



IFMSA

International Federation of
Medical Students' Associations

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Vaccine-preventable diseases and immunization: realizing the full potential of the European Vaccine Action Plan 2015–2020

The International Federation of Medical Students' Associations recognizes the importance of vaccines and immunization programs. We applaud the efforts made by the WHO European region to carry out the European Vaccine Action Plan in order to complement, regionally interpret and adapt the Global Vaccine Action Plan 2011-2020. We congratulate the member states for the achievements made as shown in the midterm review report.

The IFMSA is the world's largest student organization and consists of 1,3 million medical students from 125 countries. We represent the voices of youth and future healthcare professionals and see it as our responsibility to raise awareness about the benefits of immunization and to stress the severe repercussions resulting from low vaccination coverage.

While we highly appreciate the achievements made thus far, we must also raise some concerns: The remaining polio immunity gaps, the fact that the region is not on track to achieve elimination of measles and rubella by 2020, as well as the surveillance performance and the information on immunization coverage of these two infections alarm us. Additionally, we find the decrease in the number of member states with a 95% or greater national diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis vaccine coverage concerning. We also worry about the inequities of immunization coverage within member states and the challenges faced by some member states in financially sustaining their immunization programmes.

In order to reach each of the six EVAP goals by 2020 we urge the members states to develop and sustain strong immunization programs, equipped with adequate resources - available to all. Moreover, to expand and strengthen surveillance systems to generate all needed information. Political will to achieve the sustainable development goals also implies achieving vaccination for all. Today the IFMSA renews its commitment to ensure vaccination remains a national and global priority, and to collaborate with governments and civil society organizations to promote the importance of immunization.

Vaccination is a cost effective health intervention which saves millions of people from death, disability and illness. It is the right of every child to live free from vaccine-preventable diseases. As healthcare professionals of tomorrow we expect all member states to make this right a reality by achieving the EVAP goals by 2020 and by providing effective and quality immunization services to all.

medical
students
worldwide