



## Active citizens in Europe advocate for (adult) vaccination

EU training seminar

25 June 2024 – Bruxelles- 14.30 – 18.50

**SPEAKERS (connected by Zoom)**



**Stefano Vella**

Catholic University, Italy

He is a medical doctor and researcher. He has worked for over thirty years in Italian public institutions, from the University "La Sapienza" (1977-1992) to the Higher Institute of Health (ISS) (1993 – 2018). He co-authored the first international guidelines on antiretroviral therapy (1996). Simultaneously, he worked to promote universal access to prevention, treatment, and care for AIDS, balancing research activities with advocacy and field interventions, particularly in developing countries.



### **Siff Malue Nielsen**

World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe

She joined WHO in 2014, working primarily on risk communications. For the last nine years she has been part of the vaccine acceptance and demand team within VPI. She supports Member States in strengthening vaccine acceptance and demand. Support is focused on behavioral insight, qualitative research for targeted intervention and communication strategies, risk communication and building long-term resilience against vaccine safety scares. In addition, she is leading the inter-sectoral project on a game-based educational module on vaccines and immunization – the Immune Patrol. Prior to joining WHO her professional experience includes positions as communications consultant focusing on health care; as press and communications consultant at the Danish Medical Association; and as a journalist at a Danish newspaper.



### **Siddhartha Sankar Datta**

Regional Adviser - Vaccine-preventable Diseases and Immunization, WHO Regional Office for Europe

He is a medical professional with a public health background. The concept of "barefoot" public health and witnessing firsthand the changes in the field through the strategic development of pragmatic public health policies excites him the most. This approach allows him to drive real change in the lives of those who need it most. He cherishes leading teams of any size and discovering both his own hidden attributes and those of his colleagues through teamwork. He is skilled in epidemiology, infectious disease prevention and control, strategic policy development, planning and implementation support, healthcare, and global health.

## PARTICIPANTS (in person)



### **Vida Augustinienė**

Council Of Representatives Of Patients' Organizations, Lithuania

Vida is a Civil Engineer and she's currently the President of the Lithuanian Diabetes Association ([www.dia.lt](http://www.dia.lt)), the Editor – in – chief of the Magazine "Diabetes" and the Chair of the Council of Representatives of Patients Organisations of Lithuania ([www.pacientutyba.lt](http://www.pacientutyba.lt)). Her daily activities include managing the day-to-day association operations, patient advocacy, participating and presenting in international and organizing national conferences, events, working groups, collaborating with Parliament, Ministry of Health, medical specialists to address Diabetes and other patient interests and care.



### **Christine Baluci**

Malta Health Network, Malta

I have served on the board of administrators of the Malta Health Network (MHN) since 2015, nominated by the executive board of the Malta Association for Public Health Medicine (MAPHM). I am a medical doctor with a specialisation in Public Health Medicine currently working in environmental health and tobacco related issues. I am also a patient suffering from a chronic disease and a carer of elderly parents. I use both my personal experience and my professional experience in various domains of public health practice including the development of public health legislation, policies and strategies at national and EU levels to advocate for public health through MHN.



**Andreas Christodoulou**

Cyprus Federation of Patients' Associations (CyFPA), Cyprus

Andreas is the Director of Operations of the Cyprus Federation of Patients' Associations (CyFPA), an EPF member whose mission is to ensure that patients in Cyprus have access to holistic, patient-centered, equitable and social healthcare. He has been elected as a Board Member in EPF's Board of Directors in the Annual General Meeting 2023. As an expert patient advocate and a patient himself, Andreas has been actively involved in the fight to control cancer. He strongly advocates for the need for a Holistic Patient Care and for a Universal Healthcare Coverage. His field of expertise is patient advocacy, Digital Health, Innovation solutions, ICT and administrative support. He holds a Bachelor and Master degree in Computer Science and Master in Global Ethics & Human Values from King's College London.



**Dubravka Finka**

Croatian Association for Patients' Rights-Zadar, Croatia

Dr. Dubravka, MD, has worked as GP since 1980 for seven years, then has been working at the Oncology Department in Zadar County Hospital and Clinical Hospital Center Zagreb. Since 1995 she was working in Croatian Institute for Health Insurance, participated in various international health educational projects. Since 2003 she is the President of Croatian Association for Patients' Rights-Zadar, member of Consumer Association Zadar, (participated in about 40 projects for patient rights in Croatia, international conferences etc.)

From 2018 she is the President of the Association for Patients Rights - Zadar Patient (Zadarski pacijent).



**Christine Frühling**

Lower Austrian Patient and Nursing Advocacy, Austria

Since 02/2024, Christine is an associate of the Lower Austrian Patient and Nursing Advocacy. Work focus on patient rights, advice on and establishment of patient decrees, advice on and establishment of death decrees, out-of-court settlement negotiations, patient representation at the arbitration board of the medical association.



**Sorin Gradinaru**

ACMIM - My Child - My Heart Association, Romania

Vice president – My child - my heart association, the association for children with heart defects, managing director romania at the austrian advertising agency, Sery, project coordinator for the project Everything for your heart! - screening program for identifying patients with cardiovascular risk factors. COPAC, board member of COPAC; coordinator of the health information center in iași, infoSAN.



**Reneta Ilieva**

Bulgarian Association for Patients' Defense (BAPD), Bulgaria

She has been in the team of BAPD for 6 years as an associate lawyer and projects' coordinator. She has a number of international participation in health forums and conferences in the EU. Until now she implemented several international projects in a consortium with the European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) on air pollution: "Diesel and Health"; "Clean cities and clean air"; "Clean Transport". Provides legal advice on claiming responsibility from individual providers of medical services related to illegal actions to deprive patients of treatment in medical facilities, drug deprivation, delayed treatment, injuries and infections, medical incidents, refusal to pay for medical services rendered, clinical pathways, services and more. She is fluent in English and Spanish language, with a Masters degree in Law.



**Jasna Karačić Zanetti**

Croatian Association for the Promotion of patient rights, Croatia

Jasna is the president of the Croatian Association for the Promotion of patients' rights. She has a Ph.D. in health diplomacy and she is also the Head of the Health Diplomacy Unit and director of Department of Health Diplomacy and Patient Rights at International chair in bioethics (Former UNESCO chair). She has an active mandate as an ombudsman at the International Council of the Patient Ombudsman. She is an associate lecturer at the diplomatic academy and medical law. She served as a diplomat during the Croatian Presidency of the Council of the EU 2020, delegated from the Ministry of Health. As a responsible person for patient rights, she holds consultative status with the United Nations. She got the Rector's Award for Achievements at the UNESCO level for human rights in medicine and the National Geographic Award for Justice in sustainable

development goals. She was assigned “Young Leader” for health crisis management in 2021. She is EU Commission expert and associate editor for PLOS ONE journal.



**Marta Kulpa**

Institute for Patients' Rights and Health Education, Poland

Since 2009, Marta has been implementing training, education and community health projects at the Institute for Patients' Rights and Health Education (Instytut Praw Pacjenta i Edukacji Zdrowotnej, IPPEZ). She organizes trainings for representatives of patient organizations nationwide, and coordinates the work of the Patient Organizations' Support Centre at IPPEZ. Since June 2024, she has coordinated the work of the Alliance for the Control of Respiratory Infectious Diseases. Poland Breaths Healthily.



**Ioanna Liatsou**

Hellenic Liver Patients Association “Prometheus”, Greece

Ioanna is a Sociologist with a master degree in Addiction Prevention & Treatment - Addictology, currently serving as the Programs Manager at The Hellenic Liver Patient Association "Prometheus" since February 2022. In this role, she oversees program design, implementation, and evaluation, manages financial expenditures, and coordinates communication with external partners. Ioanna's responsibilities also include organizing field activities, conducting medical examinations and maintaining positive community relations. Additionally, Ioanna is actively engaged as a member of the Hellenic Scientific Society for AIDS, Sexually Transmitted, and Emerging Diseases Research, contributing to scientific committees and national conferences.



**Stephen McMahon**

Irish Patients Association, Ireland

Stephen is cofounder of the Irish Patients Association. He has been instrumental in coordinating a Patient-Centered Advocacy group. Its primary focus is to support patients and their families who have had negative experiences within the healthcare system. We advocate for their rights, improved patient safety, and accountability within the Health Care System. His experience encompasses various domains such as Patient Advocacy, Communications, Policymaking, Standard-setting, Regulation, Education, and Research. Some of his specialties include Individual and Collective Patient Advocacy, Patient Safety, Health Care Regulatory Experience, Crisis Management - Patients/Public Interests, Serious Incident Review, Board Room Conflict Resolution, Non-Government Organisations. He is a founding signatory on behalf of the IPA to ACNs' European Charter of Patients' Rights.



**Diane-Estelle Ngatchou-Djomo**

Ligue des Usagers des Services de Santé (LUSS), Belgium

Diane is a dedicated Pharmaceutical Policy Manager at the Ligue des Usagers des Services de Santé (LUSS), where she focuses on critical issues related to medications and medical devices. In her role, Diane-Estelle advocates for patients' interests, ensuring accessibility, availability, quality, and health literacy in healthcare services.

In addition to her work at LUSS, Diane-Estelle is a PhD fellow at the United Nations University. Her research delves into the socio-demographic, economic, and political factors associated with medicine quality, aiming to enhance understanding and policy-making in this vital area.



Through her professional and academic endeavours, Diane-Estelle is committed to improving healthcare systems and outcomes for patient.



**Marleen Struss**  
EPECS, Netherlands

Marleen is an advisor for the board of EPECS, a foundation that aims at improving the quality and accessibility of (cross-border) healthcare, and strengthening transparency and the exchange of information, for and with citizens.

Furthermore, she works at euPrevent, a cross-border network of organizations committed to enhancing the quality of life for citizens living in the border area between the Netherlands, Germany, and Belgium.

Her line of work lies within the promotion and execution of cross-border initiatives, projects and activities that support public health and citizen participation.



**Hui Wang**  
euPrevent, Netherlands

euPrevent project worker; Ph.D in law, working in public health since March 2020.