

**EU Member State****Information / Type of Inquiry****Belgium**

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A special committee on Covid-19 management was set up on 2 July 2020 to assess the Belgian management of the COVID-19 epidemic. The committee decided to structure its work around five themes:

- Preparation for a possible large-scale health crisis (pre-corona)
- Functioning, management and financing of the care sector and nursing staff
- International harmonisation and communication
- Purchase, production and distribution of protective and testing equipment, medicines and tracing
- Intra-Belgian coordination of the approach, communication and containment.

The description, in French, is here:

<https://www.lachambre.be/kvvcr/showpage.cfm?language=fr&section=/pri/covid&story=commission.xml>

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**Croatia**

No official evaluation has been conducted at the state level. However, in December 2020, the political opposition requested an evaluation from the Government on the measures taken so far in the country, after which the Government submitted a report. Also, in May 2021 the political opposition requested the dismissal of the Minister of health. The opposition believes the pandemic was used for health abuses. After that, the Ministry of Health issued a report on the work of the Minister so far.

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**Czech Republic**

In Czechia, there has not been any formal inquiry on the pandemic handling yet, apart from the Supreme Audit Office investigation which, however, limited itself to the public procurements of personal protective equipment and medical devices during the first wave (i.e. spring 2020).

The short summary (translated by Google): The Supreme Audit Office examined the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Specifically, it focused on the purchase of personal protective equipment and medical devices. From 1 January to 31 August 2020, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of the Interior paid 8.5 billion CZK for them, including transport and related services. The inspection showed that the Ministry of Health underestimated the preparation for a pandemic of new infectious diseases; for example, it last updated the Pandemic Plan of the Czech Republic in 2011. The Ministry of Health responded with delay to the lack of protective equipment in medical facilities. The purchase of protective equipment itself was accompanied by chaos due to the fact that there were independent purchasing teams at the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of the Interior that did not cooperate. Everything then resulted in contractual conditions unfavourable for the state, significant differences in the prices of comparable PPE, shortcomings in their quality and problems with transport from abroad.

Details (in Czech) to be found at: <https://www.nku.cz/cz/pro-media/tiskove-zpravy/stat-podcenil-pripravu-na-pandemii--nakupy-ochrannych-pomucek-provazel-chaos--vyrazne-cenove-rozdily--nedostatky-v-jejich-kvalite-i-problemy-s-dopravo-id11735/>

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<b>Estonia</b>	<p>There is an analysis on COVID impact on labour market, more broadly socio economic impact and gender inequality. <a href="http://www.praxis.ee/tood/covid-19-sotsiaal-majanduslik-moju/">http://www.praxis.ee/tood/covid-19-sotsiaal-majanduslik-moju/</a></p> <p>Tartu University is currently conducting an analysis assessing COVID impact on nursing. This should be finalised by the end of the year. <a href="https://tervis.ut.ee/et/uudised/tartu-ulikoolis-uuritakse-covid-19-moju-oendusabile">https://tervis.ut.ee/et/uudised/tartu-ulikoolis-uuritakse-covid-19-moju-oendusabile</a> (in Estonian)</p> <p>Currently Estonia has only published audits from the State Audit Office (summary available as well in English) very specifically assessing the use of funding allocated public institutions during the crises. <a href="https://www.riigikontroll.ee/tabid/206/Audit/2526/language/et-EE/Default.aspx">https://www.riigikontroll.ee/tabid/206/Audit/2526/language/et-EE/Default.aspx</a>  <a href="https://www.riigikontroll.ee/tabid/206/Audit/2512/language/et-EE/Default.aspx">https://www.riigikontroll.ee/tabid/206/Audit/2512/language/et-EE/Default.aspx</a></p>
<b>Finland</b>	<p>Two official evaluations on the Covid-19 preparedness and responses in Finland have just been released by the Safety Investigation Authority and the National Audit Office. <a href="https://turvallisuustutkinta.fi/en/index/currentissues/releases/2021/anindependentinvestigationrecommendsimprovementstothestatecrisisleadershipsysteminformationflowandpreparedness.html">https://turvallisuustutkinta.fi/en/index/currentissues/releases/2021/anindependentinvestigationrecommendsimprovementstothestatecrisisleadershipsysteminformationflowandpreparedness.html</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.vtv.fi/en/publications/security-of-supply-and-safeguarding-it-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/">https://www.vtv.fi/en/publications/security-of-supply-and-safeguarding-it-during-the-covid-19-pandemic/</a></p> <p>There are several government funded projects looking at different aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as pandemics preparedness in general. For instance, the Council of Strategic Research has launched a research programme on the topic Pandemics as a Challenge for Society (PANDEMICS) <a href="https://www.aka.fi/en/strategic-research/strategic-research/strategic-research-in-a-nutshell/programmes-and-projects/pandemics/">https://www.aka.fi/en/strategic-research/strategic-research/strategic-research-in-a-nutshell/programmes-and-projects/pandemics/</a></p>
<b>France</b>	<p>In France there are three formal inquiries on the management of COVID-19! One commissioned by the National Assembly, a second by the Senate and one commissioned by President Macron which is an independent committee directed by a Swiss epidemiologist.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Borowczyk, J. and Ciotti, E. (2020), Information report on the impact, management and consequences in all its dimensions of the Coronavirus-Covid 19 epidemic. 'Rapport d'information déposé par la mission d'information relative à l'impact, la gestion et les conséquences dans toutes ses dimensions de l'épidémie de Coronavirus-Covid 19'. National Assembly. No. 1399.</li> <li>2. Milon A, Deroche C, Jomier B, Vermeillet S. (2020), Report for the president of the Senat, Commission of inquiry on public policies against major pandemics in light of the health crisis of covid-19 and its management, Sénat, No. 199, Tome 1.</li> <li>3. Pittet, D., Boone, L., Moulin, AM., Briet, R. and Parneix, P. (2020), Report for the President of the Republic, Independent mission on the evaluation of the management of Covid-19 crisis ['Mission indépendante nationale sur l'évaluation de la gestion de la crise Covid-19 et sur l'anticipation des risques pandémiques']. Final report: <a href="https://www.vie-publique.fr/rapport/279851-gestion-crise-covid-et-anticipation-de-risques-pandemiques-rapport-final">https://www.vie-publique.fr/rapport/279851-gestion-crise-covid-et-anticipation-de-risques-pandemiques-rapport-final</a></li> </ol>

## Ireland

1. A parliamentary Special Committee on Covid-19 Response was established on 6 May 2020 to consider and take evidence on the State's response to Covid-19. The priority focus of the Committee was of necessity on health-related matters, including the deaths in nursing homes, the adequacy of testing and contact tracing, the impact on health care workers and the impact on non-Covid health care provision. The Committee also spent a significant amount of time considering the repeated and large scale outbreaks in meat processing plants.

Its final report from October 2020 is

here: [https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/special\\_committee\\_on\\_covid\\_19\\_response/reports/2020/2020-10-09\\_final-report-of-the-special-committee-on-covid-19-response-sccr004\\_en.pdf](https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/special_committee_on_covid_19_response/reports/2020/2020-10-09_final-report-of-the-special-committee-on-covid-19-response-sccr004_en.pdf) and submissions here <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/committees/33/special-committee-on-covid-19-response/>

This committee spent a lot of time considering the high numbers of deaths in nursing homes and it produced a specific interim report on this matter here:

[https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/special\\_committee\\_on\\_covid\\_19\\_response/reports/2020/2020-07-31\\_interim-report-on-covid-19-in-nursing-homes\\_en.pdf](https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/33/special_committee_on_covid_19_response/reports/2020/2020-07-31_interim-report-on-covid-19-in-nursing-homes_en.pdf)

2. There was a also specific report into what happened in nursing homes in wave 1 carried out by the State regulator: <https://www.hiqa.ie/reports-and-publications/key-reports-and-investigations/impact-covid-19-nursing-homes-ireland>
3. Another on nursing homes by an expert group commissioned by the health minister <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/3af5a-covid-19-nursing-homes-expert-panel-final-report/>

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National Parliamentary Inquiry Commission on the causes of the outbreak of the pandemic and the adequacy of the measures taken by States and by the WHO to prevent its spread around the world (Chamber of Deputies) was proposed at the end of April 2021. The inquiry aims would include:

- carrying out investigations and evaluating the effectiveness and timeliness of the measures adopted by national, regional and local authorities.
- investigating the causes of and responsibilities for anti-Covid strategic choices, the potential presence of speculative, illicit and corrupt phenomena, resource allocation and management, the regions choices on behalf of the government, hospital trusts and local health agencies, public tender procedures and medical personnel selection processes;
- assessing the effectiveness and outcomes National Health Institute, of the Technical and Scientific Committee and other entities, commissions or committees that supported decision-makers at every level
- evaluating the effectiveness of the indications provided to Italy by international organizations and their impact on the National Health Service.
- verifying defaults or delays, illicit or unlawful conduct of PAs and public or private entities operating in the scientific, health, productive and commercial sectors, or having control functions, ascertaining in particular the level of attention and the capacity to intervene in prevention, treatment and assistance activities
- verifying the procedures for the construction of health facilities

## Italy

- verifying the negotiation of vaccines, the effectiveness of the vaccination plan

**Suggested sources:**

- <http://documenti.camera.it/leg18/dossier/pdf/ES0265.pdf>
- [https://www.italiaviva.it/petizione\\_commissione\\_inchiesta\\_emergenza\\_covid](https://www.italiaviva.it/petizione_commissione_inchiesta_emergenza_covid)
- <https://www.rainews.it/dl/rainews/articoli/covid-commissione-inchiesta-italia-viva-deposita-ddl-043f5dd7-e7e3-43a9-905a-4af7d2772cde.html>

**Latvia**

Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry into the Government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic was initiated on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021: the Parliament is questioning government decisions regarding the COVID-19 response, including mitigation measures. The parliamentary commission has 6 months to report.

<https://www.saeima.lv/lv/aktualitates/saeimas-zinas/29704-saeima-izveido-parlamentaras-izmeklesanas-komisiju-par-valdibas-ricibu-covid-19-pandemijas-parvaresanas-procesa>

**Latvia**

The State Audit Office has provided Auditing 'Emergency' spending allocated to address COVID-19 in different sectors related to the legality and transparency of the use of additional funding

For example,

- An audit to ascertain whether the Ministry of Health used the funding of 14.9 million euros allocated to increase the capacity of the largest hospitals in the country following the purpose

<https://www.lrvk.gov.lv/en/audit-summaries/audit-summaries/solidity-and-use-of-the-requests-for-additional-funds-to-increase-the-fixed-capital-of-the-state-owned-enterprises-managed-by-the-ministry-of-health-to-cover-the-costs-incurred-due-to-the-covid-19-outbreak>

- An audit related to the funding to provide bonuses to medical practitioners and other employees in the healthcare sector for working in high-risk and hyperdynamic environment related to the COVID-19 outbreak and its consequences.

<https://lrvk.gov.lv/en/audit-summaries/audit-summaries/provision-of-bonuses-to-medical-practitioners-and-other-healthcare-workers-related-to-the-covid-19-outbreak>

- An audit on the downtime benefit administered by the Ministry of Finance, and the downtime support benefit administered by the Ministry of Welfare

<https://lrvk.gov.lv/en/news/sao-latvia-provides-the-government-with-an-assessment-of-bonus-calculations-and-costs-during-the-spring-emergency>

- An interim report for auditing the use of the allocated funding for the provision of distance learning.

<https://www.lrvk.gov.lv/en/audit-summaries/audit-summaries/providing-a-distance-learning-process-during-an-emergency>

More information on completed audits

<https://www.lrvk.gov.lv/en/covid-19/auditing-covid-19-emergency-spending/completed-audits>

## Norway

An independent commission (Coronavirus Commission) reviewed lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic in Norway, and results were published in March 2021. Perhaps of interest is the mandate for the commission published in English here. It gave the commission wide ranging authority to request information in regard to access necessary information in order to assess the management of the pandemic by the Norwegian authorities.

<https://www.koronakommisjonen.no/mandate-in-english/Norway>

Summary of the findings are presented in English here:

[https://files.nettsteder.regjeringen.no/wpuploads01/blogs.dir/421/files/2021/04/Vedlegg-1\\_Summary-in-english.pdf](https://files.nettsteder.regjeringen.no/wpuploads01/blogs.dir/421/files/2021/04/Vedlegg-1_Summary-in-english.pdf)

Another follow up evaluation report has been announced that will cover the second half of 2020.

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In Portugal, 30 July 2020, Parliament Resolution n.º 56/2020 created an Ad Hoc Committee to monitor the implementation of the measures in response to the pandemic disease COVID -19 and the process of economic and social recovery.

The mission of this committee is to:

- Analyse the application/implementation of the exceptional legal regimes approved in the framework of the fight against the COVID -19 pandemic and the regulatory measures that implemented them
- Analyse the evolution of the pandemic and its effects on public health and economic activity, in relation to the Government's decisions on measures to prevent infection by SARS -CoV -2 and the obligations of the population arising from these measures
- Monitor the process of economic and social recovery.

## Portugal

The Committee shall hear: the members of the Government directly involved in the application of the legal regimes approved in the framework of the fight against the COVID -19 pandemic; the Medical and the Nursing Councils as well as other representative entities of these occupational groups and also representatives of other professionals directly involved in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic; and other entities whose hearing is deemed convenient.

More information:

1. Portal da Comissão [Internet]. [cited 2021 Jun 15]. Available from:

<https://www.parlamento.pt/sites/COM/XIVLeg/CEAMCOVID19/Paginas/Default.aspx>

2. RAR n.º56/2020-Constituição de Comissão Eventual para o acompanhamento da aplicação das medidas de resposta à pandemia da doença COVID-19 e do processo de recuperação económica e social [Internet]. [cited 2021 Jun 15]. Available from: <https://www.sgeconomia.gov.pt/destaques/rar-n562020-constituicao-de-comissao-eventual-para-o-acompanhamento-da-aplicacao-das-medidas-de-resposta-a-pandemia-da-doenca-covid-19-e-do-processo-de-recuperacao-economica-e-socialspan-classnovo-novospan.aspx>.

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## Slovakia

Only one inspection was carried out by the Supreme Audit Office, focused on processes at Slovak moveable reserves (i.e. entity responsible for procuring masks, ventilators, PPEs etc).

The report was published in December 2020 and can be found here: <https://www.nku.gov.sk/aktuality/>

[/asset\\_publisher/9A3u/content/pandemia-odhalila-rizika-v-riadeni-statu-pocas-mimoriadnejsituacie?fbclid=IwAR2DsSnw64ACbBUxW8cmsemqfmKsp0DoWMaPVKZPsdbtKx-nOsKQuS57A9E](/asset_publisher/9A3u/content/pandemia-odhalila-rizika-v-riadeni-statu-pocas-mimoriadnejsituacie?fbclid=IwAR2DsSnw64ACbBUxW8cmsemqfmKsp0DoWMaPVKZPsdbtKx-nOsKQuS57A9E) ;

The second planned inquiry will focus on “protection of the population against infectious diseases”, i.e. overall analysis of the management of pandemics was announced but is yet to be carried out.

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## Spain

The Inter-territorial council (the Health Ministry with regional health authorities) set up a working group (in October 2020) to develop an evaluation framework for the assessment of the National Health System performance during the pandemic. The group had to define the scope, objectives and the required indicators to comprehensively assess the system. The evaluation framework has been already set up but unfortunately has not been made public yet and the independent audit has not started.

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## The Netherlands

In the Netherlands several initiatives have been started to evaluate the COVID-19 approach in the country. Initiatives were initiated by the Ministry of Justice and Safety (still in the preparation phase), the Ministry of Health (evaluation of the first wave) and the Dutch Safety Board, an independent institute that advises the government on safety issues in a broad sense (evaluation ongoing). The Dutch Safety Board uses the evaluation of the Ministry of Health as input for the further evaluation. Below, for each initiative, a short overview is provided from the source, the main question and the phase in which the project is currently. (Sources are in Dutch but Google translate may help).

### Ministry of Safety and Justice

- Source: <https://www.inspectie-jenv.nl/binaries/inspectie-venj/documenten/plannen-van-aanpak/2020/12/10/plan-van-aanpak-evaluatie-aanpak-covid-19/Plan+van+Aanpak+evaluatie+aanpak+Covid-19.pdf>
- Title: Evaluation approach Covid-19, Action plan (Evaluatie aanpak Covid-19, Plan van aanpak). December 2020
- Main question: In which way do the involved organisations and consultative structures cooperate in combatting Covid-19 and what can we learn from this (for both enforcement of measures and health care)
- No planning provided (yet), project is in an initial phase.

### Ministry of Health

- Source: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/publicaties/2020/08/31/documenten-lessons-learned-corona>; <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/downloads/document?id=fad92ef8-9a2c-4303-9028-e3fdb9e8c79c&title=Lessons%20Learned%20Covid-19.pdf>
- The MoH consulted over 100 experts with a diverse scale of expertise to evaluate the approach of the COVID-19 during the first wave. Several themes were identified: testing and tracing, the effects of the lockdown, communication to the public, the corona dashboard (providing information about infection rates etc.), health care (ICU, LTC and regular care), effects on vulnerable groups, availability of PPE and international comparison. The aim was to provide information for the government to strengthen and improve the Covid-19 policy. The MoH drafted a summary with lessons to be considered for prevention and handling a possible second wave.

- Result: Letter for Parliament: 1 August 2020. It is unclear (at least to me) whether these lessons learnt lead to improvements or changes in policy.

#### **Dutch Safety Board**

- Source: <https://www.onderzoeksraad.nl/en/page/16666/aanpak-coronacrisis>
- The Dutch Safety Board is an independent institution that advises the government on safety issues. The Board was requested by the cabinet to evaluate the COVID-19 crisis and will look at the approach by the Dutch government and other involved parties. The Board focuses on the pandemic preparedness, crisis management, imposed measures and reimposition of the measures. In addition, the Board looks at effects of the crisis on the safety of vulnerable groups in society, for instance as a result of downscaling regular care or social services. Medical treatments and economic support measures are not part of the research. The aim is to provide lessons learned for possible future pandemics.
- The preparatory phase of the research was finalized on 25 September 2020. Input was the above mentioned consultation of experts and several visits of researchers of the Board to crisis meetings. The evaluation will contain a review of the actions of relevant parties before the outbreak in the Netherlands and during the different phases of the pandemic. Attention will be paid to how the continuous development of knowledge of the virus is used in the management of the crisis. Furthermore, the organisation of crisis management, the decision making processes, the questions related to capacity, communication, enforcement and compliance of measures will be evaluated. Special attention will be paid to how the crisis was dealt with in nursing homes. When relevant, the analysis will be seen in an international perspective. In October, a supervisory committee was appointed, consisting of representatives from the health care, science and supervision and management fields. The role of the supervisory committee is to reflect upon and contribute to the investigation from a practical point of view.
- Ongoing, last available update: 7 October 2020

The information was collected and summarised by the Health Systems Policy Monitor (<https://www.hspm.org/mainpage.aspx>) of the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies following a contribution by its country representatives.