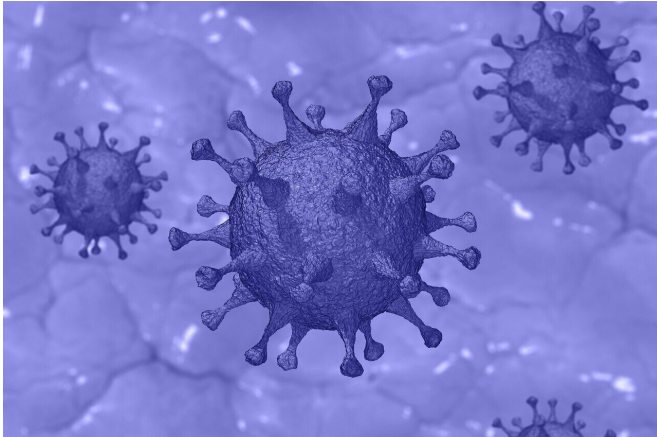


Experts call for Europe-wide COVID-19 targets

19 December 2020



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A group of more than 300 leading scientists across the globe are calling for European governments to work together in managing the pandemic and make a clear commitment to COVID-19 case number targets.

The letter, co-authored by Dr. Deepti Gurdasani from Queen Mary University of London and coordinated by Viola Priesemann from the Max Planck Institute for Dynamics and Self-Organization in Göttingen, is published today in *The Lancet*.

"Across Europe, the COVID-19 pandemic is causing excess deaths, placing a burden on societies and health systems, and harming the economy," they write. "Yet European governments have yet to develop a common vision to guide the management of the pandemic."

The letter outlines the need for a pan-European commitment to reducing and maintaining case numbers for COVID-19 at very low levels to protect people's health, society and economies. It highlights how uncontrolled spread in one region

can put the successful management of the pandemic in other regions at risk, suggesting a common vision is needed to achieve this goal.

"With open borders across Europe, a single country alone cannot keep the number of COVID-19 cases low; thus joint action and common goals among countries are essential," the authors write. "We therefore call for a strong, coordinated European response and clearly defined goals for the medium and long term."

To better manage the COVID-19 pandemic, the scientists are proposing a strategy with three core elements:

- 1) Achieve low case numbers—aiming for a target of no more than ten new COVID-19 cases per million people per day, with synchronisation across all European countries so that SARS-CoV-2 infections are not imported across borders.
- 2) Keep case numbers low—with continued and improved mitigation measures (such as mask wearing, hygiene, moderate contact reduction, testing and contact tracing), a strategy for delivering at least 300 tests per million people per day, and rapid response to local outbreaks.
- 3) Develop a longer-term common vision—with context-sensitive regional and national action plans as well as European level goals, strategies for elimination, screening, vaccination, protection of those at high risk, and support for those most affected by the [pandemic](#).

The authors conclude: "We urge governments throughout Europe to agree on clearly formulated common goals, to coordinate their efforts, to develop regionally adapted strategies to reach the goals, and thereby work resolutely towards low case numbers."

More information: Correspondence: 'Calling for

Pan-European commitment for rapid and sustained reduction in SARS-CoV-2 infections' by Priesemann et al. *The Lancet*. DOI: [10.1016/S0140-6736](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736)

www.containcovid-pan.eu/

Provided by Queen Mary, University of London

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