Protection of EU Citizens and Democracy

Introduction

More than 110,000 European citizens have died after contracting Coronavirus with more than 1 million confirmed total cases more than in any other continent. Millions of Europeans have applied for unemployment in just the past month, and millions of businesses are at a high risk of bankruptcy—right in the midst of a massive public health crisis. The coronavirus disease 2019 or (COVID-19) pandemic is having a profound effect on all aspects of society, including short-term and long-term mental health and physical health. The pandemic thus raises difficult questions about whether European Union and liberal democracies can adequately protect their citizens.

There has already been much discussion about whether authoritarian states will emerge stronger from this crisis than democracies. In particular, although the virus originated in China and the government initially seemed to struggle to deal with it, it was able to largely contain the outbreak in Hubei and deploy vast resources from the rest of the country to deal with it.

However, although authoritarian states seem so far to have coped relatively well with the virus, some democracies also succeeded thus far in containing the virus. In fact, some East Asian democracies appear to have done even better than China. At the time of writing South Korea, with a population of 51.5 million, has had only 144 death rates so far. Taiwan, with a population of nearly 24 million, has had only two deaths.

So rather than thinking in terms of the relative performance of authoritarian states and democracies, perhaps instead we should be asking what we in Europe can learn from East Asian democracies.

To beat the virus and stave off future waves of reinfection, and thus protect European citizens and Democracy, we must act NOW and act fast with a predetermined European unity and resolve .To this end, we propose a framework or an agile action plan which will ensure a rapid and optimal design , development, and operation of targeted and measured solutions to beat the virus and save European lives and Democracy.

Vision: Protect EU citizens & European democracy

Key Goals:

- Reduce the number of daily deaths caused by Coronavirus to zero by the end of 2022 with or without a vaccine
- Support EU economy to recover at least to its pre-crisis levels of growth
- Minimise short-term and long-term mental and economic impacts on European citizens

Key Capabilities:

1. Establish an Agile High Level Coronavirus Recovery Task Force similar to one proposed by the European Commission in its FIRST "ERAvsCORONA" ACTION PLAN
   - The Agile Task force has a limited mandate to achieve the above vision and its key goals within the timing proposed
   - The Agile Task force consists of no more than seven team members whose participation will be conducive to achieving the intended vision and goals
   - The Agile Task force is cross-functional. It should consist of at least the following team members
     1. EU Chief Medical Officer
     2. EU Chief Economic Officer
     3. EU Chief data Science Officer
     4. EU Chief Military Officer
     5. Agile Task force Portfolio Manager or Chief Portfolio Owner
     6. EU IT Chief Officer
     7. EU Commission President
   - The vision and goals must be "projectised" or turn into no more than seven projects at a time so that they can be managed in line with best agile methods and practices
   - Each project will have a cross functional team to achieve its objective. For example, a "testing project" with aim to test, contact trace, and make data available to other team members

- A project may consist of more than one subproject for example "Testing Project" may contain "contact tracing" and a mobile application and or web application which could facilitate data collecting and analysis related to testing
- The different projects should form an Agile portfolio backlog and thus be managed in line with Agile Portfolio Management best practices to ensure a fast and optimal delivery of solutions
- The portfolio of projects consist of all projects that are deemed necessary to the fulfilment of the vision and the task force goals which may include:
  8. "Testing Project"
  9. "Hospital Capacity Project"
  10. "PPE and equipment procurement project"
  11. "Economic recovery" project
- Each project is managed in line with best agile methods and practices
- Each project or portfolio of projects is deployed in line with best agile solution deployment practices
- Stakeholders or end-users whose needs and requirements will inform the continuous construction of the portfolio of projects may include:
  12. Businesses big and small
  13. NGOs
  14. Households
      1. Children
      2. Lonely vulnerable people such as elderly,
      3. Mentally fragile people,
      4. People coming from a difficult socio-economic background.
      5. People have access to Internet, not always have a family or friends
  15. Nurses, doctors and care workers
- Once the task force has been chosen, a JAD or Joint Application Design Session, Brainstorming,or similar requirements gathering techniques must be conducted
- The JAD session should then be followed by a GAP Analysis Session which will seek to:
  16. Identify the existing capabilities in the member states for example the number of hospitals, beds, and PEEs
  17. Identify the required capabilities
  18. Identify the gap in our capabilities
  19. Design an adaptive plan and the means to fill the gap:
      1. Short term actions

2. Long-term options
- Finally, as soon as a portfolio of agile projects has been constructed and the task force teams assigned, the Portfolio Manager or Owner with the consent of the task force authorises implementation of different projects based on their priority assigned to each

Key resources

- New funding must be available to the task force to respond to coronavirus and deliver quick results deliver quick results
- Quick and coordinated access to Research Infrastructures across EU member states which may include:
    - Analytical facilities
    - Pathogen labs,
    - Regulatory support,
    - Social science Research Infrastructures etc.)
- Quick and unhindered access to the data (e.g. for the re-testing of raw data and assessing the societal effects and effectiveness of pandemic responses) is vital for the design and operation of portfolio of projects to produce timely and accurate data and results from which we will learn more, and faster, about what works and what doesn't
- Make use of the latest technology services (including High Performance Computing and Artificial Intelligence) and datasets to match supply and demand across EU borders

Conclusion

Coronavirus has claimed hundreds of thousands of European lives with economic and health consequences beyond measure. Although these challenges and the apparent success of authoritarian regimes to contain the virus seem to cast doubt on the effectiveness and ability of liberal democracies to protect its citizens, it is only through a united, agile, and robust European approach that we beat the virus and thus protect European citizens and assert the importance of democracy even in times of a global pandemic.

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