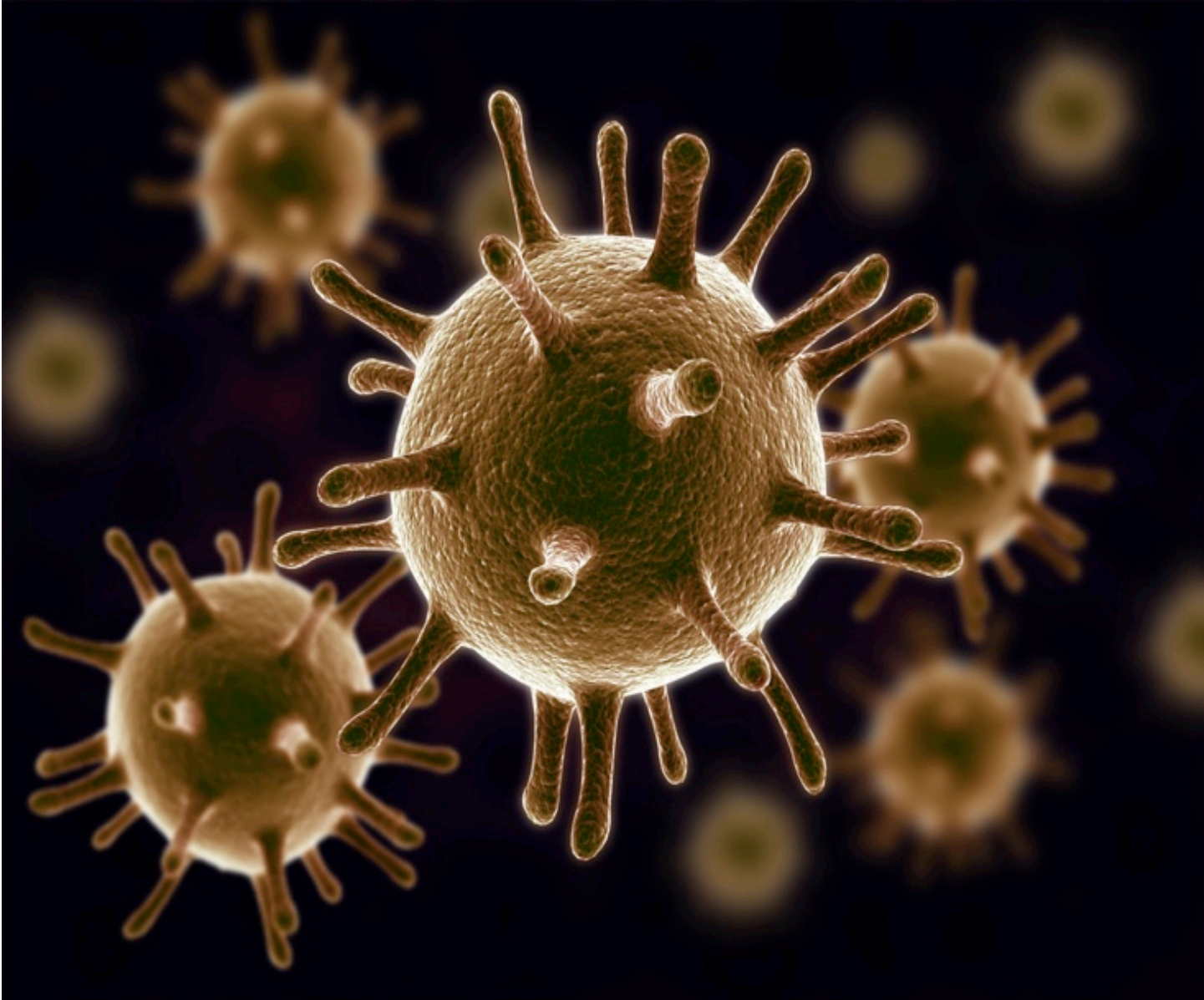




# PANDEM

## Pandemic Risk and Emergency Management

Prof Máire Connolly, School of Medicine, National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland





**Spanish Flu – 1918**  
**40-50 million deaths**

**H1N1**

# Current Context



- Convergence of risk factors driving disease emergence, amplification and dissemination
- Threat of high impact epidemics or pandemic is greater now than ever
- Emergence of new or newly recognised pathogens (eg Zika, Ebola, H1N1, SARS, Nipah...)
- Accidental or deliberate release of a biological agent (e.g. anthrax)

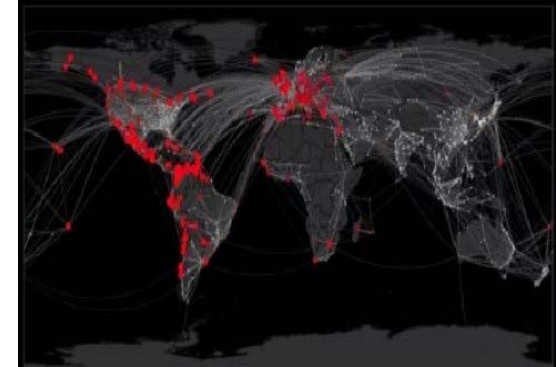
# PANDEM – PANDeMIC Risk and Emergency

- Horizon 2020 Phase I demo
- Funded by DG HOME under Secure Societies Work Programme
- Coordination and Support Action
- Duration 18 months
- 7 partners from 5 countries
- Three core project areas
  - ✓ Communications
  - ✓ Surveillance & Risk Assessment
  - ✓ Governance

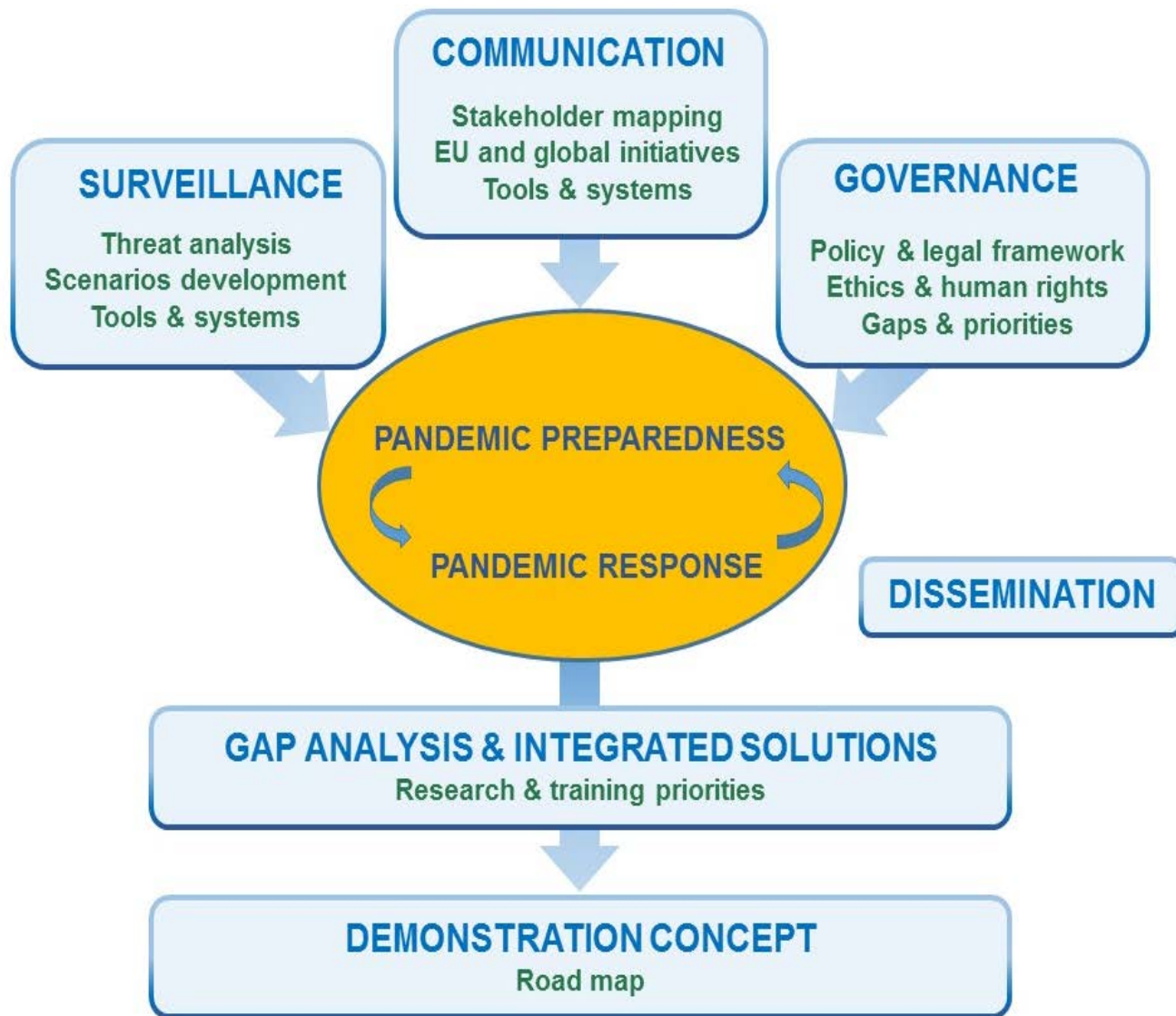


# PANDEM – Aim and Objectives

- **Aim:** To identify innovative concepts to strengthen pandemic management in EU
- **Objectives:** To reduce morbidity, mortality, environmental and economic damage from future pandemics by
  - ✓ Identifying gaps and improvement needs in current tools, systems and practices
  - ✓ Identifying innovative solutions for capacity strengthening and better integration
  - ✓ Enhancing capacity for cross border risk assessment, response and recovery
  - ✓ Identifying how the EU can support capacity for international response



# PANDEM – Work Approach



# PANDEM Current Status – Work to date

- Threat analysis and pandemic scenarios
- Global and EU initiatives and EU research projects
- Pandemic stakeholder analysis
- Expert workshop to identify needs and innovations in Brussels – February 2016
- Analysis of current systems, practices and technologies
  - ✓ Communications
  - ✓ Surveillance and Risk assessment
  - ✓ Governance



# PANDEM WP3 – Communications

Key communications challenge – how to provide the right information to the right users at the right time



# PANDEM – Communications

- Communications partner – Emily Loud and Iain Simpson, IGS Strategic Communications, London
- Focus on communications between governing bodies and professionals and communications with civil society in both preparedness and response phases
- Target outcomes for interventions
  - ✓ Communications for reputation management – maintaining trust
  - ✓ Communications for behaviour change – prevention and control measures



# PANDEM – Communications

- Emerging diseases spread rapidly, much faster than a cure ...  
... panic and misinformation can also spread rapidly
- Timely, accurate communications is a vital element in any effective response



Liberia,  
October 2014

# PANDEM Communications – Methodology

- Systematic literature review, with specific analysis of tools, skills, staff and infrastructure, and systems
- Workshop with 15 communications experts in Brussels in February 2016
  - ✓ Review of good practice from past epidemics and pandemics
  - ✓ Identification of gaps and improvement needs
  - ✓ Identification of research priorities and innovations required
- In-depth interviews with outbreak communications experts from a range of countries
- Case studies on Sweden, UK, Canada and the EU

# PANDEM Communications – Initial Findings

- Good practices identified at various levels include:
  - ✓ Advanced planning and relationship building
  - ✓ Simulations and stress tests that strengthened preparedness
  - ✓ Early and/or live communications interventions
  - ✓ Consistent use of multiple channels
- Gaps identified include:
  - ✓ Difficulty in getting real-time data on how communications are working
  - ✓ Poor skill base among communication staff in many countries to interpret technical risk assessments and communicate appropriately to the public
  - ✓ Skill gaps among communicators on use of social and digital media
  - ✓ Difficulties presented by cultural variations among Member States in terms of messages and approaches

- Evidence base for what works in communications is not strong
- Few regional and global studies, mainly national focus
- Few studies on low income countries
- Uncertainty about the best ways messaging can be used to influence protective behaviours
- Majority of studies performed retrospectively and with limited ability to understand causes and pathways for influence

- How to evaluate communications interventions and build an evidence base?
- How to support senior decision makers to deal with competing political, technical, policy and legal pressures in the event of a pandemic and ensure effective and efficient communications?
- How to bridge the gap between international principles and guidance for communications and country level communication practice?

# PANDEM Communications – Research Priorities

- What training, tools or structures can help governments engage early and more effectively with the media?
- How can social and digital media be used to engage the public in line with risk communications principles?
- What tools can be developed to help countries monitor risk perceptions and use them to feedback into communications activities during an outbreak?
- How to involve the private sector in communications responses?



# PANDEM Communications – Next steps

- Solutions workshop with experts in Brussels in September 2016
- Integrated gap analysis to be conducted
- Review of information systems needs of the EU and Member States
- Assessment of information management from event detection to data integration, analytics, mapping and modelling to support decision making for pandemic response
- Training tools using virtual reality simulators and serious gaming
- Roadmap for future R&D

# Thank You