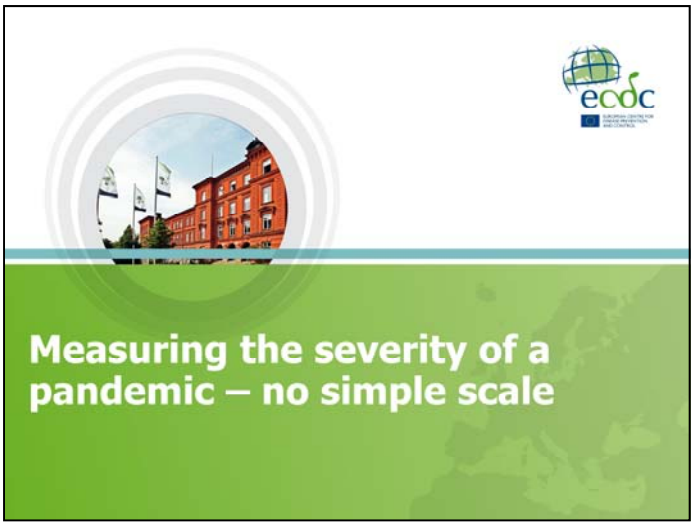
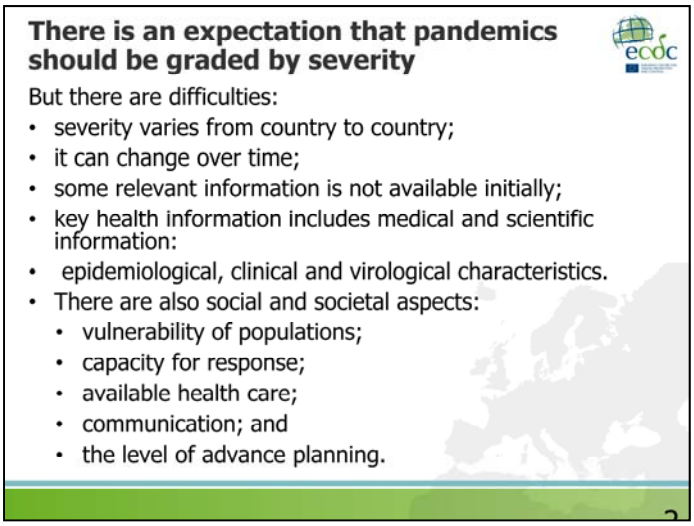


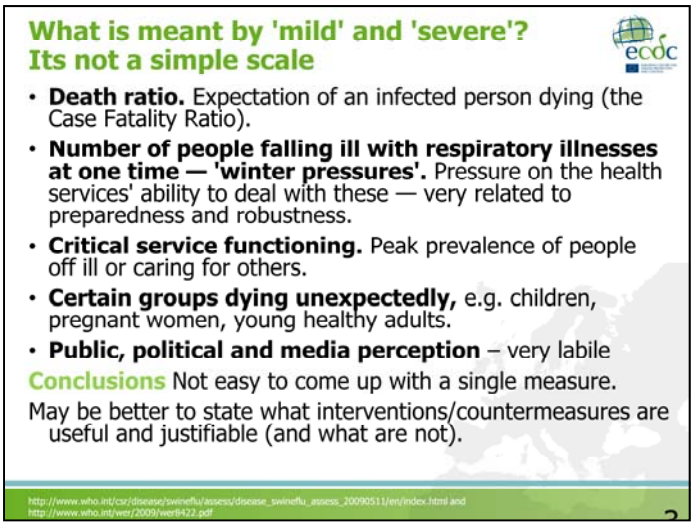
This is very important as it will determine the scale and sometimes detail of the response. Whether there should be a whole society response or a response confined to the health care sector as was the case in 2009.

WHO had a very simple scale in its 2009 guidance *Mild, Intermediate* and *Severe* thought eventually they referred to the 2009 pandemic as *Moderate* rather than *Intermediate* presumably as moderate communicated better. However there was no mechanical definition. A country that did have a formula for severity was the United States who produced a 1 to 5 scale based on Case Fatality Rate see United States Department of Health and Human Services and Centers for Disease Prevention and Control. Interim pre-pandemic planning guidance: Community strategy for pandemic influenza Mitigation in the United States. Dec 2006 http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/community/community_mitigation.pdf But that proved very hard to measure and certainly could not be mreasuers with any precision early on.

It is important to note that severity has never been part of the definition of a pandemic in WHO guidance.



The best discussion on this area is at http://www.who.int/wer/2009/wer8422.pdf and http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/assess/disease_swineflu_assess_20090511/en/index.html.



Source: http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/assess/disease_swineflu_assess_20090511/en/index.html and http://www.who.int/wer/2009/wer8422.pdf