



# **The challenge of vaccine hesitancy in the European Union**

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**Vaccine hesitancy, a global trend which threatens public health**

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# Outline

- Competence
- Political context
- Characteristics/challenges/requirements
- Joint action on vaccination 2018
- Policy initiative on vaccination 2018



# Vaccination is a competence of the Member States

On the basis of Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union the **Commission** is **supporting Member States** in encouraging their **cooperation**, while **fully respecting national competences** in the area of public health.

# Council conclusions on vaccinations as an effective tool in public health

- ❑ Evidence-based, cost-effective, safe and efficient **immunisation systems** is an **integral part** of a **well-functioning health system**
- ❑ To inform the population in order to **raise** its **trust** in vaccination programmes, using appropriate tools and **communication campaigns** also by **engaging opinion leaders, civil society** and **relevant stakeholders**
- ❑ To coordinate activities aimed at **advocating** and encouraging the **use of vaccines** included in national vaccination programmes by **sharing information on communication plans and campaigns** for vaccine introduction

# Characteristics of vaccine hesitancy

- ❑ Vaccine hesitancy is a **behavioural phenomenon** that is vaccine and context specific
  
- ❑ Vaccine attitudes are ranging **from total acceptance to complete refusal**
  
- ❑ Vaccine-hesitant individuals
  - ❑ Are a **heterogeneous group** in the middle of this continuum
  
  - ❑ May refuse some vaccines, but agree to others
  
  - ❑ Delay vaccines or accept vaccines but are **unsure** in doing so

# Challenges related to vaccine hesitancy

- ❑ **Lack** of validated and standardized **tools to assess and measure** hesitancy
  
- ❑ **Lack of data on vaccine hesitancy levels** in the populations where the interventions were tested
  - ❑ Special attention needs to be paid to differences and similarities between routine immunisation programmes and mass vaccination campaigns in different settings and contexts
  
- ❑ **Evaluation** of interventions
  - ❑ Most studies have not defined vaccine hesitancy in the study population and have **only measured change in vaccine uptake, without assessing whether the intervention had any impact on hesitancy**

# Requirements

- ❑ **Increase the understanding of vaccine hesitancy**, its determinants and the rapidly changing challenges it entails
- ❑ **Structures and organizational capacity** to decrease hesitancy and increase acceptance of vaccines at all levels
- ❑ **Sharing of lessons learnt and effective practices** from various countries and settings
- ❑ Development, validation and implementation of **new tools** to address hesitancy



## **Joint action on vaccination**

€ 3 million EU co-funding

Coordination by INSERM (France)

Participation of 20 countries (among them 17 EU MS)

JA currently under preparation, starting early 2018

Involvement of ECDC, EMA, WHO, DG RTD



## Joint action on vaccination

- Establish **shared mapping** of **best practices** among stakeholders and **analyse barriers and enablers** behind high and low vaccination coverage rates.
- Set-up **social and online media monitoring infrastructures** to conduct **real time public vaccine confidence monitoring** through social media.
- Provide guidance on the **evaluation** of the **impact** of **intervention strategies** to address vaccine hesitancy.
- Provide guidance and share best practice on the development and provision of **in-service training for health professionals**.

## Joint action on vaccination

- Provide guidance and/or promote the exchange of best practices in the field of **vaccine injury compensation programmes**
- Assess and describe **European vaccine reminder and recall systems** to inform future development of such systems
- Integrate /link **immunisation information systems** into e-health network to
  - Empower communication towards patients and health professionals to facilitate understandings of benefits of vaccination

## EU policy initiative on vaccination

- ❑ **President Juncker's State of the Union Address 2017** touching on **ongoing large measles outbreaks** in a number of countries
- ❑ Commission will present an initiative on vaccination in form of a **Council recommendation** as part of the **Commission's Work Programme 2018**
- ❑ **Roadmap on "Strengthened cooperation against vaccine preventable diseases"**
- ❑ **Public consultation**



## Commission

- Use vaccines as the case study for combatting fake news in the EU
- Possible initiative regarding EU-wide advocacy coalition



# Thank you for your attention



Commission web page on vaccination:

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/vaccination/policy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/vaccination/policy/index_en.htm)

Conference web page:

[http://ec.europa.eu/health/vaccination/events/ev\\_20121016\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/health/vaccination/events/ev_20121016_en.htm)