

# ESCAIDE

European Scientific Conference  
on Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology  
16-19 November 2021



ESCAIDE 2021 Newsletter 6 | 15 December 2021

## A look back at ESCAIDE 2021

Last month, members of the infectious disease public health community came together to discuss the latest scientific research and challenges in the field. We thank everyone who attended and contributed to making ESCAIDE 2021 the biggest edition yet. Online for the second year, we saw the impact this has on the accessibility of the event, with over 2400 active participants.

**"It is now more important than ever to host events like ESCAIDE to share experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic, to talk about the public health challenges and learn from each other" – Andrea Ammon, ECDC Director, opening the first day of ESCAIDE 2021**

### Highlights of the conference

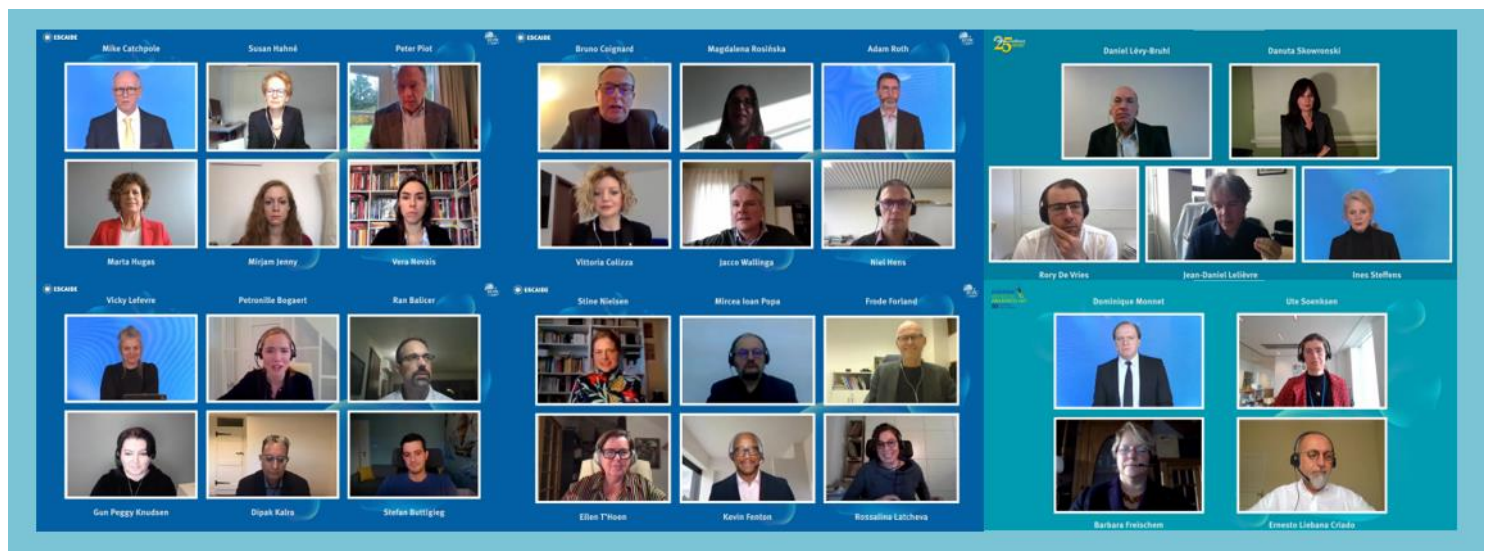
ESCAIDE 2021 offered more than 100 sessions, with more than 200 speakers, resulting in over 40 hours of content. Recordings of all sessions and the abstract pitches and poster exhibition are available on the ESCAIDE 2021 web and mobile apps (hosted by Swapcard) until the end of December.

Many plenaries, side events and abstract presentations focused on the COVID-19 pandemic and how to translate lessons learned into public health actions that could improve our response to the pandemic and other communicable diseases. There was a balance of sessions on other areas, providing a platform for continual discussion, despite the ongoing pandemic.

### Plenary sessions, EAAD event and *Eurosurveillance* seminar

The keynote plenary of ESCAIDE 2021 was opened by Professor Peter Piot, a renowned figure in global and public health. He discussed his experience of handling and communicating uncertainty, complexity, and rapidly changing facts in his role as Special Advisor on COVID-19 to the President of the European Commission. This was followed by perspectives from the panel.

This year, advances in mathematical modelling and digital health technologies were brought to the forefront of conversations at ESCAIDE, with experts sharing their experience and challenges in two plenaries, allowing the community to make full use of these innovations to see us into a future where we maximise their potential to improve public health. In the final plenary on inequality in the COVID-19 pandemic, inequalities exposed during, and further deepened by, the pandemic were discussed across a broad scale – from within one city, to across the world. Speakers reflected on how we can improve our understanding of inequalities through better data collection and community engagement, and how governments and leaders need to be more equitable in their approach in order to lead the world out of the pandemic.

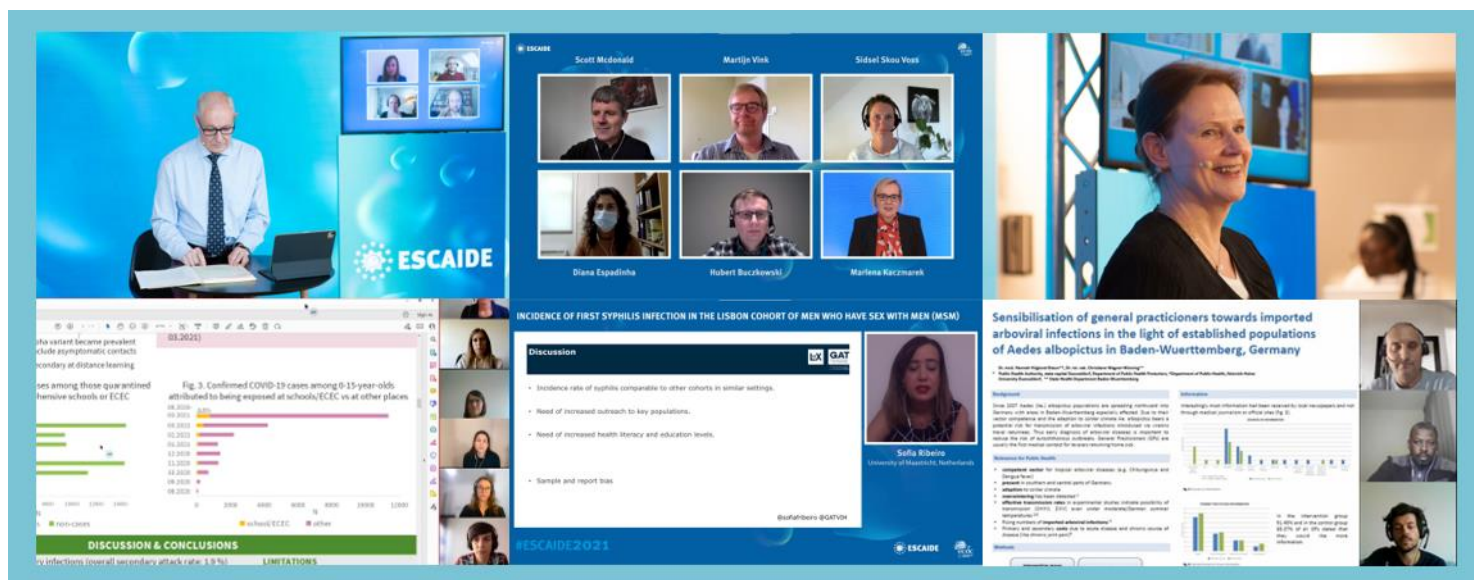


The European Antibiotic Awareness Day was launched with a dynamic event, where speakers discussed the action needed to tackle rising antimicrobial resistance, in Europe and across the world, even as the coronavirus pandemic continues to place a huge pressure on public health systems. The campaign continued online – [you can read more here](#). On the final day of ESCAIDE, *Eurosurveillance* held their annual seminar, which focused on examples of the interplay between generating hypotheses from observation, researching associated virological and immunological mechanisms, and translating the knowledge gained into public health interventions.

**"A key question is how to counter misinformation. Healthy scepticism is a fundamental part of democracy – but listen to understand. When we have understood the root causes – only then we can develop inventories and target our interventions." – Peter Piot, Special Advisor on COVID-19 to the European Commission, speaking in Plenary A on tackling distrust and misinformation in science during health crises, to improve public support for interventions.**

## Abstract sessions

In 2021, 112 posters were presented across 22 poster tour sessions and 53 abstract pitches were presented at 11 fireside sessions, representing the latest in cutting-edge research from a broad spectrum of fields. We would like to extend our thanks to all presenters and moderators, and to the session participants for their constructive questions. During the conference you were invited to vote on the best poster or oral abstract presentation and the winners were announced in the closing ceremony. You can [read winners' interviews](#) on our website, and view all abstract session content on Swapcard until the end of 2021.



## Side events

Alongside a packed scientific programme, many side-events were hosted at ESCAIDE this year. The EPIET Alumni Network hosted a session discussing opportunities for career development for conference attendees and a BarCamp session. ECDC held a session to share lessons learned in gathering information on non-pharmaceutical interventions for the ECDC-JRC Response Measures Database and another one on the impact of the MediPIET programme in neighbourhood countries. The SONAR-Global project shared results on using social science methods for infectious disease prevention and control. These were very well attended and engaged with by attendees at ESCAIDE 2021!

## +2700 questions and comments and #ESCAIDE2021 on social media

There was fantastic engagement on our online platform during the conference, with many questions asked during sessions and messages exchanged between participants. We were pleased that the dynamic exchange of ideas, support and debate could still take place in the online environment. This makes ESCAIDE what it is, so thank you for your contributions to the conference!

Our Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn were flooded with tweets from participants, presenters, moderators and organisers who publicised events, commented on research and created an online buzz about ESCAIDE. It was great to hear directly from the audience and see peer support within the infectious disease community!

## Survey and looking towards the next ESCAIDE

The ESCAIDE 2021 Feedback Survey has closed on 30 November. Thank you to all who contributed, we have reviewed your responses and appreciate the time taken to give specific feedback. This has helped us to understand the experience of ESCAIDE 2021 of attendees, speakers, presenters, moderators and organisers. It was fantastic to hear that many of you found the conference to be an engaging, informative and rewarding experience – with high quality speakers and content of relevance in the field. There was keen interest in an in-person aspect to return. We also took notes of areas for improvement, including the structure of the programme, discussion time, networking opportunities and the online platform.

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## Missed out on content?

You can access all session recordings, abstract pitches, posters and info stands, and view and contact other participants, on the Swapcard platform until the end of December.

You can read the full report of ESCAIDE 2021 and view content on the [ESCAIDE 2021 archive page](#) on our website. Recordings of the plenaries and side events will also be available here and on the [ECDC YouTube channel](#).

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## Stay tuned!

So that's all for 2021! We wish you a safe and happy festive season. Follow ESCAIDE on social media and check out the [website](#) to stay up to date with news and announcements throughout the year, including dates for ESCAIDE 2022 and abstract submissions.



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