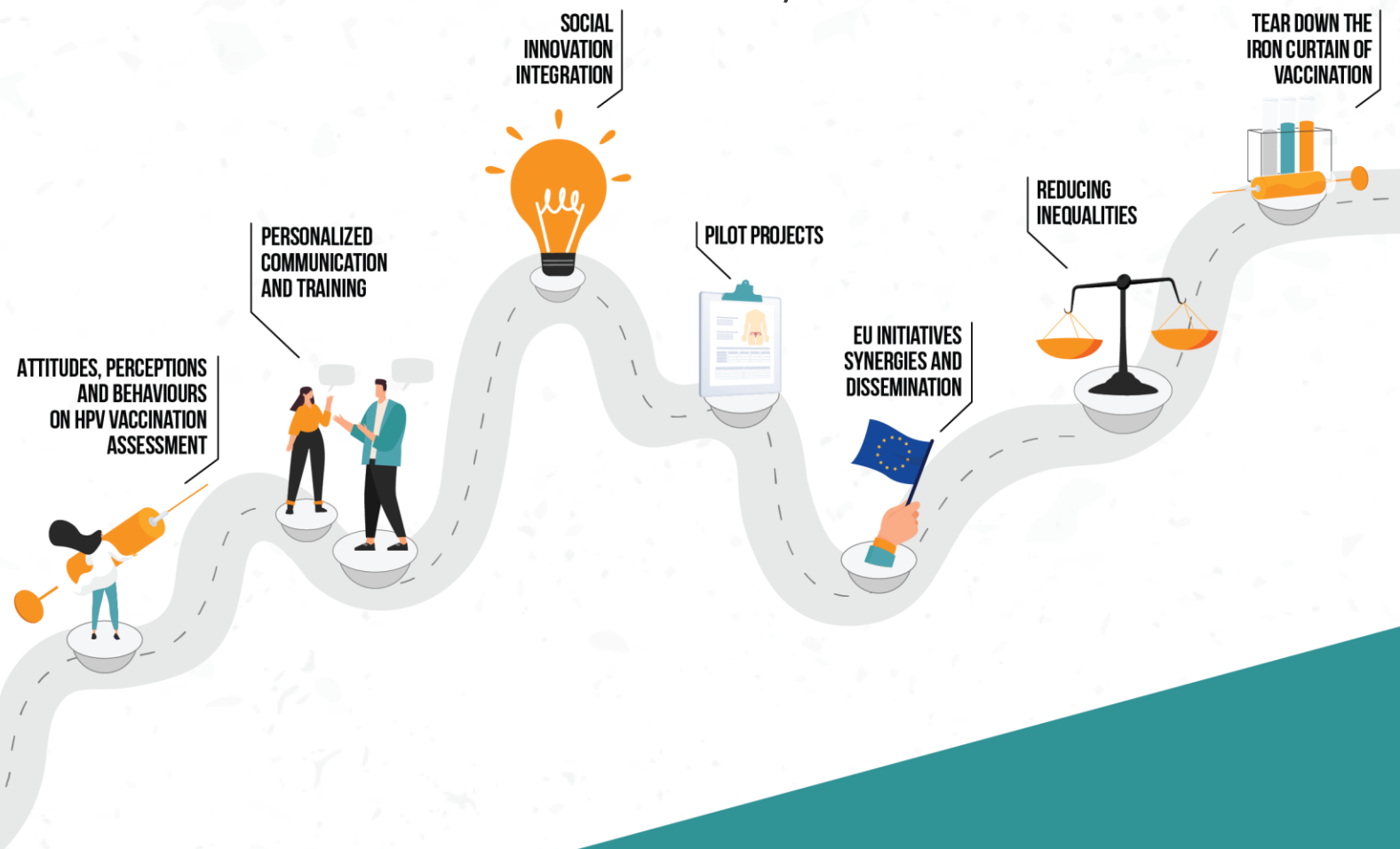


Rethink and Reduce inequalities in HPV vaccination through personalized communication and training, based on social innovation and behavioural determinants of health



D6.2. REPORT ON THE NGOS ENGAGEMENT

NOVEMBER 7, 2024



Co-funded by the European Union through the EU4Health programme 2022

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Project acronym: ReThinkHPVaccination

Call: EU4Health

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Partner(s) contributing	INOMED, EUROCC
Authors	
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Reviewers	
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	Mihai Botezatu (Renasterea Foundation)

EVENT OVERVIEW

On November 7, 2024, the online event "Rethink and Reduce Inequalities in HPV Vaccination through Personalized Communication & Training" convened key stakeholders to discuss progress, challenges, and future directions of the ReThink HPV Vaccination Project. Organized by the Renasterea Foundation and supported by partners including InoMed and Eurocomunicare, this event aimed to address the low HPV vaccination rates in Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries. It highlighted strategies to overcome barriers, leveraging personalized communication and innovative behavioral approaches.

Agenda Summary

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

- Cătălina Negară, Executive Director of Renasterea Foundation, set the tone by emphasizing the [urgent need for action and introduced the project objectives and key themes.](#)
- The Renasterea Foundation's history and impact in cancer prevention were also presented.

2. Presentations

- Dr. Marius Geantă, President of InoMed, discussed the ["Personalized Communication Matrix for HPV Vaccination."](#)
- Dr. Loredana Vladu from Eurocomunicare provided insights on ["HPV Vaccination in Romania."](#)
- Livia Stan, MSD Romania, presented strategies for "Multisectoral Collaboration to Optimize Vaccination Rates."
- Alexandra Hosszu, M&E Lead, shared ["Best Practice Transfer to EU and EU Widening Countries."](#)

3. Closing Remarks and Call to Action

- The event concluded with a summary of key points, an open Q&A, and a call to continued collaboration to improve HPV vaccination rates.

Highlights of Presentations

- **Cătălina Negară**
 - Highlighted the success of the ReThink HPV Vaccination Project, which has been supported by the European Commission through the EU4Health program.
 - Emphasized the severe impact of HPV-related cancers in countries with low vaccination rates, including Romania, where misinformation, fake news, and lack of effective communication have exacerbated the problem.
 - Presented the Renasterea Foundation's mission and its history of impactful programs in cancer awareness, early detection, and treatment support.

- Shared innovative efforts done by Renasterea Foundation such as the "Pink Illumination" and "Turquoise Illumination" events to raise awareness about breast and cervical cancer prevention.
- Discussed the challenges of limited access to healthcare in rural areas and the efforts of mobile units to provide free medical screenings and tests.
- Introduced key achievements of the ReThink HPV Vaccination Project, including targeted communication strategies, workshops, and pilot projects aimed at increasing vaccination literacy and trust.
- **Dr. Marius Geantă**
 - Introduced a personalized communication approach tailored to diverse audience groups such as anti-vaxxers, skeptical parents, and well-informed supporters.
 - Emphasized using data-driven strategies and targeted communication to combat misinformation and enhance vaccine trust.
- **Dr. Loredana Vladu**
 - Provided a deep dive into vaccine hesitancy in Romania, highlighting pervasive myths such as infertility risks and misinformation on social media.
 - Shared results from national and regional studies in Romania showing that only 13% of adolescents had been vaccinated as of August 2023, despite free vaccine availability for ages 11-19.
- **Livia Stan**
 - Outlined the importance of multisectoral collaboration involving healthcare providers, policymakers, and media to create an ecosystem of trust and information.
 - Advocated for strategies like school vaccination programs and digital campaigns to engage younger audiences.
- **Alexandra Hosszu**
 - Presented results from pilot projects in Argeş and Vrancea counties, demonstrating increased trust in HPV vaccination (from 60% to 76%) and improved ability to counter myths (from 13% to 30%).
 - Stressed the importance of transferring these best practices to other EU countries with low vaccination rates.
 - Proposed a consensus document on the strategy to rethink and restart HPV vaccination

Consensus document on the strategy to rethink and restart HPV vaccination



We invite international and national NGOs to sign the consensus document:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/18I7CLNHiv8lo_fB_NGzWuRX7skAmAOWqnpwpxbvt_-c/edit?usp=sharing

Conclusions and Next Steps

The ReThink HPV Vaccination Project has made significant strides in addressing disparities in HPV vaccination uptake, demonstrating the potential of personalized communication and collaborative efforts. Moving forward, the following steps were emphasized:

- 1. Scaling Best Practices:**
 - Expand pilot initiatives to other regions in Romania and CEE countries.
 - Engage the Romanian diaspora in vaccination campaigns.
- 2. Policy Advocacy:**
 - Strengthen public health policies to mandate and support HPV vaccination.
 - Lobby for increased funding and resources for vaccination programs.
- 3. Enhanced Collaboration:**
 - Foster partnerships between NGOs, healthcare providers, and policymakers.
 - Utilize digital platforms and social media to reach broader audiences.

Zoom Meeting | You are viewing Catalina Negara's screen | View Options

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Prezentare catalina (Mod compatibilitate) - PowerPoint

RETHINK ACCINATION
 Confined by the European Union through EU4Health programme 2022
 2 year project
 February 2022 - January 2025
 Coordinator: Renaşterea Foundation
 Partners: BioMed, Eurocomunicare
 Associated Partner: European School of Oncology
 website: www.rethink-accination.com

Renaşterea Foundation
 • NGO established in September 2001, with public utility NGO status since 2007
 • Mission: strengthening civic responsibility in Romania; development and implementation of health, cultural and educational programs; promoting women's health. Objectives: increasing survival rates for cancer patients, ensuring access to information, diagnosis and modern medical services (prevention and early detection of breast, cervical and colorectal cancer) and increasing the quality of life of cancer patients.

Center for Innovation in Medicine (CIM)
 • NGO interested in innovative health policies, innovative communication and civil society education.
 • Develops programs to educate, inform and engage all audiences regarding medical innovation, innovative technologies, ideas, products and services
 • Independent platform for informed dialogue between all stakeholders in cancer, personalized (precision) medicine, digital health, data oncology, immunoncology, cancer research, biotechnology, systems biology, etc.

Eurocomunicare Association
 • Media literacy interventions, exploring the ability to exercise critical thinking, data literacy, awareness and understanding of how personal data is used, online security literacy, awareness of the meaning of on-line misinformation.
 • Carries out actions and projects that consist of educational activities, such as training sessions, media literacy workshops, the development of studies that address various communication phenomena.

Participants: 15

Unmute | Stop Video | Participants | Chat | Share Screen | Summary | AI Companion | Reactions | Apps | Whiteboards | Notes | More

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Tatiana Dnestrean

Livia Stan

Sakshi Jindal

Ruxandra Schitea

Zoom Meeting

Loredana Vladu | Tatiana Dnestrean | Alexandra Eni, ECO | Mirela Pirvan | Carmen Manea | Bianca Ciucos

Prezentare catalina (Mod compatibilitate) - PowerPoint

RENAȘTEREA
 Foundation for Women's Health
 NGO established in September 2001
 Public utility status since 2007

Mission: Consolidate civic responsibility in Romania (develop and implement health, cultural and educational programs) Promote women's health.

Goals: Increasing survival rates for oncology patients. Promote access to information, diagnosis and modern medical services (breast, cervical and colorectal cancer prevention and early detection)

We organized:
 71 national awareness campaigns
 24 Pink Illumination Events
 10 "Art for life" Gala
 10 Race for the Cure Romania

Achievements:
 2 Medical Centers in Bucharest
 3 Mobile Units for Diagnosis – Breast and Cervical Cancer
 6 EU funded project by: EEA Financial Mechanism (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein), POSDRU, POCA, 2 POCU projects – on-going – regional cervical cancer and colorectal screening

We provided:
 38.700 free of charge medical investigations for women in rural areas (Pap Smear Tests, breast ultrasounds and mammograms)
 Over 120.000 medical investigations in Bucharest

Participants: 15

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Participants: Fundatia Renasterea, Claudia Oancea Fundatia Re..., Catalina Negara, Loredana Vladu

Marius Geanta - Presentation event ReThinkHPV Vaccination November 2024

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PERSONALISED COMMUNICATION MATRIX FOR HPV VACCINATION

INDIRECT TARGETING

DIRECT TARGETING

INDIRECT CHANNELS

DIRECT CHANNELS

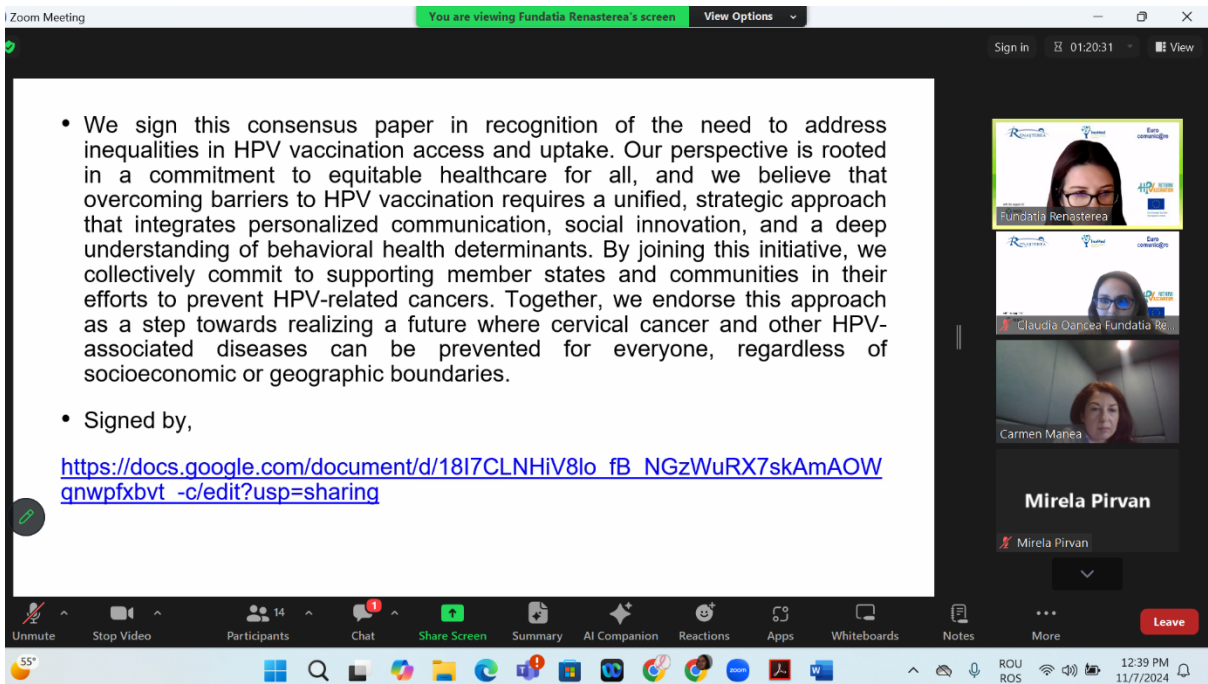
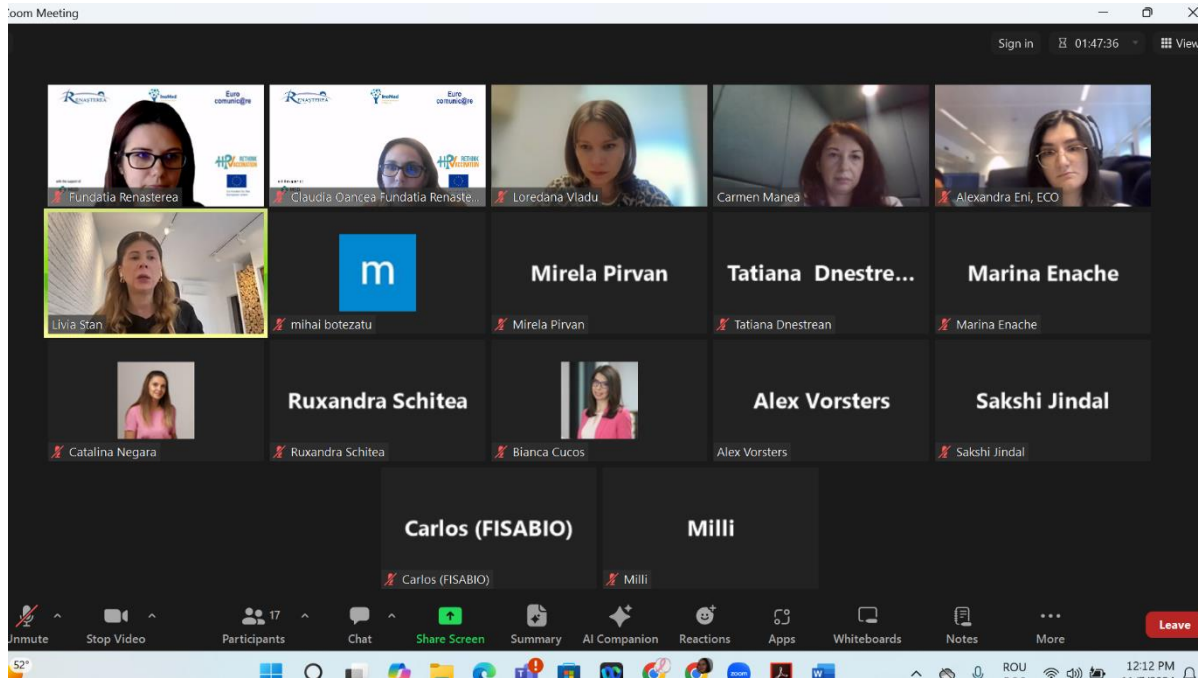
KEY FACTORS

Figure 1 HPV Vaccination Communication Matrix

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Participants: Fundatia Renasterea, Claudia Oancea Fundatia Re..., Marius Geanta - InoMed, Loredana Vladu



LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Name	Surname	Organization	Country
Gamborino	Carlos Murciano	FISABIO	Spain
Vorstere	Alex	Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences Campus Drie Eiken - Vaccinopolis	Belgium
Jindal	Sakshi		Belgium
Eni	Alexandra	European Cancer Organisation	ECO
Ivaylo	Petrov	On behalf of BJCN Public Affairs & Projects Lead	Sofia, Sofia City, Bulgaria
NIKOLA	MILASEVIC		Muntenegro
Semenov	Viktor	Department of Social Medicine, Public Health and Healthcare Management Dnipro State Medical University	Ucraina, Dnipro
Duduciuc	Alina	SNSPA Romania	Romania
De Pauw	Hélène	Scientist Belgian cancer centre - Unit cancer epidemiology Epidemiology and public health	Belgium
Dumitru	Catalina	MSD Romania	Romania
Gabriela	Trifon	MSD Romania	Romania
Manea	Carmen	MSD Romania	Romania

INVITATION

We are very pleased to invite you to a special online event on **“Rethink and Reduce Inequalities in HPV Vaccination through Personalized Communication & Training, Based on Social Innovation and Behavioral Determinants of Health”** hosted by the **Rethink HPV** project consortium. The event will be held on **November 7, 2024, at 10:00 (CET)/11:00 (Romania time)** and will last for maximum two hours.

The **Rethink HPV Project** is a collaborative initiative co-funded by the European Union under the **EU4Health Programme**. Implemented by a consortium led by the **Renasterea Foundation for Woman’s Health** and partnered with the **Centre for Innovation in Medicine**, the **Eurocomunicare Association**, the project aims to help EU Member States and neighboring countries rethink and restart their HPV vaccination campaigns.

Our goal is to support efforts toward achieving the objectives outlined in **Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan** and the **Cancer Mission**, with a specific focus on:

- Addressing health inequalities in HPV vaccination
- Utilizing personalized communication and training approaches
- Incorporating social innovation and behavioral determinants of health to promote vaccine uptake

This event will bring together international NGOs, public health experts, and community leaders for an interactive session that explores innovative strategies to reduce disparities in HPV vaccination access. We believe that your organization's expertise and insights will be invaluable to shaping the discussion and enhancing the impact of our shared mission.

To confirm your participation and receive the event link, please email your confirmation to fundatiarenasterea@gmail.com by **October 28, 2024**. We hope you will join us in this discussion aimed at ensuring equitable access to HPV vaccination for all and moving closer to eliminating HPV-related cancers.

For any inquiries, please write us: fundatiarenasterea@gmail.com.

Warm regards,

Cătălina Negară

Executive Director

Renasterea Foundation

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) – RETHINK HPV VACCINATION

*Consensus document on the strategy to rethink and restart HPV
vaccination*

November 7, 2024

PREAMBLE:

The Renasterea Foundation for Women's Health, in partnership with the Center for Innovation in Medicine (InoMed) and the Eurocommunication Association, is implementing the project "Rethinking and Reducing Inequalities in HPV Vaccination through Personalized Communication and Training, Based on Social Innovation and Behavioral Health Determinants" (ReThinkHPVaccination) from February 2023 to January 2025. This initiative is co-funded by the European Union through the EU4Health Program.

The goal of the RethinkHPV Vaccination project is to support EU member states and EU-widening countries in rethinking and relaunching their HPV vaccination campaigns, bringing them closer to achieving the goals of the European Beating Cancer Plan and the Cancer Mission objectives regarding HPV vaccination and cancer prevention.

Cervical cancer remains one of the most preventable forms of cancer, thanks to vaccination against the human papillomavirus (HPV). However, widespread HPV vaccination faces numerous barriers, ranging from lack of information and awareness to limited access, cultural or personal hesitations, and insufficient communication of vaccination benefits by the medical community.

To overcome these obstacles, a personalized and innovative approach is needed, integrating social, medical, and behavioral sciences to create effective tools for prevention and improved public health.

A Vision for a World Without Cervical and Related Cancers

Increasing HPV vaccination rates is crucial for preventing HPV-related cancers and other health complications. A comprehensive approach involves multiple strategies engaging different segments of society. Here's a detailed look at how this can be achieved:

1. **Public Campaigns:** Public education is fundamental to increasing HPV vaccination rates. Large-scale educational campaigns that provide clear and accurate information about the vaccine's safety, efficacy, and benefits are essential. These campaigns should address biases, skepticism, and common fears, highlighting the vaccine's role in preventing cancers and other diseases. By disseminating information through diverse media channels—including TV, radio, social networks, and print—campaigns can reach a wide audience.

2. **Involvement of Healthcare Professionals:** Healthcare professionals play a crucial role in promoting HPV vaccination. Engaging doctors, nurses, and pharmacists through training and educational materials can ensure they are well-informed and confident in recommending the vaccine. Professionals should be encouraged to initiate discussions about HPV vaccination during routine check-ups, especially with the parents of preteens and adolescents. When healthcare professionals are proactive, the likelihood of vaccination increases significantly.
3. **School Vaccination Programs:** Schools are an ideal setting for HPV vaccination initiatives, providing direct access to the target age group. Collaborating with educational institutions to incorporate HPV vaccine education into health programs can raise awareness among students and parents. Implementing on-site school vaccination programs also simplifies vaccination for students without the need for separate medical appointments.
4. **Community Partnerships:** Building partnerships with community organizations, including religious, cultural, and civic groups, can help increase HPV vaccination rates by leveraging the trust these groups have with their members. These partnerships can facilitate community events, information sessions, and vaccination campaigns, ensuring accurate information reaches diverse populations. Tailoring awareness efforts to meet the specific needs and concerns of different communities is essential for overcoming barriers.
5. **Leveraging Digital Media:** In today's digital age, social media platforms are powerful tools for promoting health initiatives. Creating engaging content, such as infographics, videos, and testimonials, can help raise awareness about the importance of HPV vaccination. Social media campaigns can target younger audiences, parents, and caregivers with personalized messages that resonate with their specific concerns and interests. Involving influencers and celebrities can also amplify the message and reach broader audiences.
6. **Advocacy for Public Policy:** Advocacy for policies that support HPV vaccination is vital for long-term success. This may include supporting school vaccination requirements, ensuring insurance coverage for the vaccine, and promoting public health policies that encourage vaccination. Policymakers and public health officials should be involved to create an environment that supports vaccination through legislative and regulatory measures.
7. **Addressing Vaccine Hesitancy and Anti-Vaccine Narratives:** Vaccine hesitancy remains a significant obstacle to increasing HPV vaccination rates. Understanding the root causes of hesitancy—such as safety concerns, religious beliefs, or misinformation—is necessary for developing messages that meet the population's needs. Surveys, focus groups, and community feedback can provide insights into these concerns. Once understood, targeted interventions, including education and dialogue, can be developed to address these issues, building trust and encouraging vaccination.
8. **Improving Vaccine Accessibility:** Facilitating access to the HPV vaccine is another relevant factor. Offering the vaccine in a variety of locations, such as pharmacies, community health centers, mobile clinics, and even home visits, can make vaccination more convenient for individuals and families. Expanding clinic hours and

offering walk-in appointments can also help accommodate those with busy schedules. Ensuring the vaccine is affordable or free through insurance coverage or government programs can remove additional barriers. It is also relevant to ensure the HPV vaccine reaches disadvantaged environments, such as rural areas, ethnic communities, and areas with high levels of poverty and social exclusion.

9. **Engaging Parents and Guardians:** Parents and guardians are the primary decision-makers regarding the vaccination of minors. Engaging them with clear, evidence-based information about the benefits of HPV vaccination is both helpful and necessary to increase the likelihood that they will become allies in the fight to eliminate cervical cancer. This can be achieved through direct communication from healthcare professionals, as well as informational materials distributed in schools, clinics, and community centers. Emphasizing the vaccine's role in protecting their child's long-term health can motivate parents to take action.
10. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Continuous monitoring of HPV vaccination promotion efforts is essential. Tracking vaccination rates, analyzing feedback from communities and healthcare professionals, and evaluating the impact of educational campaigns can help identify areas needing improvement. By periodically evaluating strategies and making adjustments, the initiative can remain responsive to changing needs and challenges, ensuring sustainable progress in increasing HPV vaccination rates.

This initiative aims to create an effective, comprehensive approach to HPV vaccination, contributing significantly to reducing the incidence of HPV-related cancers across Europe.

We sign this consensus paper in recognition of the need to address inequalities in HPV vaccination access and uptake. Our perspective is rooted in a commitment to equitable healthcare for all, and we believe that overcoming barriers to HPV vaccination requires a unified, strategic approach that integrates personalized communication, social innovation, and a deep understanding of behavioral health determinants. By joining this initiative, we collectively commit to supporting member states and communities in their efforts to prevent HPV-related cancers. Together, we endorse this approach as a step towards realizing a future where cervical cancer and other HPV-associated diseases can be prevented for everyone, regardless of socioeconomic or geographic boundaries.

Signed by,