



ECOH

Study Guide

Committee:Emergency Commission on Health
(ECOH)

Disease Control in Humanitarian Emergencies

Letter from the Executive Board

Honourable Delegates,

It is our honour and privilege to welcome each of you to the Emergency Commission on Health (ECOH), 1989, where we take you back to October 17th, 1918! This is going to be a unique and enthralling experience as each delegate will be given a chance to change history.

We enjoy participating in MUNs that are interesting, fun and memorable. This specific committee will not only put to the test your lobbying, debating and paperwork, but also your ability to think on the spot and tackle crises; a war and a pandemic in one!

A great delegate will not only come prepared with research, but also ready to draft radical communiques, practical solutions, and indulge in fiery debate. Delegates must strike an artful balance between innovation and pragmatism in their paperwork, collaboration and self-interest when lobbying, and efficiency and deliberation when dealing with crises.

To tell you a bit about ourselves:

Greetings Delegates,

I am your chair **Sivaan Chokshi**, and I enjoy MUNs.

My favourite MUN experience was the challenges proposed by delegates and the rivalries between delegates ending in a debate. Bizzare updates are also extremely entertaining as they tend to stir up relations and change bloc dynamics.

Greetings Delegates,

I am your chair **Esha Toshniwal** and other than MUNs and history, I love music, specifically Taylor Swift, and bingeing sitcoms. If you love poor jokes, I am your go-to EB member!

My favourite MUN experiences have to be crises, including me attempting a military coup of India, admitting to be a mole in committee and holding delegates hostage, and framing Hong Kong for bombing China with the aid of the USA.

Greetings Delegates,

I am your co-chair **Veda Shah**, apart from MUNs I love playing and watching sports, especially tennis, and my favourite subject in school is Global Perspectives.

My favourite MUN experience was 2v2s, somehow they are entertaining and amusing yet informative at the same time.

If you have any questions regarding the committee, please feel free to reach out to the Executive Board or the secretariats at (secgenmun@bdsint.org, dirgenmun@bdsint.org, depsecgenmun@bdsint.org)

Until November,
Sivaan Chokshi,
Esha Toshniwal,
Veda Shah.

About the Committee- Emergency Commission on Health (ECOH)

Although the world seems like it is unfit to collaborate and unite, with a health crisis, the Spanish Flu rapidly spreading, nations have decided to attempt to work together to resolve the crisis. Countries are entering this conference with motives and hidden intentions, wanting the best for their own countries.

Considering international tensions, major countries such as the USA, Britain, France and Germany dominate, but this should not limit smaller countries from striving to make their concerns heard, for their people. Countries are likely to present paperwork and create blocs with their allying nations, but keep in mind that rising tensions can lead to constant crises, and ever changing stances.

This commission is fictional, and a recommendatory body. All countries are allowed to vote and contribute equally to paperwork. It is a constant crisis committee which would expect radical, but logical communiques.

Introduction to the Agenda

About the Spanish Flu:

The Spanish flu was a pandemic, a new strain of influenza. A virus that spread quickly and infected people all over the world. Because the virus was new, few, if any, people had immunity to the disease.

The Spanish flu is said to have lasted from 1918 to 1919, but some sources say the pandemic ended in 1920.

The Spanish flu was a type of influenza (flu) caused by an H1N1 virus that originated in some type of bird (avian origin). It was eventually passed down to mammals.

The Spanish flu infected an estimated 500 million people worldwide between 1918 and 1919. This represented approximately 33% of the world's population at the time. Furthermore, the Spanish flu killed approximately 50 million people.

Infants under the age of five and people over the age of 65 were particularly vulnerable to the Spanish flu.

The symptoms of the Spanish flu were similar to those observed during flu season, but more severe:

- A sudden and sometimes extremely high fever.
- Coughing that is dry.
- Headache and muscle aches
- Throat ache.
- Chills.
- a runny nose
- Appetite loss.
- Extreme exhaustion (fatigue)

Many people died from pneumonia and other respiratory illnesses as a result of the Spanish flu. Some people died the same day they fell ill.

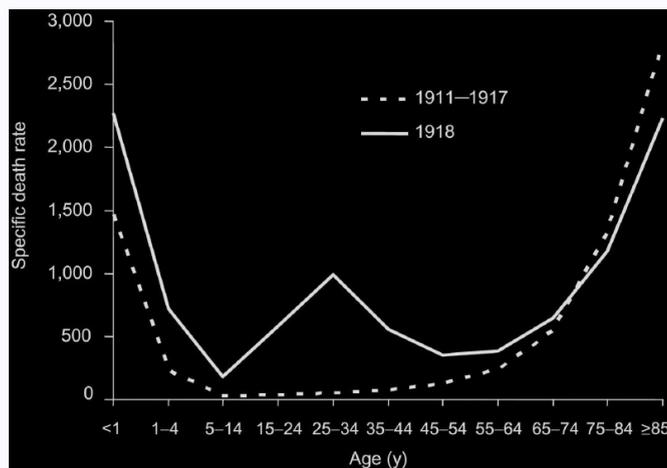
There were no tests available to detect the Spanish flu. Healthcare providers were forced to rely on patients' reported signs and symptoms. There were no antiviral medications available, nor were

antibiotics available to treat infections caused by the flu. There were also no mechanical ventilation machines or intensive care units.

Hence, global control efforts were limited to non-pharmaceutical interventions such as isolation, quarantine, good personal hygiene, use of disinfectants, and restrictions on public gatherings, which were applied unevenly.

Among the many reasons why the Spanish flu killed so many people were:

- The lack of effective treatment, which was caused in part by the unknown cause at the time.
- During World War I, animals and people, particularly the military, had to live in cramped quarters.
- A scarcity of healthcare providers. A sizable number of doctors were fighting in the war.
- The virus's extraordinary ability to replicate itself and infect the lungs. This last feature was discovered while studying the 1918 virus using tissue from people who died from the Spanish flu.



World War 1 and the Spanish Flu:

Prior to 1914, few people traversed long distances, limiting the spread of infectious diseases. World War One saw mobilisation and movement of large numbers of troops and related personnel.

When first exposed to pandemic influenza, those from previously isolated populations, such as Alaska or the Pacific Islands, were doubly vulnerable. For the same reason, rural recruits were more likely to perish than urban recruits.

Army recruits from various backgrounds were brought together in World War One to live in close quarters in army camps, barracks, troop-ships, and trench dugouts. Those who had served in the army for a longer period of time had a lower mortality rate because they had been immunised against seasonal flu.

In the spirit of the war, conspiracy theories about the Spanish flu included a slew of "guilty parties." According to one account, the pandemic was brought in by a camouflaged German ship that infiltrated Boston harbour at night and released the germs that seeded the city. According to another story, the Germans snuck into Boston harbour in U-boats and landed secretly, carrying vials of germs that they released in theatres and other crowded places. Another, equally terrifying version claimed that the germs were inserted into aspirin produced by the German pharmaceutical company Bayer.

Case Studies:

1. Plague of Justinian (541 AD- 750 AD)

Justinian's plague was the first documented outbreak of a bubonic plague pandemic. It was named after Justinian I, the Byzantine emperor at the time. At its peak, Constantinople was killing up to 10,000 people per day. By the time the plague had finished, nearly half of the city's population had died. Approximately one-third of Europe's population had been wiped out. (5)

There were quite a few treatments for the Plague, as there were no known cures for the disease. Plague doctors experimented with cures. Some of the attempted methods being, bloodletting, changing diet, witchcraft or charms. "Lancing the Buboes" was another procedure used, doctors believed that by doing so the bacterium could leave the body through the wound, and then a mixture of tree resin, flowers and human faeces would be applied to the open wound. Patients were also required to drink a specially concocted mixture every day.

2. The Black Death (1347-1351)

Between 1347 and 1351, Europe was devastated by the Black Death pandemic. This pandemic killed more people than any other epidemic or war up to that point in history. The Black Death began in China and Central Asia and spread to Europe in 1347. Modern genetic analysis reveals that the plague strain introduced during the Black Death is the ancestor of all current strains known to cause disease in humans. Living conditions in mediaeval towns, as well as overcrowding in housing, aided in the spread of disease.

Cities with poor sanitation became breeding grounds for disease-carrying rats. The plague resurfaced in 1361-63, 1369-71, 1374-75, 1390, and 1400. Some believed the disease was a manifestation of God's vengeance.

Quarantines were one of the most vital solutions and reasons as to why the plague ended. The un-infected would usually remain in their homes and only exit if and when required. During the later stages of the pandemic, major improvements in terms of hygiene were also expected to have taken place.

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1. "1918 Pandemic (H1N1 Virus)." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 20 Mar. 2019, <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/1918-pandemic-h1n1.html>.
 2. Aderet, Ofer. "a Terrible New Weapon of War': The Spanish Flu Had Its Own Share of Conspiracy Theories." *Haaretz.com*, Haaretz, 26 Mar. 2020, <https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/2020-03-26/ty-article/.premium/the-spanish-flu-had-its-own-share-of-conspiracy-theories/0000017f-f83c-d318-affb7fc9d40000>.
 3. "Black Death Key Facts." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., <https://www.britannica.com/summary/Black-Death-Key-Facts>.
 4. John Mathews Honorary Professorial Fellow. "World War One's Role in the Worst Ever Flu Pandemic." *The Conversation*, 14 Sept. 2022, <https://theconversation.com/world-war-ones-role-in-the-worst-ever-flu-pandemic-29849>.
 5. "Plague of Justinian." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., <https://www.britannica.com/event/plague-of-Justinian>.
 6. "Spanish Flu: What Is It, Causes, Symptoms & Pandemic." *Cleveland Clinic*, <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/21777-spanish-flu>.

Timeline:

- March 1918
 - In the United States, a flu-like illness breaks out.
 - In Kansas more than 100 soldiers caught the flu. In a week, the number of cases quadruples.
 - Over the course of six months, cases of a flu-like illness are detected all over the United States, Europe and Asia.
- April 1918
 - The first mention of influenza was through a weekly public health report on April 5th. According to the study, there have been 18 serious cases and three deaths in Haskell, Kansas.
- May 1918,
 - By May, hundreds of thousands of soldiers travel across the Atlantic each month as they are deployed for World War I, this contributed to the spread of the disease all around the world.
- Sept 1918,
 - Between September and November, a second wave occurred, it was highly fatal, and responsible for most of the deaths attributed to the pandemic.
- October 1918,
 - The highest fatality rate was recorded in October
 - In fall of 1918 the United States experienced a severe shortage of professional nurses, because of the deployment of large numbers of nurses to military camps in the United States and abroad, and the failure to use trained African American nurses.
- November 1918,
 - The end of World War I enables a resurgence of influenza as people celebrate Armistice Day and soldiers begin to demobilise.
- December 1918,
 - Public health officials begin education programs and publicity about dangers of coughing and sneezing; careless disposal of “nasal discharges.”
 - Committee of the American Public Health Association encourages stores and factories to stagger opening and closing hours and for people to walk to work when possible instead of using public transport to prevent overcrowding.
- January 1919,
 - A third wave of influenza occurred in the winter and spring of 1919, killing many more.
 - The third wave subsides in the summer.
- April 1919,
 - At the Versailles Peace Conference, while negotiating the end of World War I with other world leaders, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson collapses. Some historians speculate he was weak from influenza, which was still rampant in Paris.

- *1918 Pandemic Influenza Historic Timeline | Pandemic Influenza (Flu) | CDC.*
www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/1918-commemoration/pandemic-timeline-1918.htm. Accessed 24 Sept. 2022.

Past Solutions (briefly):

In the absence of a vaccine, public health initiatives continue to serve as the first line of defence against epidemics. These actions include shutting down businesses including restaurants, stores, and schools; restricting access to public transit; requiring social seclusion; and outlawing public meetings. In the US, several states tried to impose quarantines on their residents, each with varying degrees of success. Fresh air was regarded as a possible barrier to the transmission of disease. In Britain, citizens were encouraged to stay at home and avoid large gatherings. However, it was difficult to prohibit huge crowds from assembling, especially at religious buildings. For a while, efforts to eradicate the virus persisted, as people became far more aware of the dangers of this seasonal influenza.

- Strohlic, Nina, and Riley Champine. "How Some Cities 'Flattened the Curve' During the 1918 Flu Pandemic." *History*, 3 May 2021, www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/how-cities-flattened-curve-1918-spanish-flu-pandemic-coronavirus. Accessed 24 Sept. 2022.
- BBC News. "Coronavirus: How They Tried to Curb Spanish Flu Pandemic in 1918." *BBC News*, 10 May 2020, www.bbc.com/news/in-pictures-52564371. Accessed 24 Sept. 2022.
- "History of Flu (Influenza): Outbreaks and Vaccine Timeline." *Mayo Clinic*, www.mayoclinic.org/coronavirus-covid-19/history-disease-outbreaks-vaccine-timeline/flu. Accessed 24 Sept. 2022.
- Strohlic, Nina, and Riley Champine. "How Some Cities 'Flattened the Curve' During the 1918 Flu Pandemic." *History*, 3 May 2021, www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/how-cities-flattened-curve-1918-spanish-flu-pandemic-coronavirus. Accessed 24 Sept. 2022.

Questions Committee Should Answer:

1. What are the most efficient ways to contain the Spanish Flu, considering the war?
2. What were the main factors that led to the rise of the Spanish flu, and how could they have been avoided?
3. How to set up a framework to prevent the spread of such pandemics in the future.
4. Whether an armistice should be signed, ending the war?
5. How can conspiracy theories blaming the spread of the pandemic be proven true or false, and whether accountability should be thrust upon the accountable nations?

Country bloc dynamics

Allied Powers

France

After the German invasion of the neutral territories of Belgium and Luxembourg, the German forces turned their attention to France thus bringing the French into the war. This action directed towards the French came as a result of France refusing to take a position in relation to the war that had begun between Germany and Russia. Germany demanded that France remain neutral while the French bilateral agreement with the Russian's required they intervene. A failure to respond, other than to withdraw troops from the borders and call up its reserve forces, led to the German decision to declare war on France. The French Empire meant that French involvement was global.

British Empire

The British Empire, as a result of its bilateral agreement with France, entered the war as a result of the German escalation and troop movement towards the French territory as well as a refusal by Germany to maintain the neutrality of Belgium in the conflict. Included in the British Empire at the beginning of the war were its dominions: Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The British Empire conducted war mainly within Europe but through its dominions fought throughout the globe.

Russia

Through its alliance with the Kingdom of Serbia, Russia entered the war in response to the AustroHungarian invasion of its ally Serbia. The nation quickly marshalled its forces in defence of its ally. Having declared war on AustriaHungary, Russia subsequently mobilised against Germany as a result of its dual alliance with the Austro Hungarians. After refusing to de-escalate its mobilisation in response to calls from both German and AustroHungarian governments, Germany officially entered into a state of war with Russia.

Serbia

Serbia, as a result of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, was invaded by AustroHungarian forces after failing to comply completely with the presented ultimatum. The Serbian goal in the war was to defend itself and remain independent from AustriaHungary.

Montenegro

Montenegro joined in the defence of Serbia from AustriaHungary and later Bulgaria. It's participation was limited to the action as it was unsuccessful and Montenegro was conquered by AustroHungarian forces.

Belgium

Invaded by Germany in 1914, after refusing a German request to allow troop movement through its territory, having been up till that point a neutral party in the conflict till that point. Belgian influence in the war was limited to its resistance to German forces and it was occupied for the majority of the conflict.

Japan

As part of the allied forces, Japan seized the German Micronesia colonies and the coaling port of Qingdao on the Chinese Shandong Province and thus declared war on Germany as well as AustriaHungary due to the latter's refusal to withdraw a ship from a German port. Japan thus participated in the removal of German territories in the Pacific.

Italy

Having at first been part of the triple alliance with Austria-Hungary and Germany, Italy, having designs on territory in Austria and receiving offers from the Allies, officially joined the Allies through the signing of the Treaty of London. They subsequently declared war on Austria-Hungary and later Germany. Italian action in the war was primarily in forward assaults on the Austro-Hungarian provinces to its north although in its colonies it also fought conflicts.

Portugal

Germany's declaration of war on Portugal meant the end of Portugal's neutral position in the war and their official entrance. Conflicts between Portugal and Germany had already occurred although these had centred on their respective African colonies. Furthermore the German U Boat blockade in the Atlantic had damaged Portuguese interests. Portugal's primary goal during the war was to maintain its colonial empire.

Romania

Having initially been aligned with the Central Power, Romania declared itself neutral in response to the Austro-Hungarian invasion of Serbia stating that since Austria-Hungary was the aggressor it was under no responsibility to join the aggression. A subsequent Allied offer of Hungarian territory swayed Romania away from its neutral position into an alliance with the Allies. Their intervention in the war proved a temporary uplift for the Allied eastern front however the subsequent November revolution in Russia in 1917 and their withdrawal from the war greatly restricted Romanian ability to be effective.

United States

Initially the United States had a policy of nonintervention and tried to find ways to negotiate an end to the conflict. This continued despite German use of submarine warfare in the Atlantic which included American casualties, famously the sinking of the RMS Lusitania. After repeated warnings from the United States, Germany seized its use of submarine warfare temporarily but its later resumption would be a catalyst for United States entry into the war. An attempt by Germany to persuade Mexico to join the Central Powers and attempt to retake Texas from the United States which was intercepted by British Intelligence and released by President Wilson to the public provided the justification the United States required publicly to enter the war.

Greece

Initially King Constantine I of Greece and its new provisional government of Venizelos clashed over the loyalties of the country. While the King sided with the Central Powers, the provisional government sided with the allies. Subsequent internal strife and conflict led to the resignation of King Constantine I in favour of his son and Greece entered the war aligned with the allies. Greek involvement in the war was largely limited to fighting around its borders, especially in Macedonia.

Central Powers

Germany

Germany's dual alliance with Austria-Hungary placed it in a state of war with Russia as their forces mobilised against them in response to the Austro-Hungarian invasion of Serbia. A refusal to calls by Germany to Russia to de-escalate its mobilizations led to Germany's declaration of war. In the West, an appeal to France to stay neutral, despite its bilateral agreement with Russia, was met with silence and mobilisation of reserve forces. Germany subsequently invaded Luxembourg and declared war on France while a refusal by neutral Belgium to allow German forces passage through the country led to a further war and invasion by Germany.

Austria-Hungary

The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary by Yugoslav nationalist Gavrilo Princip in late June of 1914 led to the delivery of an ultimatum to the Kingdom of Serbia and its subsequent invasion by Austro-Hungarian forces. Austria-Hungary was motivated by the eradication of Serbia and to end its interference in Bosnia. Furthermore it was correctly believed that Serbian officials were involved with the assassination plot.

Ottoman Empire

The Ottomans entered the war through a secret agreement made with the German's in August of 1914. Its hope in doing so was to reclaim territories lost to Russia as well as in other regions and once again establish the Ottoman Empire as a growing world power. The Ottoman Empire also used the distraction of the war and thus the Western powers as an opportunity for mass ethnic cleansing.

Bulgaria

German and AustroHungarian officials managed to convince Bulgaria to join the central powers and declare war on Serbia. Bulgaria soon joined AustriaHungary in its attacks on Serbia, sharing in its territory after its conquest.

(Based on WW1 dynamics, country matrix, triple entente, triple alliance, colonies, other important aspects)

Fixes (integrate):

In relation to the Spanish flu, The American Red Cross was the organisation that combated the influenza pandemic of 1918-1920. On October 1, 1918, when U.S. Surgeon General Rupert Blue decided the nationwide outbreak of severe influenza warranted a national response, he telegraphed the American Red Cross (ARC) national headquarters in Washington, D.C. The message requested that the organisation "assume charge of supplying all the needed nursing personnel" to combat the pandemic, and that it "furnish emergency supplies" when local authorities could not do so promptly enough. The Surgeon General asked that the ARC pay the nurses' salaries and expenses, and expend \$575,000 to finance the effort.

Table

France	Montenegro	Portugal	Germany
British Empire	Belgium	Romania	AustriaHungary
Russia	Japan	United States	Ottoman Empire
Serbia	Italy	Greece	Bulgaria

Concluding remarks

Delegates, we hope our study guide provides you with basic information about topics you need to know. It gives you the basic knowledge needed to debate, however we would suggest watching and reading the additional resources provided below for additional preparation. Your unique elements brought out by research will also be noted by the executive board. Looking forward to seeing you all in committee, we hope the committee moves in an enthralling direction!

Additional Resources

Videos:

https://youtu.be/3x1aLAw_xkY
<https://youtu.be/4g3DCdByey0>
<https://youtu.be/XO9WX4qVxEo>
<https://youtu.be/48Klc3DPdtk>

Texts:

<https://vdocument.in/model-united-nations-mun-study-guide-for-who.html?page=3>
<https://www.who.int/about/who-we-are>
<https://www.who.int/groups/independent-oversight-and-advisory-committee>
https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/2021-dha-docs/ioac-tor-august-2021.pdf?sfvrsn=9d1e689d_5
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2862338/>
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6477554/>
<http://www1.centenary.oucs.ox.ac.uk/body-and-mind/the-spanish-influenza-pandemic-and-its-relation-to-the-first-world-war/>
<https://www.theweek.co.uk/tags/black-death>

HMUN procedure:

This study guide and all material in it is only for reference purposes for delegates and affiliates of BDMUN 2022

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