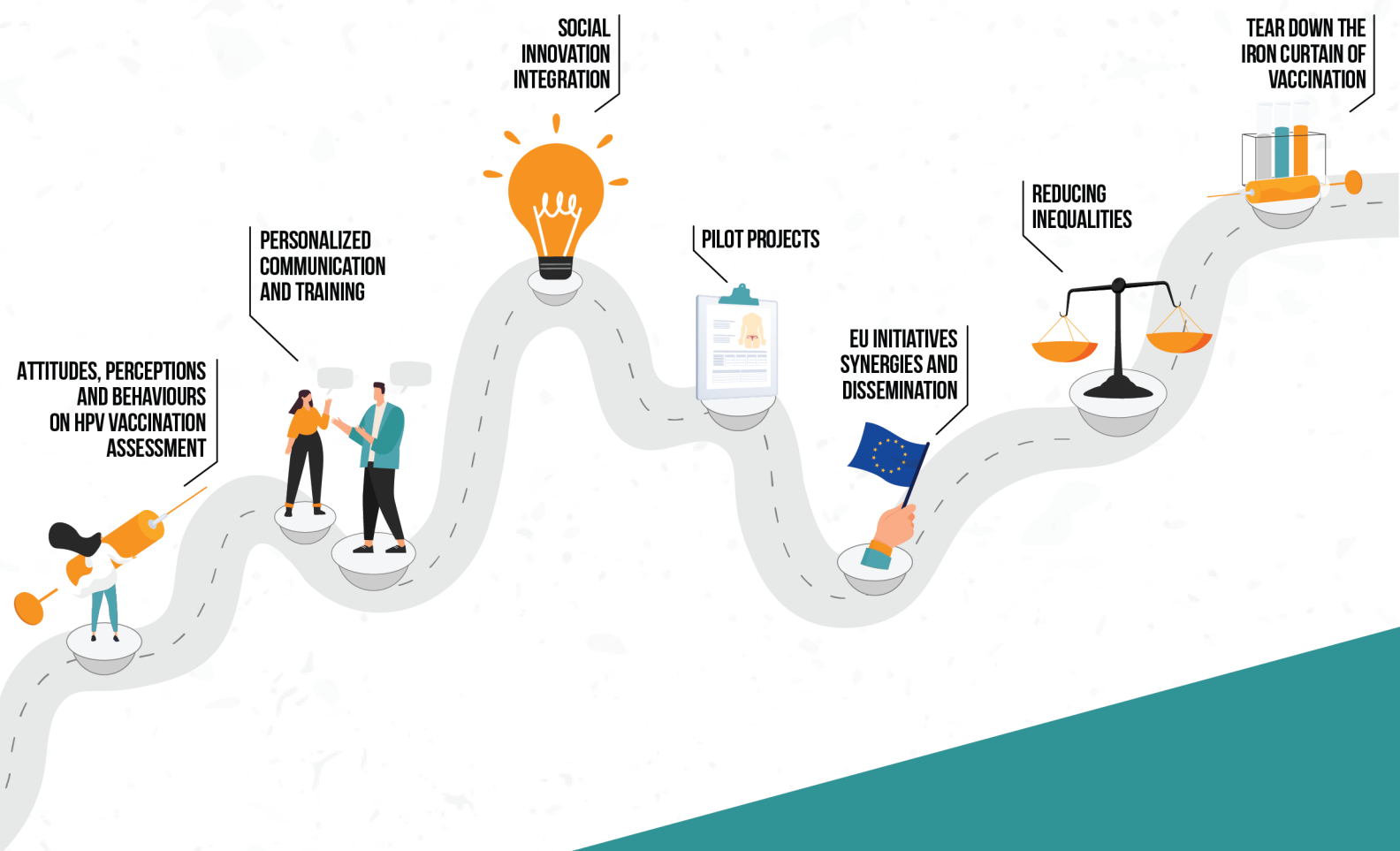


Rethink and Reduce inequalities in HPV vaccination through personalized communication and training, based on social innovation and behavioural determinants of health



D5.3. Social media awareness campaign

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Introduction

The Renasterea Foundation successfully implemented a social media campaign aimed at promoting HPV vaccination in Argeş and Vrancea counties, Romania. This initiative targeted increased public awareness of HPV vaccination's benefits, encouraged engagement within the community, and inspired individuals to take action, such as seeking further information or participating in vaccination programs.

The campaign was carried out over several phases, beginning in April 2024 and ending in December 2024. These timelines were strategically chosen to align with broader public health outreach efforts, ensuring the messages reached the intended audience during periods of heightened attention.

Facebook and Instagram served as the primary platforms for this initiative, leveraging their extensive user bases and ability to facilitate targeted advertising. The campaign utilized paid advertisements and boosted posts, supported by creative content including compelling visuals, informative captions, and interactive features such as polls and stories. Performance tracking through Facebook Ads Manager and Instagram Insights provided valuable data on audience engagement and campaign effectiveness.

The primary objective of the campaign was to increase awareness and encourage HPV vaccination among residents of Argeş and Vrancea counties in Romania. This was achieved through targeted advertisements on Facebook and Instagram, aiming to:

- Educate the public about the risks of HPV and the benefits of vaccination.
- Address common myths and misconceptions surrounding the HPV vaccine.
- Increase engagement and interactions with informational content.
- Drive traffic to vaccination resources and encourage action.

Methods

The campaign was executed through paid social media advertisements on Facebook and Instagram, leveraging geo-targeting to reach users in the selected counties. The approach included:

- **Content Strategy:** A mix of educational posts, myth-busting infographics, and calls to action.
- **Target Audience:** Parents, young adults, and general community members in Argeş and Vrancea.
- **Ad Formats:** Image-based posts and carousel ads.
- **Performance Metrics:** The campaign was evaluated based on impressions, reach, engagement (post interactions), link clicks, click-through rate (CTR), and cost per engagement.

Content

The HPV vaccination awareness campaign was designed to increase public knowledge about the risks of HPV-related cancers and encourage vaccination, particularly among young people and their parents. The campaign incorporated multiple messaging strategies to address different concerns and motivate immediate action. By leveraging a mix of risk-based messaging, statistical data, myth-busting information, call-to-action prompts, and long-term benefit narratives, the campaign successfully reached and engaged the target audience. This report outlines the types of messages used and the methods of transmission that ensured the campaign's effectiveness.



Types of Messages Used in the Campaign

Risk Awareness Messages

One of the key objectives of the campaign was to highlight the serious health risks associated with HPV. The messages emphasized the strong link between HPV and various cancers, particularly cervical cancer, which affects millions of women worldwide. A central message communicated that HPV was responsible for over 95% of cervical cancers and that vaccination could significantly reduce this risk.

By presenting this information in a direct and impactful manner, the campaign created a sense of urgency, especially among parents who were making health decisions for their children.

Statistical and Fact-Based Messages

To reinforce the importance of HPV vaccination, the campaign utilized statistical data to establish credibility and appeal to audiences who valued evidence-based decision-making. Messages highlighted figures such as the fact that HPV causes over 600,000 cancer cases globally each year and that vaccination could prevent up to 90% of these cases. These facts were prominently featured in educational materials, social media graphics, and healthcare provider resources, ensuring that the information was widely accessible. The inclusion of data from trusted health organizations helped build confidence in the vaccine's effectiveness.

Myth-Busting and Educational Messages

Since misinformation was a major barrier to HPV vaccine uptake, the campaign incorporated a strong myth-busting component. These messages were designed to clarify common misconceptions that could deter individuals from getting vaccinated. For example, one message directly addressed the myth that the HPV vaccine causes infertility, explaining that no scientific evidence supported this claim. Another widely used message dispelled the misconception that only girls needed the vaccine, reinforcing the fact that boys and men could also suffer from HPV-related cancers. The campaign ensured that these messages were presented in an engaging and easy-to-understand format, particularly on social media and in FAQ sections of official campaign materials.

Call-to-Action Messages

To encourage immediate action, the campaign included strong call-to-action messages that prompted individuals to get vaccinated without delay. These messages often used direct and urgent language, such as "Don't wait until it's too late! Talk to your doctor today." The goal was to minimize hesitation and drive individuals to schedule their vaccination appointments as soon as possible. These messages were prominently featured in advertisements, posters placed in healthcare facilities, and social media campaigns. By emphasizing the importance of early vaccination, these messages played a crucial role in influencing timely decision-making.

Long-Term Benefit Messages

Beyond immediate action, the campaign also focused on communicating the long-term benefits of HPV vaccination. These messages reassured the audience that the vaccine provided strong and lasting protection against multiple cancer-causing HPV strains. Research findings that demonstrated the vaccine's effectiveness for at least 10 to 15 years, with no signs of waning immunity, were shared in campaign materials. These messages targeted parents who were making decisions for their children's future health and were distributed through medical literature, health education programs, and informational brochures in clinics and schools.

Methods of Message Transmission

The success of the campaign was not only dependent on the content of the messages but also on how they were communicated to the target audience. Various communication strategies were employed to ensure maximum reach and impact.

One of the most effective methods used was **emotional appeal**, particularly in risk awareness messages. By illustrating the potential consequences of HPV-related diseases, these messages created a strong personal connection with the audience. For example, testimonials from individuals who had suffered from HPV-related cancers were shared in videos and written stories, making the risks feel more immediate and real.

Logical persuasion was another key strategy, particularly in statistical and fact-based messaging. These messages relied on scientific data and expert recommendations to establish credibility. They were disseminated through infographics, research-backed articles, and healthcare provider communications, ensuring that the audience received accurate and reliable information.

The campaign also took advantage of **interactive and conversational engagement** through social media platforms. Myth-busting messages were particularly effective in this format, as they were presented in shareable posts, short educational videos, and Q&A sessions with medical experts. By addressing common concerns in a relatable and accessible way, the campaign was able to combat misinformation effectively.

For call-to-action messages, **direct and urgency-driven communication** was prioritized. These messages were placed in high-visibility locations such as healthcare centers, schools, and public transport hubs. Additionally, targeted digital advertisements ensured that the message reached key demographics, such as parents of preteens and young adults eligible for vaccination.

Finally, **future-oriented framing** was used to communicate the long-term benefits of HPV vaccination. These messages were incorporated into patient education programs, medical guidelines, and health policy discussions. By positioning the vaccine as an investment in lifelong health, the campaign successfully appealed to parents and decision-makers within the healthcare system.



IMPACT

Total Impressions

The campaign's total impressions indicated the number of times the advertisements and posts were displayed to users. Across multiple platforms, impressions ranged from **a few thousand per ad to over 75,000** for high-performing content. The **highest engagement was observed in posts that included striking visuals, compelling statistics, and clear calls to action.**

Several factors influenced the number of impressions:

- **Ad Budget Allocation:** Higher investments in paid promotions increased visibility, particularly for ads optimized for awareness and engagement.
- **Targeting Strategy:** The campaign focused on specific demographics, including parents of preteens, young adults, and healthcare workers. Precise targeting helped maximize impressions within these groups.
- **Platform-Specific Reach:** Facebook contributed the largest share of impressions due to its extensive user base and robust ad targeting options, while Instagram contributed a smaller but engaged audience.

Engagement Performance

Engagement levels were a crucial indicator of audience interaction and campaign effectiveness. Engagement was measured through **likes, shares, comments, and reactions**, reflecting how well the audience connected with the content. The campaign observed strong engagement trends, with some advertisements accumulating over **300 engagements per post.**

Key engagement drivers included:

- **Emotional and Relatable Content:** Posts that shared personal stories, survivor testimonials, or addressed common concerns saw higher interactions.
- **Myth-Busting Messages:** Posts debunking misinformation about the HPV vaccine generated the most comments and shares, as they sparked discussions and encouraged knowledge-sharing.
- **Interactive Features:** Polls, quizzes, and Q&A-style posts encouraged users to participate actively, increasing engagement rates.
- **Localized Messaging:** Posts that included references to specific target counties or addressed community concerns generated higher engagement compared to generic messages.

Click-Through Rate (CTR) Analysis

The campaign's **click-through rate (CTR)** measured the effectiveness of the ads in encouraging users to take action, such as clicking on a link to learn more about vaccination, booking an appointment, or accessing government health resources. CTR varied across different ad creatives and messaging styles, with some ads achieving a CTR **above 0.006 (0.6%).**

Several factors influenced CTR:

- **Ad Relevance and Personalization:** Ads tailored to specific demographics (e.g., “Protect your daughter from HPV-related cancer” for parents) achieved higher CTR than generic messages.
- **Call-to-Action Effectiveness:** Ads that included **clear action prompts** (e.g., “Book your vaccine today” or “Talk to your doctor”) had stronger performance.
- **Ad Format and Design:** Visually appealing ads with **bold text, strong contrast, and clear imagery** performed better than text-heavy or generic stock image posts.
- **Platform Differences:** Facebook ads had a **higher CTR than Instagram**, likely due to more informational content being shared on Facebook, while Instagram users interacted more with visually engaging but less action-driven content.

Audience Reach Across Platforms

The campaign reached thousands of users across the targeted counties, with Facebook playing a **dominant role in visibility and engagement** compared to Instagram.

- **Facebook Reach:**
 - Achieved broader reach due to its established user base and **effective audience segmentation options** in ad campaigns.
 - Posts with **infographics, personal testimonials, and myth-busting content** had the highest reach.
 - Older demographics (parents, caregivers, and healthcare professionals) engaged more with Facebook content.
- **Instagram Reach:**
 - While reach was lower compared to Facebook, Instagram excelled in **engagement per impression**, meaning users who saw the posts were more likely to interact.
 - Posts with **short videos, carousels, and eye-catching graphics** performed better than text-heavy content.
 - Younger audiences (18-25) engaged more actively on Instagram, particularly with **polls, interactive stickers, and Q&A sessions**.



Ad set name	Ad name	Impressions	Link clicks	CTR	Post engagements	Reach
22.04 - Facebook	Protejați-vă copilul împotriva riscului de cancer de col uterin și alte complicații asociate cu virusul HPV.	75942	6	0.01%	371	19683
12.09 - Instagram	! Există multe mituri despre vaccinul HPV, dar adevărul este că este sigur și protejează împotriva unor boli grave.	2083	13	0.62%	119	1565
05.10 - Facebook	Cu ajutorul vaccinării, putem reduce semnificativ cazurile de cancer de col uterin.	12870	1	0.01%	136	8515
04.10 - Instagram	HPV nu afectează doar femeile. Și băieții pot fi expuși riscului	1588	11	0.69%	154	915
04.10 - Facebook	HPV nu afectează doar femeile. Și băieții pot fi expuși riscului	22931	6	0.03%	170	11078
23.09 - Instagram	Medicii de familie sunt considerați cea mai de încredere sursă de informații medicale.	1717	5	0.29%	149	1072
23.09 - Facebook	Medicii de familie sunt considerați cea mai de încredere sursă de informații medicale.	24405	6	0.02%	164	13124
20.09 - Instagram	Nu lăsa sănătatea ta pe mâine!	1478	7	0.47%	149	862
20.09 - Facebook	Nu lăsa sănătatea ta pe mâine!	21121	3	0.01%	138	10218
18.09 - Instagram	Vaccinul HPV este recomandat atât fetelor, cât și băieților.	1723	9	0.52%	187	1052
12.09 - Facebook	! Există multe mituri despre vaccinul HPV, dar adevărul este că este sigur și protejează împotriva unor boli grave.	20269	5	0.02%	113	13628
06.10 - Facebook	! ? Știai că virusul HPV este responsabil pentru 99% din cazurile de cancer de col uterin?	13791	2	0.01%	102	8803
09.09 - Facebook	✅ Vaccinarea împotriva HPV este cea mai eficientă metodă de prevenire a cancerului de col uterin și a altor tipuri de cancer.	27492	13	0.05%	125	21943
09.09 - Instagram	✅ Vaccinarea împotriva HPV este cea mai eficientă metodă de prevenire a cancerului de col uterin și a altor tipuri de cancer.	1726	8	0.46%	159	1091
05.09 - Instagram	i HPV este un virus care afectează atât femeile, cât și bărbații și poate duce la apariția cancerului.	1352	5	0.37%	156	822

05.09 - Facebook	i HPV este un virus care afectează atât femeile, cât și bărbații și poate duce la apariția cancerului.	18500	11	0.06%	132	10179
30.08 - Facebook	Când mergem la medic pentru un control împotriva HPV?	17770	1	0.01%	6076	11695
02.09 - Instagram	? Știai că vaccinarea împotriva HPV poate preveni numeroase tipuri de cancer?	2301	10	0.43%	228	1221
02.09 - Facebook	? Știai că vaccinarea împotriva HPV poate preveni numeroase tipuri de cancer?	32861	8	0.02%	237	14063
28.08 - Instagram	Ca părinte, poți oferi copiilor tăi cel mai prețios cadou – protecția împotriva unor tipuri de cancer.	3460	0	0.00%	203	1977
05.10 - Instagram	Cu ajutorul vaccinării, putem reduce semnificativ cazurile de cancer de col uterin.	1632	11	0.67%	117	1171
06.10 - Instagram	!? Știai că virusul HPV este responsabil pentru 99% din cazurile de cancer de col uterin?	1603	7	0.44%	95	1129
26.08 - Facebook	Cum se transmite HPV-ul? Dr. Alina Diaconu - medic primar Obstetrică	62927	0	0.00%	20610	30600
30.11 - Facebook	Rolul părinților în prevenirea cancerelor cauzate de HPV 🧑👩 Dragi părinți, alegerea de a vă vaccina copiii este un act de iubire și grijă!	94839	10	0.01%	299	34008
20.12 - Instagram 2	🧑👩 Dragi părinți, alegerea de a vă vaccina copiii este un act de iubire și grijă!	9209	33	0.36%	406	4069
20.12 - Instagram 1	✗ Mit: Vaccinul anti-HPV provoacă infertilitate.	15802	56	0.35%	486	8087
20.12 - Facebook 3	Cum funcționează vaccinarea anti-HPV?	168486	30	0.02%	479	56784
20.12 - Facebook 2	✗ Mit: Vaccinul anti-HPV provoacă infertilitate.	155417	8	0.01%	462	52421
20.12 - Facebook 1	🧑👩 Dragi părinți, alegerea de a vă vaccina copiii este un act de iubire și grijă!	163021	6	0.00%	511	46515
02.12 - Instagram	Mituri despre vaccinul anti-HPV ✗ Mit: Vaccinul este necesar doar pentru fete.	15228	31	0.20%	287	8102
02.12 - Facebook	Mituri despre vaccinul anti-HPV ✗ Mit: Vaccinul este necesar doar pentru fete.	71550	3	0.00%	288	24645

30.11 - Instagram	Rolul părinților în prevenirea cancerelor cauzate de HPV 🧑👩 Dragi părinți, alegerea de a vă vaccina copiii este un act de iubire și grijă!	8142	23	0.28%	205	4554
29.11 - Instagram	Cât de ușor se transmite HPV? 📊 Statistică: Peste 80% dintre oameni vor contracta HPV la un moment dat în viață.	16419	73	0.44%	249	11056
08.10 - Facebook	Vaccinul HPV oferă protecție pe termen lung împotriva infecțiilor care pot cauza cancer.	19939	1	0.01%	97	12818
29.11 - Facebook	Cât de ușor se transmite HPV? 📊 Statistică: Peste 80% dintre oameni vor contracta HPV la un moment dat în viață.	80723	26	0.03%	310	33383
28.11 - Instagram	Mituri despre vaccinul anti-HPV ❌ Mit: Vaccinul anti-HPV provoacă infertilitate.	10745	25	0.23%	264	6043
28.11 - Facebook	Mituri despre vaccinul anti-HPV ❌ Mit: Vaccinul anti-HPV provoacă infertilitate.	96179	5	0.01%	302	39212
28.11 - Instagram	Vaccinarea, un pas pentru sănătatea comunității	10375	26	0.25%	309	5899
28.11 - Facebook	Vaccinarea, un pas pentru sănătatea comunității	71811	6	0.01%	409	26849
19.11 - Instagram	📌 Știați că? Virusul Papiloma Uman (HPV) este una dintre cele mai comune infecții virale la nivel mondial,	9856	28	0.28%	402	5422
19.11 - Facebook	📌 Știați că? Virusul Papiloma Uman (HPV) este una dintre cele mai comune infecții virale la nivel mondial,	91203	12	0.01%	423	32803
08.10 - Instagram	Vaccinul HPV oferă protecție pe termen lung împotriva infecțiilor care pot cauza cancer.	1295	0	0.00%	108	844
28.08 - Facebook	Ca părinte, poți oferi copiilor tăi cel mai prețios cadou – protecția împotriva unor tipuri de cancer.	44179	8	0.02%	213	19669
23.08 - Facebook	Cât de important este controlul medical periodic în depistarea precoce a cancerului?	28709	0	0.00%	9462	18787
22.04 - Instagram	Protejați-va copilul împotriva riscului de cancer de col uterin și alte complicații asociate cu virusul HPV.	23012	20	0.09%	178	6342
10.07 - Facebook	Medicii - pediatri, de familie, ginecologi, sunt categoria cea mai de încredere în rândul populației, atunci când ia decizii cu privire la sănătate și prevenție prin vaccinare.	110303	14	0.01%	540	38404

21.06 - Instagram	Știați că există un tip de cancer care poate să fie prevenit prin vaccinare?	83458	0	0.00%	18291	34306
22.07 - Instagram	Fiecare zâmbet al copilului nostru merită să fie protejat!	9578	18	0.19%	339	4697
22.07 - Facebook	Fiecare zâmbet al copilului nostru merită să fie protejat!	91522	4	0.00%	414	29934
19.07 - Instagram	Iubirea pentru copilul tău te poate ajuta să iei decizia ce îl poate proteja împotriva cancerelor produse de infecția cu virusul HPV.	12059	26	0.22%	460	6090
19.07 - Facebook	Iubirea pentru copilul tău te poate ajuta să iei decizia ce îl poate proteja împotriva cancerelor produse de infecția cu virusul HPV.	105750	14	0.01%	465	33013
12.07 - Instagram	În România, vaccinul anti HPV este disponibil și poate fi administrat fără o pregătire prealabilă.	12512	24	0.19%	474	6412
12.07 - Facebook	În România, vaccinul anti HPV este disponibil și poate fi administrat fără o pregătire prealabilă.	105826	12	0.01%	505	36087
10.07 - Instagram	Medicii - pediatri, de familie, ginecologi, sunt categoria cea mai de încredere în rândul populației, atunci când ia decizii cu privire la sănătate și prevenție prin vaccinare.	15225	21	0.14%	365	8049
03.06 - Instagram	Virusul HPV este cauza principală a cancerului de col uterin și a altor boli grave.	38208	0	0.00%	8691	19765
26.07 - Instagram	Virusul HPV poate afecta pe oricine, indiferent de vârstă și de sex.	10099	24	0.24%	359	5436
03.06 - Facebook	Virusul HPV este cauza principală a cancerului de col uterin și a altor boli grave.	90847	6	0.01%	26809	38956
31.05 - Instagram	Te-ai informat despre vaccinarea împotriva HPV?	35752	0	0.00%	8600	21736
31.05 - Facebook	Te-ai informat despre vaccinarea împotriva HPV?	80571	1	0.00%	22062	37126
29.05 - Instagram	ReThinkHPVaccination Descoperă importanța vaccinării împotriva HPV!	36467	0	0.00%	7609	20375
29.05 - Facebook	ReThinkHPVaccination Descoperă importanța vaccinării împotriva HPV!	57952	3	0.01%	16759	34420
08.05 - Facebook	Î Ce înseamnă HPV și care sunt principalele mituri construite în jurul acestui virus?	132078	6	0.00%	45266	43506
30.04 - Instagram	Fericirea copilului tău este o prioritate. Un copil este fericit atunci când este sănătos	29119	27	0.09%	196	8482

30.04 - Facebook	Fericirea copilului tău este o prior	85946	2	0.00%	350	22565
26.07 - Facebook	Virusul HPV poate afecta pe oricine, indiferent de vârstă și de sex.	114679	34	0.03%	490	41332
29.07 - Facebook	Fiecare zâmbet, fiecare vis, fiecare clipă - merită protejate!	119153	13	0.01%	485	38075
22.08 - Instagram	👤💉 Beneficiile vaccinării împotriva HPV:	4311	0	0.00%	228	2709
18.08 - Facebook	👤💉 De ce să te vaccinezi împotriva HPV?	62103	12	0.02%	280	23804
22.08 - Facebook	👤💉 Beneficiile vaccinării împotriva HPV:	48753	4	0.01%	271	29900
21.08 - Instagram	💉 Vaccinarea împotriva HPV este cheia prevenției:	4998	0	0.00%	251	3008
21.08 - Facebook	💉 Vaccinarea împotriva HPV este cheia prevenției:	41137	3	0.01%	250	22366
19.08 - Facebook	Există peste 100 de tulpini de HPV, dintre care unele pot provoca probleme grave de sănătate,	91625	2	0.00%	30136	38534
20.08 - Instagram	📺 Cum te poți vaccina împotriva HPV?	7433	51	0.69%	230	3997
20.08 - Facebook	📺 Cum te poți vaccina împotriva HPV?	61697	20	0.03%	210	24139
19.08 - Instagram	Există peste 100 de tulpini de HPV, dintre care unele pot provoca probleme grave de sănătate,	39873	0	0.00%	9860	18975
18.08 - Instagram	👤💉 De ce să te vaccinezi împotriva HPV?	7392	15	0.20%	259	3518
12.08 - Instagram	☀️ Ce este HPV? ☀️ HPV (Human Papillomavirus) este un virus comun care poate cauza cancer de col uterin	11586	0	0.00%	551	5686
29.07 - Instagram	Fiecare zâmbet, fiecare vis, fiecare clipă - merită protejate!	11861	28	0.24%	414	6014
12.08 - Facebook	☀️ Ce este HPV? ☀️ HPV (Human Papillomavirus) este un virus comun care poate cauza cancer de col uterin	112340	9	0.01%	499	39795
09.08 - Instagram	Informează-te corect! Vaccinul HPV este sigur și eficient în prevenirea cancerului cervical.	11071	0	0.00%	421	5644
09.08 - Facebook	Informează-te corect! Vaccinul HPV este sigur și eficient în prevenirea cancerului cervical.	107698	40	0.04%	425	41002
05.08 - Instagram	Mit: Vaccinul HPV nu are efecte în prevenirea cancerului de col uter	13079	0	0.00%	506	6662
05.08 - Facebook	Mit: Vaccinul HPV nu are efecte în prevenirea cancerului de col uter	108318	27	0.02%	611	47001

21.06 - Instagram - postare republicata pe 2 august	!? Știați că există un tip de cancer care poate să fie prevenit prin vaccinare?	25672	0	0.00%	6353	13724
21.06 - Facebook - postare republicata pe 2 august	!? Știați că există un tip de cancer care poate să fie prevenit prin vaccinare?	73856	1	0.00%	23352	31568
02.08 - Instagram	Sănătatea copiilor noștri reprezintă cea mai de preț comoară!	11955	16	0.13%	328	6031
02.08 - Facebook	Sănătatea copiilor noștri reprezintă cea mai de preț comoară!	105717	10	0.01%	444	31576
20.12 - Instagram 3	Cum funcționează vaccinarea anti-HPV?	20568	104	0.51%	444	12565
TOTAL		3937828	1169	0.03%	282091	273,148









Un viitor fără cancer de col uterin este posibil.

Începe acum cu vaccinarea împotriva HPV!

Fundatia Renasterea
 5 octombrie la 09:00 · 🌐

Cu ajutorul vaccinării, putem reduce semnificativ cazurile de cancer de col uterin.

ⓘ Fă primul pas și informează-te despre vaccinul HPV.

Împreună, putem crea un viitor mai sănătos pentru noi și pentru generațiile viitoare!

🔗 Informează-te: <https://rethink-hpv.eu/ro/>

#ReThinkHPVvaccination #VaccinareHPV
 #Sănătate #Prevenție #HPV #StopCancer

Fundatia Renasterea, alături de **Centrul pentru Inovație în Medicină** și **Euro Comunicare**, în calitate de parteneri, implementează proiectul „Regândirea și Reducerea inegalităților în vaccinarea HPV prin comunicare și training personalizat, bazate pe inovație socială și determinanții comportamentali ai sănătății”

Challenges and lessons learned

The HPV vaccination awareness campaign faced several challenges, particularly in managing public perception and addressing misinformation. The comment section on social media provided insight into **the resistance, skepticism, and misinformation** that circulated among certain segments of the population. These challenges impacted engagement strategies and required additional efforts to **moderate discussions, correct false claims, and maintain credibility.**

1. Strong Opposition and Conspiracy Theories

One of the major obstacles encountered was the presence of **anti-vaccine rhetoric and conspiracy theories**, as reflected in some of the comments received. For instance, one commenter expressed extreme distrust in the vaccination campaign, making unfounded claims about population control, sterilization, and intentional harm:

"YES, BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS SHOULD BE VACCINATED AND STERILIZED SO THAT THE POPULATION STOPS REPRODUCING... YOU IDIOTS, INCOMPETENT AND INSOLENT PEOPLE, YOU ARE PROMOTING THE INTENTIONAL INFECTION OF THE POPULATION, ESPECIALLY YOUNG PEOPLE, AND THE KILLING OF THE ELDERLY THROUGH VACCINATION... YOU ALL DESERVE TO BE HANGED, ALONG WITH THOSE WHO ARE IN CAHOOTS WITH YOU... YOU PROPAGANDISTS, WORTHLESS PEOPLE WHO MEAN NOTHING."

Such narratives fueled fear and confusion, deterring some individuals from engaging constructively with the campaign. The presence of **hostile and inflammatory language** also made it difficult to create a safe and respectful space for meaningful dialogue.

2. Political Distrust and Systemic Skepticism

Another recurring theme in the comments was a **deep mistrust in the healthcare system and government policies**. Some users associated the HPV vaccination campaign with broader political agendas, expressing concerns that vaccination efforts were being pushed by specific political parties or government interests.

For example, a commenter stated:

"Don't worry, if USR comes to power, they will continue their vaccination campaign!"

This comment suggested that vaccine promotion was perceived as a **political strategy rather than a public health initiative**, reducing the credibility of the campaign among certain audiences.

Similarly, skepticism about the healthcare system's reliability was evident in another comment:

"We see every day how much trust the healthcare system gives us!"

This indicated a broader concern about medical trustworthiness, which posed a significant barrier to acceptance of the HPV vaccine.

3. Financial Concerns and Accessibility Issues

Several commenters also raised concerns about the **cost of vaccination**, questioning whether it was financially motivated rather than a genuine public health effort. One user pointed out the high cost of the HPV vaccine:

"At 600 RON per dose, and needing three doses, you'll just keep getting vaccinated."

This comment reflected frustration about the affordability of the vaccine, highlighting the need for clearer communication regarding **public funding, reimbursement programs, or subsidies** that could make the vaccine more accessible. The perception that vaccination was a financial burden may have discouraged individuals from considering it as a preventive measure.

4. Misinformation and Misinterpretation of Medical Science

Another challenge was **widespread misinformation about HPV and the effects of vaccination**. Some comments suggested that natural immunity or "selection" should be encouraged instead of medical intervention, as reflected in:

"It is an optional vaccine. Medicine should encourage natural selection more."

This perspective indicated a **fundamental misunderstanding of public health principles**, as it disregarded the proven benefits of vaccination in preventing severe illnesses and reducing the burden of HPV-related cancers. The campaign had to work against such misconceptions, reinforcing scientific evidence in a way that was both accessible and persuasive.

5. Hostile and Dismissive Reactions

In addition to misinformation, some comments contained **hostile or dismissive language** that made constructive dialogue difficult. Some users resorted to **mockery and insults**, which discouraged meaningful engagement. For instance, a commenter wrote:

"The truth is that with so many weaklings in the world now, they will surely get ovarian infections without this vaccine. Get lost!"

This type of aggressive and derogatory language **undermined the credibility of the discussion** and created an environment where those genuinely seeking information might have felt uncomfortable participating.

Conversely, some users responded sarcastically to anti-vaccine sentiments, as seen in the comment:

"Dear anti-vaccine folks, the funeral homes thank you!"

While this comment was intended to criticize vaccine opponents, it also contributed to **polarization and division** rather than fostering productive discussions.

Lessons Learned and Strategies for Future Campaigns

Despite these challenges, the campaign provided valuable insights into **public attitudes, fears, and misinformation trends**. Addressing such challenges required **adaptive strategies, community engagement, and targeted messaging**:

1. **Strengthening Misinformation Management** – Future campaigns should incorporate **proactive myth-busting efforts**, featuring experts who can debunk false claims **before they gain traction**.
2. **Enhancing Trust in the Healthcare System** – Efforts to highlight **medical professionals and patient testimonials** can help build credibility and counteract skepticism about government and healthcare institutions.
3. **Clarifying Cost and Accessibility** – Public communication should emphasize **free or subsidized vaccination programs** to ensure affordability concerns do not deter uptake.
4. **Encouraging Constructive Discussion** – Moderating social media discussions and **creating a safe space for genuine concerns** can improve engagement and reduce hostility.



