and resilience**

Call for Nominations for a SAPEA Working Group

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Background

The European Commission's Scientific Advice Mechanism provides independent and transparent scientific advice. It consists of the independent [Group of Chief Scientific Advisors](#) and the [SAPEA](#) (Science Advice for Policy by European Academies) consortium.

SAPEA comprises the five European Academy Networks - [Academia Europaea](#), [ALLEA](#), [EASAC](#), [Euro-CASE](#) and [FEAM](#) - and brings together outstanding expertise in engineering, humanities, medicine, natural and social sciences from over 100 academies, young academies and learned societies across Europe.

The Group of Chief Scientific Advisors, in collaboration with [the European Group on Ethics in Science and New Technologies](#), will develop a Scientific Opinion with the working title of '*Strategic crisis management in the EU: Improving EU crisis prevention, preparedness, response and resilience*'.

The Advisors intend to deliver their Scientific Opinion by June 2022. To inform it, they have asked SAPEA to produce an Evidence Review Report. The main question to be answered by the Scientific Advice Mechanism is:

Based on a broad and multidisciplinary understanding, how can the EU improve its strategic crisis management?

This is the third phase of the Advisors' work dedicated to examining evidence on lessons learned from the COVID-19 crisis ([see previous phases of work](#)).

While only now beginning to recover from the aftermath of the pandemic, the EU and European societies must prepare for a range of other natural or human-made shocks, which may include, and go beyond,

major health threats. Future crises may, for example, be caused by a changing climate, environmental degradation, increasing inequality or security issues. These events may lead to disruptions and cascading effects throughout increasingly connected infrastructure networks, such as energy, water, transportation or digital networks. Moreover, these events are likely to be interrelated and to co-occur as a part of global threats. Improving the EU's strategic crisis management, which is defined broadly to cover prevention, preparedness, response, recovery, and resilience, has thus become essential for protecting and enhancing the present and future wellbeing and prosperity of EU citizens, and achieving sustainable growth.

While the EU has shown its capacity to react to past and ongoing crises, there is nevertheless an urgent need to investigate - based on the best available cross-disciplinary expertise - improvements to the overarching EU cross-sectoral crisis management framework, while re-examining the core analytical and conceptual framework that has been used to inform EU policies related to crisis management.

The Advisors' Scientific Opinion and the evidence review carried out by SAPEA should cover the following aspects:

- Identifying and prioritising where the added value of the EU lies in crisis situations;
- Providing an overview and streamlined definitions of relevant concepts and frameworks, and their use in crisis management at the EU level;
- Reviewing EU crisis governance, coordination and operations, especially looking at cross-sectoral approaches to face multi-hazard crises and cascading effects;
- Reviewing the needed long-term strategies and adequate tools to support decision-making;
- Integrating social and ethical aspects, especially mitigation of inequalities in the face of crises, and citizen trust and participation in crisis mechanisms.

It is also proposed to analyse up to four carefully selected evidence-based case studies of major threats, as a way to verify and exemplify the overarching findings, from the areas of:

- Climate change, environmental degradation including biodiversity loss and its cascading impacts;
- Security, including large-scale cybersecurity threats, strategic autonomy and hybrid threats;
- Serious cross-border health threats (beyond pandemics).

Please contact AECardiffHub@cardiff.ac.uk if you would like more information on this topic and to receive a copy of the draft scoping paper.

SAPEA call for nominations

SAPEA will undertake the Evidence Review Report that informs the Scientific Opinion of the Advisors. **To address the topic, SAPEA will set up an international and interdisciplinary working group, covering the necessary fields, both from the social sciences/humanities and natural sciences/technical fields.**

The Working Group will be chaired by Professor Tina Comes, who was appointed by the SAPEA Board. Professor Comes is Full Professor in Decision-Making and Digitalisation at the School of Business & Economics (University of Maastricht) and Associate Professor at the Faculty Technology, Policy & Management (TU Delft). Since 2014, she is Visiting Professor at Lamsade, Université Dauphine, Paris. She

serves as Scientific Director of the 4TU Centre on Resilience Engineering (the Netherlands). She is also a member of the Norwegian Academy of Technological Sciences.

The Working Group experts will provide their input mostly via online meetings and are expected to draft sections of the Evidence Review Report between meetings. A first solid draft of the evidence review is expected by December 2021/January 2022, and a final draft for peer review by April 2022.

We welcome your support through the nomination of experts. They may be selected as members of the Working Group, for the peer review process or as discussants at a workshop. We also welcome the suggestion of any published reports or publications on the topic.

Examples of **areas of expertise** that may be of relevance are provided below. All nominated experts should have expertise in the broad area of crisis management, prevention, preparedness, response, and resilience. This knowledge may be applied to certain areas in particular (e.g. health, climate, digital, society, infrastructure, governance, EU policy etc, as set out in the scoping paper.

- Political, policy sciences, governance of crises (at national and EU levels)
- History, quantitative history
- Economy, political economy, institutional economics, management science
- Natural and systems sciences, environmental studies, complexity
- Computer sciences, especially cyber resilience and social media analytics, crisis informatics
- Health and healthcare systems
- Psychology and cognitive sciences
- Technical sciences and engineering, especially looking at infrastructure resilience, design, tools and supportive innovations
- Security science and risk management
- Geography, (social) vulnerability
- Sociology, anthropology
- Legal sciences
- Ethical sciences, philosophy

A diverse group of experts will be selected across different fields, and attention will be given to gender balance, geographical coverage and career level ([see criteria for selection](#)). All experts selected will be asked to complete the Standard Declaration of Interests form of the European Commission. A SAPEA Selection Committee will meet to review the nominations; the composition of the Working Group will be approved by the SAPEA Board.

The organisational lead network for the topic is ALLEA (the European Federation of Academies of Sciences and Humanities), working closely with AE, EASAC, Euro-CASE and FEAM, which are the other European Academy Networks in SAPEA.

Nominations of experts should please be accompanied by a detailed curriculum vitae, together with a short statement on how the nominee's experience meets the areas of expertise needed.

We would be very grateful if you could inform us whether you have checked your experts' availability before nominating them. Please address your response to AECardiffHub@cardiff.ac.uk by the deadline of **27 August 2021**. We would very much appreciate an early response if possible.

If there are any travel costs, they will be reimbursed by SAPEA for attendance at meetings. Kindly note that experts selected for the Working Group will carry out their work on a voluntary basis and will not receive any fee for their time.

If you have questions or would like further information please email AECardiffHub@cardiff.ac.uk

Thank you very much in advance and we look forward to hearing from you,



Professor Antonio Loprieno

Chair of the SAPEA Board, President of ALLEA

Previous phases of work examining lessons from COVID-19 crisis

This is the third phase of the work of the Group of Chief Scientific Advisors dedicated to examining evidence on lessons from the COVID-19 crisis. The first two phases (done jointly with the European Group on Ethics and Professor Peter Piot, Special Advisor on COVID-19 to European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen) were:

- **Phase 1:** A joint '[Statement on scientific advice to European policy makers during the COVID-19 pandemic](#)' (June 2020), which offered guidance on the provision of scientific advice in pandemics, in particular during the current COVID-19 crisis.
- **Phase 2:** A joint Opinion on '[Improving pandemics preparedness and management](#)' (November 2020), which provides recommendations beyond the COVID-19 crisis. The Opinion has already informed the legal package 'Towards a European Health Union: Stronger EU preparedness and response for health crises' which was adopted on 11 November. Nine experts nominated by European academies and SAPEA contributed to this Opinion.

Criteria for selection of members to the international Working Group

A SAPEA-appointed Selection Committee will select the experts according to demonstrated excellence in one or more of the fields listed in the Call, and other criteria such as:

- Interdisciplinarity; all relevant disciplines should be included
- Wide geographical coverage of Europe
- Participation of underrepresented gender in SAPEA Working Groups of at least 40%
- Inclusion of early career researchers
- Commitment and time availability

There should be a good diversity of technical, professional, and scientific experts, ranging from highly focused specialists to generalists, from well-established to early-career career stage, and as socially, culturally and gender balanced as possible.

Please note that nomination does not guarantee selection to the Working Group. The average success rate varies according to the topic but is around 20%.

SAPEA Working Group members will need to fill in the Standard Declaration of Interests form of the European Commission. Further information about SAPEA Quality Assurance Procedures can be found here: www.sapea.info/publications/quality-assurance/.

Expected workload, support and timeline

Members of the Working Group are expected to:

- Meet approximately once a month or as appropriate, between September 2021 and May 2022 (expected to be mostly online meetings);
- Consider the results of structured literature reviews on the topic, carried out in coordination with the Working Group;
- Draft the Evidence Review Report; review and advise on the editorial work undertaken by SAPEA staff, with the first draft of the Evidence Review Report to be delivered by December 2021/January 2022;
- Write up evidence-based conclusions and policy options, presented in a balanced and non-biased way;
- Respond to the comments on the draft Evidence Review Report made by external experts at an expert workshop in April 2022; attendance of some members of the Working Group will be required;
- Respond to the comments made by the peer reviewers on the Evidence Review Report in May 2022;
- Be involved in stakeholder and public engagement work (such as meetings, conferences, events) as appropriate, following delivery of the Report.

In support, SAPEA staff will:

- Manage the project, establish the Working Group and organise the meetings;
- Coordinate the literature reviews that will be undertaken for the Working Group;
- Undertake editorial work on drafts of the Evidence Review Report, in liaison with the Chair and Working Group;
- Organise a workshop comprised of a wider group of experts, to consider the draft Evidence Review Report;
- Coordinate a formal peer review of the final draft of the Evidence Review Report;
- Coordinate stakeholder and public engagement work associated with the topic;
- Prepare and publish the final Evidence Review Report, by June 2022

An *indicative* timeline is as follows:

2021	Task
<i>September</i>	Final formation of Working Group
<i>October</i>	Working Group meeting(s)
<i>November</i>	Working Group meeting(s)
<i>December</i>	Working Group meeting(s)
2022	<i>Production of first solid draft</i>
<i>January</i>	Working Group meeting(s)
<i>February</i>	Working Group meeting(s)
<i>March</i>	Working Group meeting(s) <i>Production of second solid draft</i>
<i>April</i>	SAPEA expert workshop

	<p>Working Group meeting(s) to address comments from the workshop</p> <p>Evidence Review Report sent for peer review</p>
<i>May</i>	<p>Working Group meeting(s) to address comments from peer review</p> <p>Peer review comments addressed by Working Group</p> <p>Compilation of final Evidence Review Report</p>
<i>June</i>	<p>Evidence Review Report endorsement by SAPEA Board</p> <p>Final designed Evidence Review Report handed over to European Commission</p> <p>Advisor's Scientific Opinion and SAPEA Evidence Review Report published</p>