



European Medical Students' Association

Association Européenne des Étudiants en Médecine

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Statement on the European Immunization Agenda 2030

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As the European Medical Students Association (EMSA), we applaud the efforts made by the WHO European region to implement the European Vaccine Action Plan. We congratulate the member states on their achievements made, as shown in the midterm review report. EMSA strongly advocates for access to affordable medicines in alignment with the Oslo Medicines Initiative. Access to vaccines should be available to all, regardless of socio-economic background. It is concerning to see that around 500 000 children were left un- or under-immunised against diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis in 2019, 54% percent of whom are from middle-income countries.

Important strides were made to develop the strategic activities in the roadmap on access to complete immunisation with an emphasis on procurement and supply chain management. While we highly appreciate the achievements made thus far, we believe that certain aspects can be improved upon in collaboration with various non-governmental healthcare as well as patient- and student-lead organisations, especially taking recent experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic into account:

1. Strong immunization strategies need to be developed and sustained, taking into account the effects of the ongoing as well as potential effects of future pandemics, following the principle of "leaving no one behind".
2. Vaccine hesitancy and mis- and disinformation circulating regarding potential side-effects as well as efficacy and safety of vaccines need to be addressed through targeted campaigns using various platforms in order to improve vaccination uptake.
3. Necessary information on the development and effect of vaccinations need to be drafted in an easily understandable format and be made readily available to the population in order to counteract vaccine hesitancy and myths circulating regarding safety, development and efficacy of vaccines.
4. The life-course vaccination platform needs to be strengthened in order to address the needs of adult populations and to mainstream catch-up vaccinations.

We believe that equity, equal access to immunisation, immunisation at different stages of life, and local solutions to local challenges within the region and nations have to be directly approached, taking into account the lessons learned during the pandemic.

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While progress in the field of vaccination is noticeable, the challenges that accompany COVID-19 have palpable effects on vaccination rates especially in regards to routine and childhood vaccinations. With variants of different diseases additionally being on the rise, all efforts have to be made now to increase access to vaccinations globally and in Europe in order to be able to best prevent pandemics in the near future.

As exemplified most recently in the case of COVID-19 vaccinations, a global approach to vaccination in an effort to ensure disease prevention is essential to save lives and support the healthcare sector proactively.



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