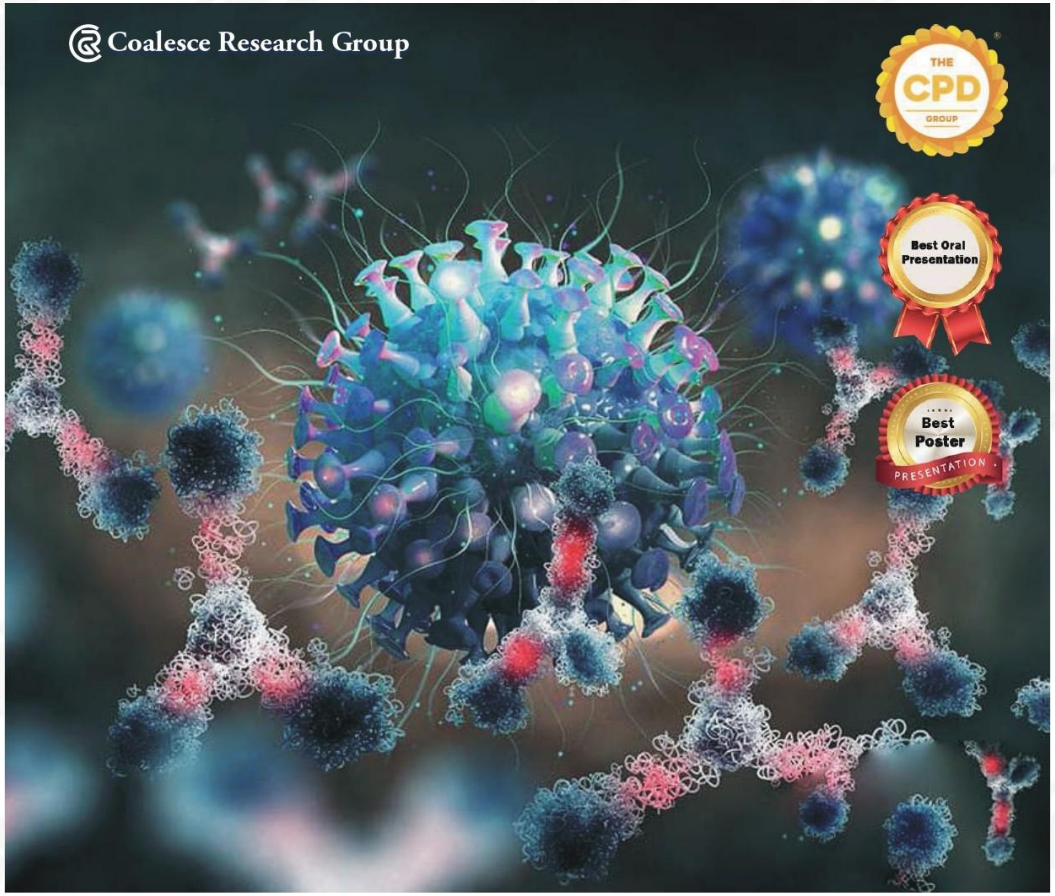


8TH EUROPEAN CONGRESS ON

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

September 24-25, 2026

RADISSON HOTEL BUDAPEST, BUDAPART, HUNGARY

Theme: "Advancing Infectious Disease Research: Shaping the Future of Global Health"

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK
CITTADINANZATTIVA

A broader narrative on respiratory diseases. A citizens' and patients' perspective towards the development of an EU Respiratory Health Plan

Mariano Votta
Cittadinanzattiva / Active Citizenship Network

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK
CITTADINANZATTIVA

Cittadinanzattiva & Active Citizenship Network

Cittadinanzattiva

- Italian NGO founded in 1978
- More than 35.000 volunteers, 270 local assemblies and 84 local centres
- Mission: promote active participation of citizens and protection of their rights


MINISTERO DELLA SALUTE

Con decreto del Presidente della Repubblica in data 19 settembre 2006 è stata conferita

alla Cittadinanzattiva
Tribunale per i diritti del Malato

La medaglia d'oro
Al Merito della Sanità Pubblica

Roma, 14 dicembre 2006

Il Ministro

In 2007 we have been awarded a **gold medal** for our committment to improving the public health system in Italy

Active Citizenship Network

- The European branch of Cittadinanzattiva, established in 2001
- One of the most widespread network, with more the 100 civic, patients and user organisations
- Promotes the European citizens' point of view in all public policies areas, focusing on healthcare, consumers and corporate social responsibility issues.

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK
CITTADINANZATTIVA

Community and civil society engagement on health issues



The WHO has defined community engagement as “a ***process*** of developing relationships that enable stakeholders to work together to address health related issues and promote well being to achieve positive health impact and outcomes” and it underlines the “Community and civil society engagement” as a pillar of its “Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All”.





December 5, 2023, the European Commission adopted the EU4Health 2024 work program to implement key health policy priorities within the European Health Union. As Stella Kyriakides, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, said, "***Civil society has a crucial role to play in reaching out to our citizens***".



G7 Ministers’ Meeting on Health 9/11 Oct. 2024 Ancona (Italy): “….vaccination is an essential preventive measure and reiterate the crucial role of routine immunisation and campaigns”…. “the importance of ***raising awareness and involving the general population*** by providing evidence-based information through ***campaigns aimed at citizens’ empowerment and increasing health literacy*** regarding prevention, research and care”



The right to participate in policymaking in the area of health: ***Citizens have the right to participate*** *in the definition, implementation and evaluation of public policies relating to the protection of health care rights.*

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK
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EU survey "Integrating COronaVIrus Disease 2019 into the broader respiratory disease narrative" (I)



From pandemic to endemic: integrating COronaVIrus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) into the broader respiratory disease narrative

European civic survey

EU civic survey addressed to civil society organisations and patient advocacy groups across Europe, aiming at identifying their opinions and concerns. Read more

MEDVIX PUBLICATIONS

Journal of Medical and Clinical Case Reports
Research Article | Open Access | ISSN 2997-6022 | Volume 02 | Issue 05

Incorporating COVID-19 Into the Broader Narrative on Respiratory Diseases. A Citizens' and Patients' Perspective Towards the Development of An EU Respiratory Health Plan

Mariano Votta[1*], Bianca Ferraiolo[2]

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[2]Senior Manager EU Affairs and Head of the Representative Office to the EU, Active Citizenship Network, Rue Philippe Le Bon 46, 1000 Brussels, Belgium.

Received date: 20 August 2025; **Accepted date:** 04 September 2025; **Published date:** 12 September 2025

Corresponding Author: Mariano Votta, Director, Active Citizenship Network, c/o Cittadinanzattiva APS, Via Imera, 2 – 00183 Rome, Italy. ORCID iD: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7557-2546, ResearchGate: www.researchgate.net/profile/Mariano-Votta/research

- 43 PAGs and CSOs from 19 Member States
- Addressed to the leaders and representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs) and patient advocacy groups (PAGs) across Europe, aiming at identifying their opinions and concerns
- Qualitative, not quantitative, collection of data
- On-time survey: from 18 December 2024 to 16 February 2025
- Not a comparison between different countries, but an overall European assessment

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK
CITTADINANZATTIVA

EU survey "Integrating COronaVIrus Disease 2019 into the broader respiratory disease narrative" (II)

- **Pandemic Anxiety:** 83,7% of respondents remain persistently concerned about new pandemics.
- **Lack of Preparedness:** only 27,9% consider the preparedness of national authorities to be adequate.
- **Digital Stagnation:** progress in e-Health is perceived as "minimal" by over 70% of organizations.
- **Untapped Potential:** uneven public communication efforts, particularly for VPRDs; there is near-unanimous support for involving pharmacists in vaccination campaigns, yet civic and patient organizations remain significantly underutilized as strategic partners in health communication.
- When we look at the top threats to respiratory health, **financial constraints** lead the way (76,7%), followed by the **impact of air pollution and climate change** (48,8%). Interestingly, the impact of **Long-COVID** is perceived as a primary concern by only 9,3% of respondents. This suggests a dangerous risk of underestimation that we cannot afford to ignore.

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK
CITTADINANZATTIVA

“European civil society unites to strengthen health workforce and citizens’ right to health”

***Eu Call to Action” to the European Commission to Urgently Address the Health Workforce Crisis*: 42 civic, patient and health professional organisations**, **supported by 5 MEPs** from the two largest political groups in the European Parliament (EPP and S&D), have addressed an open letter to the newly elected European Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare, Olivér Várhelyi. This joint effort, led by Cittadinanzattiva - Active Citizenship Network and RPP Group, aims to underline the urgency of tackling Europe’s health workforce crisis to protect citizens’ right to health. List of signatory organisations

Watch the collective video message and the ones by MEP Ondřej Dostál (NI, Czech Republic), MEP Loucas Fourlas (EPP, Cyprus), MEP András Kulja (EPP, Hungary), MEP Tomislav Sokol (EPP, Croatia)



MEP Ondřej Dostál (NA, Czech Republic) - #CareforAll 2024





MEP András Kulja (EPP, Hungary) - #CareforAll 2024



MEP Tomislav Sokol (EPP, Croatia) - #CareforAll 2024



) - #CareforAll 2024

MEP Ondřej Dostál (NI, Czechia) and MEP Brando Benifei (S&D, Italy) signing the open letter

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK
CITTADINANZATTIVA

EU workshops on European policies & advocacy in respiratory care







Read more (A – B)







Read more (C – D)

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK
CITTADINANZATTIVA

"Supporting health workforce to strengthen patients' rights in the EU"



"Supporting health workforce to strengthen patients' rights in the EU". With this message, the #CareforAll2024 campaign was launched in the second half of 2024, featuring representatives of 13 associations from 10 countries as testimonials.

Read more - For the video message, click here

JOURNAL OF MEDICAL AND CLINICAL CASE REPORTS (Published date: 10 December 2024): Call to Action to the European Commission to Urgently Address the Health Workforce Crisis and the Upskilling of Healthcare Professionals

MEDVIX PUBLICATIONS

Journal of Medical and Clinical Case Reports
Research Article | Open Access | ISSN 2997-6022 | Volume 01 | Issue 12

Call to Action to the European Commission to Urgently Address the Health Workforce Crisis and the Upskilling of Healthcare Professionals

Mariano Votta[1*], Bianca Ferraiolo[2], Kinga Wójtowicz[3], Luca Mario Comincioli[4]

[1]Director, Active Citizenship Network, c/o Cittadinanzattiva APS, Via Imera, 2 - 00183 Rome, Italy.

[2]Head of the Representative Office to the EU - Senior Manager EU Affairs, Active Citizenship Network, Rue Philippe Le Bon 46, 1000 Brussels, Belgium.

[3]Director of EU Healthcare at RPP Group Brussels office, Rue Guimard 10, 1040 Brussels, Belgium.

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Received date: 22 November 2024; **Accepted date:** 04 December 2024; **Published date:** 10 December 2024



ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK
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Working Group on Respiratory Care (I)

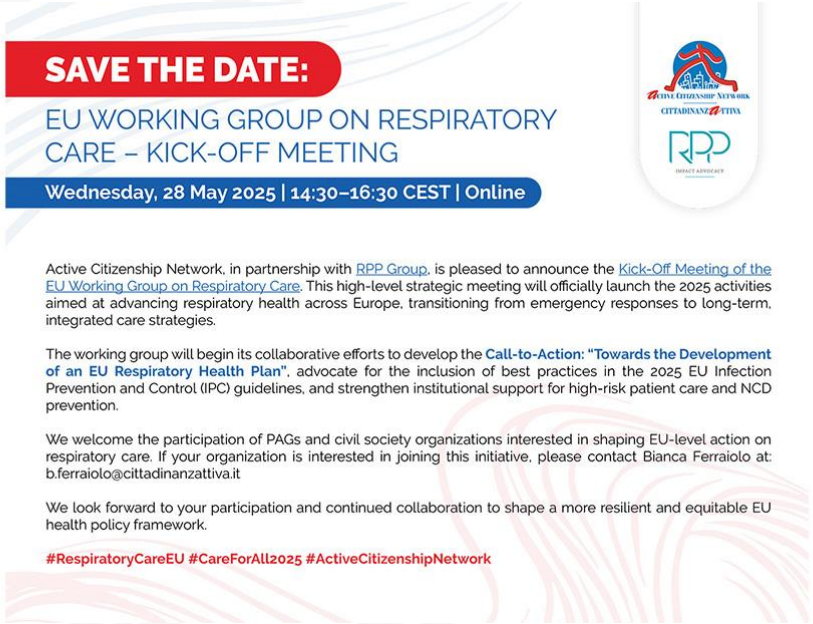
- The EU Working Group on Respiratory Care is a collaborative initiative launched to address the growing burden of respiratory diseases across Europe.

- Co-organised by the Active Citizenship Network (ACN) and the RPP Group, the Working Group brings together EU-level scientific societies, healthcare professionals, and national patient advocacy organisations to foster dialogue, share best practices, and shape policy recommendations.

- Its mission is to serve as a practical and inclusive platform that supports the development of evidence-based strategies.

- By aligning actors across Member States and sectors, the Working Group aims to ensure that respiratory health becomes a central component of EU public health planning, with a particular focus on prevention, equity, and resilience.

Working Group on Respiratory Care (II)



SAVE THE DATE:

EU WORKING GROUP ON RESPIRATORY CARE – KICK-OFF MEETING

Wednesday, 28 May 2025 | 14:30–16:30 CEST | Online

Active Citizenship Network, in partnership with RPP Group, is pleased to announce the Kick-Off Meeting of the EU Working Group on Respiratory Care. This high-level strategic meeting will officially launch the 2025 activities aimed at advancing respiratory health across Europe, transitioning from emergency responses to long-term, integrated care strategies.

The working group will begin its collaborative efforts to develop the **Call-to-Action: "Towards the Development of an EU Respiratory Health Plan"**, advocate for the inclusion of best practices in the 2025 EU Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) guidelines, and strengthen institutional support for high-risk patient care and NCD prevention.

We welcome the participation of PAGs and civil society organizations interested in shaping EU-level action on respiratory care. If your organization is interested in joining this initiative, please contact Bianca Ferraiolo at: b.ferraiolo@cittadinanzattiva.it

We look forward to your participation and continued collaboration to shape a more resilient and equitable EU health policy framework.

#RespiratoryCareEU #CareForAll2025 #ActiveCitizenshipNetwork

Read more



SAVE THE DATE:

EU WORKING GROUP ON RESPIRATORY CARE – SECOND MEETING

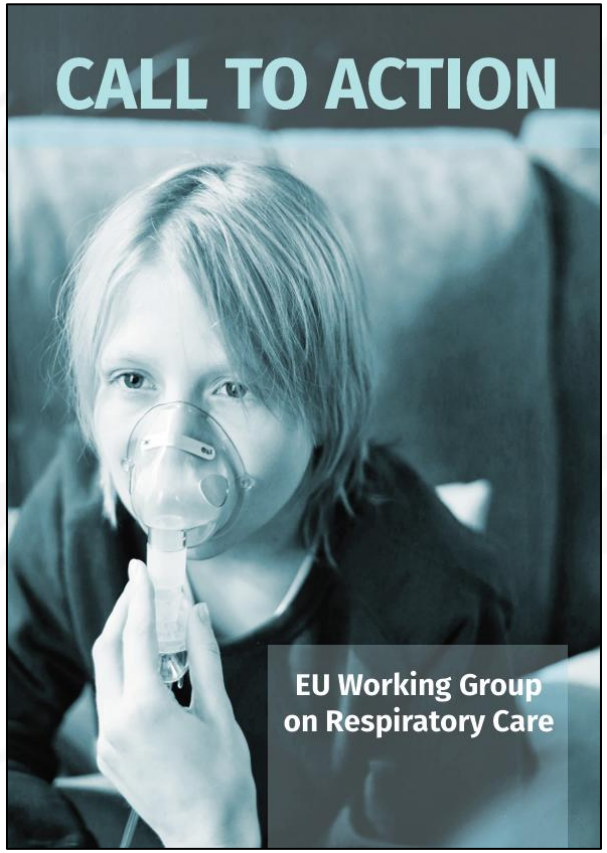
Monday, 22 September 2025 | from 14:30 to 16:30 CEST | Online

Read more

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK

CITTADINANZATTIVA

Policy recommendations for an EU Respiratory Health Plan: Call to Action (I)



The eleven recommendations outlined in the Call to Action are intended to provide robust, evidence-based input to ensure that the specific needs of respiratory health are fully addressed and embedded in an upgraded, unified European framework for infection control, providing better protection for the health rights of European citizens. Read more

Endorsed by:

- 24 National CSOs & PAGs from 13 Member States

- EUROPEAN UMBRELLA PATIENTS' ORGANIZATIONS:

1. European Liver Patients' Association (ELPA)
2. International Patient Organisation for Primary Immunodeficiencies (IPOPI)

- HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS' ASSOCIATIONS:

1.Federation of European Academies of Medicine (FEAM)
2.World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA)
3.European Scientific Working group on Influenza and other Respiratory Viruses (ESWI)
4.European Specialist Nurses Organisation – ESNO
5.European Medical Association – EMA
6.European Geriatric Medicine Society – EuGMS

Click here to download the document

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK
CITTADINANZATTIVA

Policy recommendations for an EU Respiratory Health Plan: Call to Action (II)

Areas of Interest

1. Prevention & Early Detection

- **Scale up prevention**: Vaccination, smoking cessation, and environmental policies to cut respiratory disease incidence.
- **Improve early detection**: Strengthen screening for timely intervention and less healthcare strain.
- **Integrate respiratory care**: Embed it within IPC strategies to address respiratory risks.

2. Improved Access to Treatment

- **Ensure equitable access**: Essential medicines, antivirals, and new therapies across Member States.
- **Support innovative care models**: Integrated clinics, telemonitoring, and mobile screening.
- **Include in preparedness plans**: Integrate treatment strategies to manage seasonal and pandemic surges.

3. Equitable Access & Support for Vulnerable Populations

- **Remove access barriers**: Reduce wait times, specialist gaps, financial and social inequalities.
- **Prioritise vulnerable groups**: Elderly, children, and people with chronic or rare conditions.
- **Include patient voices**: Ensure vulnerable groups are represented in policy design.

4. Public Awareness and Healthcare Workforce Upskilling

- **Launch EU awareness campaigns**: Promote respiratory prevention and adult vaccination.
- **Invest in workforce training**: Upskill healthcare professionals, including respiratory nurses and geriatric specialists.
- **Strengthen engagement skills**: Include patient communication and digital literacy in training.

By acting now, we can not only reduce the current burden but also future proof our systems against emerging respiratory threats. The time for coordinated evidence-based action is now

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK
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EU campaign “Advancing Respiratory Care Across Europe”







To know more: A – B

#CareforAll 2025 is part of the ‘Advancing Respiratory Care at the EU Level’ project. It has been developed in partnership with 13 patient advocacy groups from 9 countries.

Advancing Respiratory Care Across Europe #CareforAll 2025

With the unconditional support of: Pfizer

Created in collaboration with: MD Health

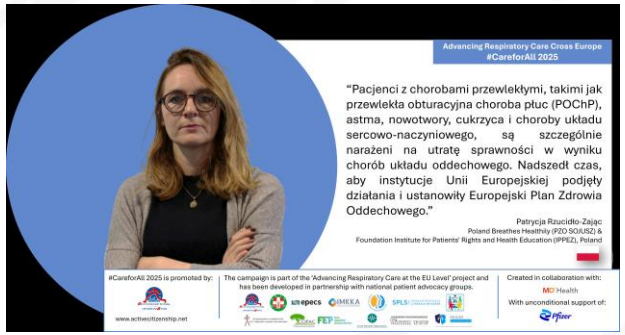


#CareforAll 2025 is promoted by:

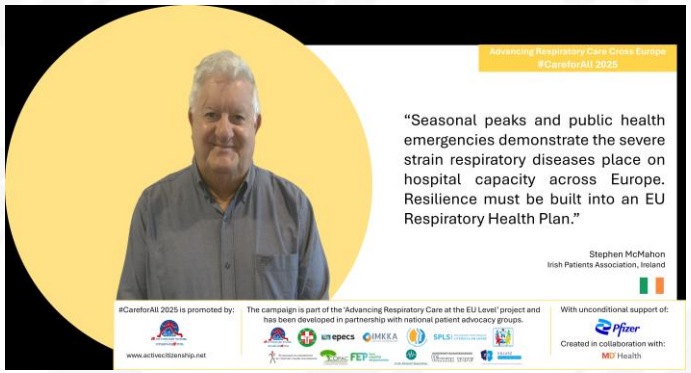
www.activecitizenship.net

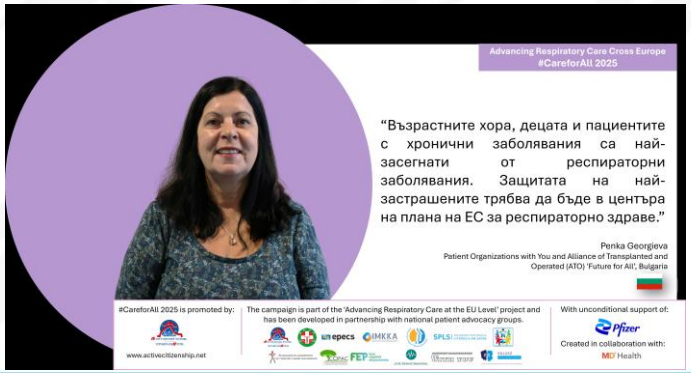












Call for a Council Recommendation on immunisation against respiratory infections



Toward a Council Recommendation on the value of immunisation against respiratory infections

Steering Group on Prevention of Respiratory Infections

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Core policy ask:

We call for a new Council Recommendation on the value of immunisation against respiratory infections.

In a world of rising health threats and mounting pressure on health systems, **the EU has a clear opportunity and responsibility to lead on preparedness by reinforcing investment in public health prevention**. Preventing and mitigating respiratory infections is not only a public health priority but also a vital component of EU resilience; safeguarding citizens, economies, and essential services from the destabilising effects of large-scale outbreaks.

As other global actors reduce their long-term public health investments, the EU can step forward to fill the gap and champion a model of long-term resilience. **Immunisation against respiratory infections is a proven, cost-effective tool** that strengthens strategic autonomy, reducing economic losses and reliance on emergency measures and external supplies during crises.

The EU has already taken steps to promote immunisation against influenza with the 2009 Council Recommendation on Seasonal Influenza Vaccination. This provides a strong foundation. However, to match the scale of today's challenges and address the reality of other respiratory infections, some with pandemic potential, further action is needed. These infections can overwhelm healthcare systems, disrupt essential services, and undermine workforce capacity and economic stability.

Safe and effective immunisation tools are available and the prevention of severe outcomes is both feasible and cost effective. A comprehensive EU approach will save lives, protect economic productivity, and maintain public trust while ensuring that the EU is prepared for future cross-border health threats. Now is the time for the EU to take responsibility and act decisively to protect the health and security of its citizens.

Steering Group on Influenza Vaccination

As a member of the Steering Group on Prevention of Respiratory Infections we contributed to the Call to Action "Toward a Council Recommendation on the value of immunisation against respiratory infections"



Calling for a new Council Recommendation on the value of immunisation against respiratory infections

Steering Group on Prevention of Respiratory Infections

A new Council Recommendation should:

Call on Member States to:

- **Use New Economic Governance Framework (NEGF) flexibilities** to exclude immunisation spending from caps on country's budget deficits.
- **Fund education, training, and best-practice exchange** for healthcare professionals.
- **Adopt EU-wide coverage targets** for influenza, COVID-19, RSV, and pneumococcal disease, using the 75% flu benchmark for at risk populations.
- **Strengthen surveillance** by expanding existing flu systems to include COVID-19, RSV, and pneumococcal disease.
- **Tackle misinformation** through transparent communication and community engagement.

Invite the European Commission to:

- **Commit dedicated EU funding** for immunisation access, innovation, and confidence.
- **Issue guidance for Member States** on prevention budgeting under NEGF flexibilities.
- **Empower the ECDC** to set harmonised reporting standards on coverage.
- **Invest in digital infrastructure** to track immunisation coverage as a key performance indicator.
- Develop guidelines to **embed immunisation** in medical education and daily practice.
- **Integrate immunisation** into all EU health and resilience strategies, including the forthcoming Cardiovascular Health Plan

Now is the time for the EU to take responsibility and act decisively to protect the health and security of its citizens.

Respiratory Care: repository

- **VACCINES TODAY** (March 17th, 2026): Europe needs a Respiratory Health Plan that prioritises prevention
- **HEALTH EUROPA** (10th March 2026): The role of vaccination against respiratory infections as a tool for preventing cardiovascular disease
- **SUNTEXT REVIEW OF CASE REPORTS & IMAGES** (Published date: 23 February 2026) Leveraging Civil Society and Community Leadership to Support Public Vaccination Policies: Collection of Grassroots Mobilisation Initiatives across Europe
- **JOURNAL OF ZOONOTIC PATHOGENS AND ONE HEALTH POLICY** (Published: 31 January 2026): Priorities to Strengthen Respiratory Health Strategy in the European Union
- **TREND SANITÀ** (3 Nov 2025): Respiratory Health in Europe: Integrating Environment, Prevention and Access to Care
- **TREND SANITÀ** (3 Nov 2025): Salute respiratoria in Europa: integrazione tra ambiente, prevenzione e accesso alle cure (IT)
- **HEALTH EUROPA** (2nd October 2025): Towards the development of an "EU respiratory health plan"
- **JOURNAL OF MEDICAL & CLINICAL CASE REPORTS** (Published date: 12 September 2025): Incorporating COVID-19 Into the Broader Narrative on Respiratory Diseases. A Citizens' and Patients' Perspective Towards the Development of An EU Respiratory Health Plan
- **ACN monthly Newsletter** *(Sept 2025): "Special edition on our commitment on vaccination and respiratory care"*


SCIENCE SET

Research Article

Journal of Zoonotic Pathogens and One Health Policy

Policy Priorities to Strengthen Respiratory Health Strategy in the European Union

Mariano Votta[1]* Bianca Ferraiolo[2], Kinga Wójtowicz[3], Luca Mario Comincioli[4], Francesco Santarossa[4] & Georgios Mavrodimitrakis[4]

[1]Director Active Citizenship Network, c/o Cittadinanzattiva APS, Via Imera, 2 - 00183 Rome, Italy
[2]Head of the Representative Office to the EU - Senior Manager EU Affairs, Active Citizenship Network, Rue Philippe Le Bon 46, 1000 Brussels, Belgium
[3]Director of EU Healthcare at RPP Group Brussels office, Rue Guimard 10, 1040 Brussels, Belgium
Health Policy Consultant at RPP Group Brussels office, Rue Guimard 10, 1040 Brussels, Belgium
[4]Associate Consultant at RPP Group Brussels office, Rue Guimard 10, 1040 Brussels, Belgium

*Corresponding author: Mariano Votta, Director Active Citizenship Network, c/o Cittadinanzattiva APS, Via Imera, 2 - 00183 Rome, Italy.

Submitted: 19 January 2026 Accepted: 26 January 2026 Published: 31 January 2026


Across Europe

ACN Europe Pollution

Respiratory Health in Europe: Integrating Environment, Prevention and Access to Care

Social and environmental inequalities weigh heavily on respiratory health across Europe. During the Workshop on European Policies and Advocacy in Respiratory Care held in Brussels, organized by Cittadinanzattiva-Active Citizenship Network, Professor Guglielmo Trovato emphasized the need for an integrated approach linking environmental policies, prevention, and healthcare professional training to ensure equity and quality of care

di Rossella Iannone 3 November 2025 Tempo di lettura: 3 min Italian

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP NETWORK
CITTADINANZATTIVA

Respiratory Care: supporting initiatives across EU

Panelist:

- 24 June 2025 I Linking Adult Immunization and Chronic Disease Management to Advance Healthy Aging in Europe
- 9 September 2025 I EU webinar "Is Preventative Medicine a Human Right?“
- 25 September 2025 | Brussels (Belgium): “Viral threats, immune challenges: shaping the future of respiratory care – the PID patients’ perspective”
- 22-23 October 2025 I 12th Global Webinar on Public Health
- 10-11 November 2025 | Barcelona (Spain): 17th Global Summit on Nursing Education & Healthcare
- 26-27 November 2025 | Webinar: 4th Global Summit on Public Health

EU-funded project:

- Providing external support for the IMPORTANCE-Implications of Positive Airway Pressure and Home Mechanical Ventilation - TowArds optimal patient CarE, a European Respiratory Society Clinical Research Collaboration.

Publications:

- “COVID-19 Policy and Disease Management Recommendations in the Post-Pandemic Era Best Practices to Support High-Risk and At-Risk Patients”



25 September 2025 | Brussels

Jubilee 2025 in Rome (Italy): Prevention campaign "*Know the path. Walk with care*", urging citizens and visitors to monitor for respiratory symptoms and to get tested if they suspect any symptoms. Read more

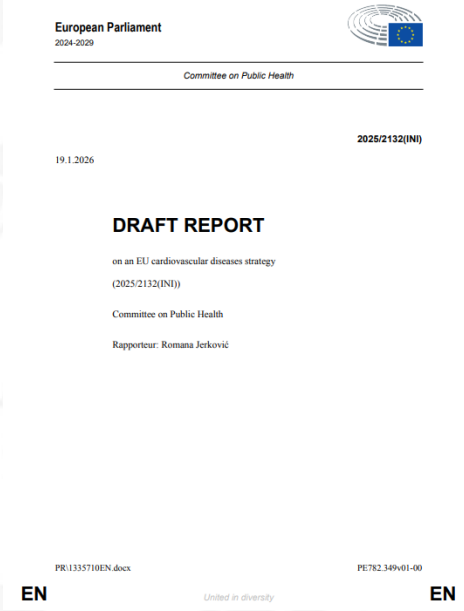


Institutional policy dialogue at the EU Parliament

"Council recommendation on the value of immunisation against respiratory infections: a step towards an EU Respiratory Health Plan?"

(Brussels, 18 March 2026)

- Under the EU Safe Hearts Plan, the European Commission will propose a Council recommendation on immunisation against respiratory infections as a preventive measure for cardiovascular disease.
- However, the European Parliament Committee on Public Health's (SANT) first draft of its report on an EU cardiovascular diseases strategy make s no mention of vaccination.



European Parliament
2024-2029

Committee on Public Health

2025/2132(INI)

19.1.2026

DRAFT REPORT

on an EU cardiovascular diseases strategy

(2025/2132(INI))

Committee on Public Health

Rapporteur: Romana Jerković

PR\1335710EN.docx PE782.349v01-00

EN United in diversity EN

The event, hosted by Cypriot MEP Michalis Hadjipantela (EPP Group), brought together experts and representatives of EU institutions interested in the Council Recommendation on the value of immunisation against respiratory infections. To know more (A – B)



Promoting «European Respiratory Care Alliance»







COPAC
Coalitia Organizatiilor Pacientilor
cu Afectiuni Cronice din Romania

Bucharest (Romania) – 14 May 2026

Active Citizenship Network
Cittadinanzattiva





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