

United for Health: EU Member States exchange best practices on vaccination and prevention

Wednesday, 28th June 2023, 16:15 - 17:30

Museum of Natural Sciences, Brussels



Clarisse Lhoste
President
MSD France



Mariano Votta
Director
Active Citizenship Network/ Cittadinanzattiva



Francisco Ribeiro Mourão
Treasurer - European Junior Doctors
Paediatrician - Centro Materno Infantil do Norte
Porto, Portugal



Jean-Baptiste Lusignan
Public Health Manager
Crips Ile-de-France



Plamena Nikolova
Director "Policies for the children"
National Network for Children, Bulgaria



Leonidas Galeridis
Research and Policy Officer
European Parliamentary Forum for
Sexual and Reproductive Rights



Florence Ranson
Moderator

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Introduction

Dear speakers,

In anticipation of our inaugural *Europe's Tomorrow: Vaccination and Prevention Summit*, we are providing you with an outline of how we plan to run this breakout session, "*United for Health: Member States exchange best practices of vaccination and prevention*", in which you have kindly agreed to take part. In order to help you prepare, we have put together this pack which includes an overview of the Summit, a guiding script with questions, and some practical instructions. We would like the conversation to be candid and lively, so the discussion may deviate slightly from the structure below depending on how the conversation evolves.

Thank you for taking part in our event and please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Synopsis of discussion

The Covid-19 pandemic exposed the vulnerability of health system crisis response mechanisms across Europe, and forced us all to face our fragility and acknowledge the precarious balance between life and death. Moreover, unprecedented media coverage and public scrutiny of governments' decisions led to increased demand from all sectors of society to invest more human and financial resources into coordinating the scientific and political spheres, in order to prevent another public health emergency of the same scale. Europe overall received a fair amount of criticism regarding its approach to vaccination during the pandemic, but the varied policies adopted by different countries now offer fruitful learning opportunities for the future. Therefore, panellists in this discussion will draw on personal expertise from their respective countries and together

explore how Europe can make progress in its approach to vaccination and prevention.

Speakers

Clarisse Lhoste has been President of MSD France since March 2019, where she focuses on the operational transformation of the company in the country, reinforce the position of France as one of the main contributors in oncological clinical trials within MSD as well as developing various public-private research partnerships under MSDAVENIR. Furthermore, she is also Secretary General of the LEEM and Vice-president at Agipharm. Engaged with MSD for more than 20 years, Clarisse previously led the company in Belgium and Luxembourg (2016-2019) and worked as Director for urban medicine and Chief Marketing Officer at MSD Canada. She started her career in France in marketing and sales functions as well as leading the Business Development and Market Access departments.

Mariano Votta joined Cittadinanzattiva in 2001 and since 2013 has been responsible for EU Affairs as Director of its EU branch, called "Active Citizenship Network", which is committed at the EU level to increasing the protection of patients' rights and their involvement in the decision-making process. Passionate about health & consumer issues, Mariano has over 20 years of experience in advocacy, stakeholder engagement, European projects, communication, and civic information. After beginning his career in journalism, he worked within the United Nations Development Programme as a consultant in Public Services and Communication in Colombia. In 2016 Mariano won the Efhre International University Excellence Awards on patients' rights, and in 2017 he was appointed as Secretary-General at the European Consumer Union. Mariano holds an MSc in Political Science and two post-graduate courses in EU Public Relations and Corporate Social Responsibility.

Francisco Ribeiro Mourão is an attending physician in Paediatrics, and has been working at the Pediatric Gastroenterology Unit in Centro Materno Infantil do Norte, Porto, Portugal, since 2021. He is a member of the Executive Board of European Junior Doctors, the Portuguese Medical Residency Selection Examination National Bureau and the Portuguese Medical Residency Council. After graduating as a medical doctor and obtaining a postgraduate degree in healthcare management, Francisco completed postgraduate clinical training in the UK and Mozambique. Previously a member of the Portuguese Medical Students International Committee and the Portuguese Medical Association, he is now a PhD student working on Inflammatory Bowel Disease in children.

Plamena Nikolova graduated with BA in "Cultural Studies" from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in 2011. Since then she has worked with the Trust for Civil

Society in Central and Eastern Europe, NDF "13 centuries Bulgaria" and TimeHeroes Foundation. With 5 years of high school teaching experience, she joined the National Network for Children (Bulgaria) in 2014, where she is responsible for numerous youth-focused projects as well as the formation of priorities in policies for children and active advocacy before institutions. Since March 2023 she is co-chair of the [PROTECT EUROPE](#) project, an EU4Health Project that champions gender-neutral vaccination programmes in EU Member States to provide protection for everyone against HPV-related cancers.

Jean-Baptiste Lusignan started volunteering in an HIV and Aids fighting NGO, in France, 20 years ago, when he was still a History student. This allowed him to learn about sex education, drug abuse and how to offer counselling to students and other users with specific needs. A few years later, he started working in Crips Ile-de-France, as social and health educator, mostly in schools and in an innovative prevention place for teenagers called Cybercrips. He then developed various projects and prevention tools with Crips IdF, such as outreach programs and educational games. He also started giving public speeches to promote public health work and gave training to other social workers on sex and drugs prevention techniques. Then, 6 years ago, he became manager of the team he was part of and pursued on developing prevention programs to another level.

Leonidas Galeridis' passion for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) was sparked while volunteering in a Greek HIV civil society organisation, where he actively supported individuals living with HIV and worked to promote positive sexual health practices. After this, he served as a research officer for an international NGO dedicated to assisting asylum seekers and refugees from the LGBTQ community. Currently, Leonidas works as a Policy and Research Officer for EPF (European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual and Reproductive Rights), where he monitors and analyses policy developments, publications, significant events, and crucial decision-making interventions at the EU level concerning sexual and reproductive health and rights, development, demography, and population policies. Additionally, he actively engages in advocacy efforts, supporting both national and European Members of Parliament working on SRHR and other pertinent topics.

Florence Ranson is the founder of REDComms. She is a seasoned event presenter and moderator for clients ranging from European Institutions and Agencies to national/international structures and private organisations, including media and trade associations. She also regularly provides public speaking training to clients in the public and private sectors, always adapting to the specific circumstances of their assignments and their working language. Furthermore, she is an experienced strategic and communications adviser and supports various organisations in the planning and development of their communications policies.

Live conversation guiding script

INTRODUCTION

Moderator (16:15)

Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to our breakout session focusing on youth vaccine hesitancy across EU Member States. My name is Florence Ranson, and I'm honoured to be moderating this important discussion. We have a diverse panel of experts from various Member States, who will share their insights, experiences, and best practices in understanding and addressing vaccine hesitancy among young people:

- Clarisse Lhoste - President of MSD France
- Mariano Votta - Director of Cittadinanzaattiva/ Active Citizenship Network
- Francisco Ribeiro Mourão - Paediatrician at Centro Materno Infantil do Norte in Porto, Portugal and Treasurer at European Junior Doctors
- Jean-Baptiste Lusignan - Public Health Manager at CRIPS Île-de-France
- Leonidas Galeridas - Policy and Research Officer, European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual and Reproductive Rights
- Plamena Nikolova - Director "Child Policies", National Network for Children in Bulgaria

I have prepared a number of questions, but please feel free to put up your hands and ask your own - this session is meant to be interactive! Let's now dive into our first set of questions.

Before we begin, I'd like to mention that Plamena Nikolova, one of our panellists, will have to leave the session a bit earlier due to other commitments.

To kick off our conversation, I'd like to invite Leonidas Galeridis to briefly present the Cervical Cancer Prevention Atlas developed by the European Parliamentary Forum for Sexual and Reproductive Rights. This Atlas was published in 2020 as a tool to illustrate healthcare inequalities across Europe, and will give a good basis for our further discussion as we compare the state of play in different European countries.

Leonidas Galeridis [5 mins]

Moderator

Thank you, Leonidas. We will now continue the discussion with the rest of the panellists, but if you have any questions for Leonidas please bring them up at the end of the session or speak to him during the drinks at the end of the day. I'd now

like to invite Mariano Votta to present the results of civic monitoring activity of 147 vaccination centres across Italy. If I'm not mistaken, it's the first time you present these results in Brussels, so thank you very much for allowing us to be the first to hear your insights. Without further ado, I will let Mariano provide an overview of this report.

Mariano Votta [5 mins]

Moderator

Thank you for sharing those insights, Mariano - these two presentations are a great starting point for our discussion.

THEME 1: UNDERSTANDING YOUTH VACCINE HESITANCY

Moderator (16:30)

Now, before we delve deeper into the topic, I would like to remind you that Plamena will unfortunately need to leave us a bit early due to other commitments. Hence, we will hear from her next. Plamena, could you tell us more about the attitudes of teenagers, young adults, and parents of small children towards vaccination and prevention in Bulgaria?

Plamena Nikolova

Thank you, Plamena. Francisco, as a Portuguese paediatrician, you have a unique perspective on this issue. Could you share with us some of the strategies and good practices you've observed or implemented in fighting vaccine hesitancy, particularly from the perspective of the healthcare system and professionals?

Francisco Ribeiro Mourão

Moderator

Thank you, Francisco. Let's turn our attention now to the perspective from France. Clarisse, could you share with us your impressions of the vaccine information landscape in France? What role do you think pharmaceutical companies have in public awareness about vaccines?

Clarisse Lhoste

Moderator

Jean-Baptiste, given your extensive experience in HIV and Aids prevention and education, could you share how you've seen attitudes toward vaccines evolve over

the years, particularly among youth? How are these insights from your work with CRIPS Île-de-France applicable to broader vaccine hesitancy challenges?

Jean-Baptiste Lusignan

Moderator

Thank you, Jean-Baptiste.

THEME 2: BEST PRACTICE EXCHANGE

Moderator

Now I'd like to dig a bit deeper and ask our panellists to share their advice for each other, bearing in mind the challenges highlighted earlier by Leonidas and Mariano in their respective presentations. Plamena, before you leave, what is your biggest takeaway in terms of what could be changed in Bulgaria to improve vaccination and prevention programs?

Plamena Nikolova

Moderator

Thank you, Plamena. Mariano - can you now take the lead and share your biggest lesson for other countries to take on board from the Italian experience?

Mariano Votta

Moderator

Thank you Mariano. Clarisse - do you see these recommendations working in France? Are there other solutions in place in France which could help to address issues that the other speakers have mentioned?

Moderator

Clarisse Lhoste

Thank you, Clarisse. Francisco - do you think the approaches mentioned by the previous speakers could be applied in Portugal? If not, what are the unique barriers which you experience when working in this country that do not apply in others?

Moderator

Francisco Ribeiro Mourão

Moderator

Thank you, Francisco. Finally, let's delve into CRIPS' work. Jean-Baptiste - from your experience of the new paradigms in STD prevention, do you have any recommendations for countries to take up in order to address this topic more effectively?

Jean-Baptiste Lusignan

AUDIENCE Q&A SESSION

Moderator (17:10)

Thank you to all our panellists for their valuable insights into the complex issue of youth vaccine hesitancy. We will now open the floor to questions from the audience.

Audience

CLOSING REMARKS

Moderator (17:25)

Thank you, everyone, for your participation in this breakout session. It's clear that addressing youth vaccine hesitancy is a complex challenge that requires collaboration among various types of stakeholders. I would like to thank all our panellists for sharing their expertise and experiences in tackling this important issue.

I hope that the insights and best practices shared here today will inspire further action across EU Member States to better understand and address vaccine hesitancy among young people. Together, we can work towards a healthier and more resilient Europe.

This marks the end of our session. Thank you once again.

Practical instructions

The venue address is Museum of Natural Sciences, Rue Vautier 29, 1000 Bruxelles. It is easily accessible via public transport and by foot.

If you are only attending this discussion please arrive around 15:45. Of course, you are more than welcome to take part in the rest of the Summit and stay for the evening drinks too. There will be representatives from ThinkYoung to guide you through the building - we will be obvious!

If you have any problems on the day please contact Marilena Toumazou at +357 99317585.

About the Summit

The inaugural *Europe's Tomorrow: Vaccination and Prevention Summit* will consist of a series of panel discussions, breakout room discussions and an exhibitors' fair showcasing organisations that work on vaccination and prevention. The Summit will also aim to spotlight youth voices with respect to vaccination and prevention, connecting the concerns and views of young people with high-level stakeholders in the healthcare industry and related policy fields. The theme of the Summit is *Building Europe's Vaccination System Back Better*, and discussions will focus on the provision of vaccinations and other preventative healthcare measures across Europe.

The event builds up on the work ThinkYoung has been doing in the past years to promote the importance of vaccination among young people. In January 2019, we launched our [Vaccine Coalition](#), a group of 40 young healthcare professionals whose main objective is to advocate for the importance of vaccination and prevention across Europe. Last year we also published a report on [Covid-19, Vaccine Hesitancy and Routine Immunisation](#), which highlighted the desire among young people for innovative vaccination delivery methods and better communication around the efficacy and safety of vaccines. The Vaccine Coalition is supported by a number of medical organisations and companies, including MSD.

Social media accounts

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