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## NUI Galway's New Project on Future Pandemic Response



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The National University of Ireland (NUI Galway) is starting a new project aimed to improve the EU's preparedness to manage future pandemics through the use of IT solutions.

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The PANDEM-2 Project, which has just received almost €10 million of EU funding, will focus on developing systems and processes for efficient simulations of pandemic scenarios, and use those to educate pandemic management experts in Ireland and Europe. "The goal of PANDEM-2 is to prepare Europe for future pandemics through innovations in training and to build capacity between EU member states responding to pandemics on a cross-border basis," according to the description of the project. Among the priorities are also resource planning and management in key areas, such as hospital capacities, provision of personal protective equipment and vaccination programmes.

The new initiative is based on several previous EU-funded projects including the original PANDEM. The NUI Galway-led project will last for two years and should result in the development of a suite of novel concepts, services and IT systems to be deployed in the EU for a more consistent and efficient pandemic response. Its main outcomes are planned to be the following:

- A coherent pandemic-management database through integrating data from different sources
- A dashboard for pandemic response execution
- A Resource Modelling and Management service
- Enable participatory surveillance for data collection
- Efficient pandemic communication
- Cross-border Capacity Building and Operational Strategy
- A long-term basis for future pandemic responses

COVID-19 has been an unprecedented source of practical information for pandemic management. The future response should take this information into consideration, especially in the areas that proved to have room for improvement. Among those are the analysis of real time data, sharing of information across borders and adopting common and consistent policies. Future policies should also include factors such as growing populations, increased international travel as well as environmental factors facilitating the spread of new diseases.

In addition to the NUI Galway's team, PANDEM-2 brings together European experts in health, security, defence, microbiology, communications, information technology and emergency management fields. Participating in the project's Advisory Board are the World Health Organisation (WHO) and European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).

According to Professor Máire Connolly, College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, NUI Galway and Coordinator of the PANDEM-2 Project, there is a need for cross-collaboration between the EU member states in their preparations to future pandemics. "The state-of-the-art tools that will be developed by PANDEM-2 have the potential to transform how Europe prepares for future large-scale healthcare crises through improved analysis of surveillance and contact tracing data, innovative pandemic modelling, better resource allocation and training of pandemic managers using simulations across Europe," Prof Connolly said in a statement.

More information about the PANDEM-2 Project can be found [here](#).

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