

Oral statement on ‘Vaccine-preventable diseases and immunization: realizing the full potential of the European Vaccine Action Plan’ - agenda point of the 68th session of the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Committee for Europe

September 2018

The European Public Health Association (EUPHA) appreciates the decision to place the European Vaccine Action Plan on the agenda of the 68th session of the World Health Organization Regional Committee for Europe. EUPHA welcomes the midterm report presenting progress towards the goals and objectives against the agreed European Vaccine Action Plan targets. Following our written statement that we submitted to the 68th Regional Committee, we would like to highlight two important considerations related to vaccination in the European region.

Firstly, EUPHA underlines its concern at falling confidence in vaccinations. The decrease in confidence is fuelled by fake news and linked to bots on social media. This manifests in lowered herd immunity and outbreaks of measles, a disease which several European countries considered having eradicated.

Secondly, we would like to highlight that political support and leadership for vaccination remains of paramount importance. Achieving a better understanding of political processes and the role they play in determining stances on vaccination policy, is an important avenue to help us communicate and better address genuine concerns as well as tackling organised purveyors of fake news.

Earlier this year, EUPHA published the e-collection ‘Facing the facts: challenges in vaccinating Europe’. This e-collection reflects on challenges in vaccination in the European region and includes a selection of scientific peer-reviewed articles recently published in the European Journal of Public Health. EUPHA will continue to provide the evidence base and will continue to collaborate with the European Commission, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, the WHO Regional Office for Europe and our networks.



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.

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