



**Statement by the European Public Health Association (EUPHA)
on 4 proposals to increase protection of the people of Europe against
vaccine-preventable disease**

Vaccination is one of the most effective public health interventions, and one that prevents 2-3 million deaths worldwide every year. In 2018, about 95% of all eligible infants in the European received at least one dose of measles containing vaccine, and 94% received their third dose of diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis-containing vaccine. This tremendous achievement, a testament to national public health teams, supported by their partners at the national, regional and global levels, deserves to be celebrated. However, the public health gains achieved by the success of vaccine programmes in Europe are under threat. The rise of measles in Europe, the decrease in vaccine coverage seen in certain European countries, the increasing attempts to undermine this success provide some insight into the challenges faced by those working on protecting citizens of Europe and beyond against the threat of vaccine-preventable diseases.

Maintaining the levels of coverage we need to protect the population requires an ongoing commitment by those funding, delivering and monitoring vaccination programmes as well as their partners. As one of these partners, the European Public Health Association (EUPHA), the umbrella organisation for public health associations and institutes in Europe, is committed to strengthening vaccine programmes across Europe. EUPHA recognises that vaccine programmes in Europe face multiple, simultaneous challenges that threaten high vaccine uptake. Some reflect changing societies, with greater mobility of people and the growth of vulnerable populations, but there are also those who are actively spreading disinformation, including some who are exploiting fears for political reasons.

If we are to overcome these challenges we must adopt multi-component approaches that include improving access to vaccination, equipping different sectors of the healthcare workforce with adequate capacity and capability to deliver a high quality vaccine programme, developing data solutions that enable individuals' to demonstrate their vaccination status regardless of where they are, provide clear messages on the evidence for vaccination, and take on those who are promoting disinformation. EUPHA has supported these through different activities such as [workshops](#), [publications](#), [conferences](#) and is a stakeholder for major cross-European initiatives around vaccination such as the European Coalition for Vaccination and the Global Summit on Vaccination. As such, and in line with the European Council recommendation on [Strengthened Cooperation against Vaccine Preventable Diseases](#) and the forthcoming World Health Organization [Immunization Agenda](#)

[2030](#), EUPHA supports European-level initiatives to maintain and strengthen immunisation programmes across Member States, in particular through:

- 1) Implementing electronic immunisation systems that enable to record vaccination status in an accurate and timely manner, as well as inviting and reminding individuals when vaccinations are due. Such systems should aspire to be interoperable to fulfil the vision of an immunization information system that shares data across borders.
- 2) Optimizing the use of existing data, both within and across borders, to identify groups and communities most underserved by vaccination programmes in order to vaccinate them and reduce health inequalities.
- 3) Equipping future and current healthcare workers with the capacity and capability of delivering high quality vaccination programmes, including the ability to address real or perceived concerns about vaccination with confidence.
- 4) Fostering trust and confidence in vaccines by harnessing the power of communication channels, both old and new, to deliver powerful messages to the public about the importance and benefits of vaccination and to expose and confront those spreading disinformation, for whatever reason.

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The European Public Health Association, or EUPHA in short, is an umbrella organisation for public health associations in Europe. Our network of national associations of public health represents around 20'000 public health professionals. Our mission is to facilitate and activate a strong voice of the public health network by enhancing visibility of the evidence and by strengthening the capacity of public health professionals. EUPHA contributes to the preservation and improvement of public health in the European region through capacity and knowledge building. We are committed to creating a more inclusive Europe, narrowing all health inequalities among Europeans, by facilitating, activating, and disseminating strong evidence-based voices from the public health community and by strengthening the capacity of public health professionals to achieve evidence-based change.

EUPHA - European Public Health Association

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ⁱ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/immunization-coverage>

ⁱⁱ https://www.who.int/immunization/monitoring_surveillance/data/g_s_eurprofile.pdf?ua=1