



## Minutes – EAP Vaccination Working Group Meeting Brussels, 1 Dec 2017

Chair: Hans Juergen Dornbusch, Austria

Co-chair: Lia Syridou

After approval of the current agenda and the minutes of the last Vaccination Working Group session in Vilamoura on 12 May 2016 Hans Juergen acknowledged the highly productive collaboration with the EAPRASnet team regarding the parent survey on vaccine confidence, particularly welcomed the high interest by several new “Young EAP” members, and provided an update on the following topics:

- In the light of the complex European Vaccination policy involving multiple stakeholders following the European Vaccine Action Plan (EVAP 2015-2020) an **EU Joint Action on Vaccination** was started this year linking certain countries to promotion of different important topics like Immunization Information Systems (IIS), Supply and Preparedness, Prioritization of Vaccine Research & Development or Vaccine Hesitancy. The timeline aims at results by 2019, but as yet only few countries (Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Netherlands and Norway) coordinated by France have volunteered; involvement of more countries would be highly appreciated; in case of interest, Prof. Genevieve Chene should be contacted at [genevieve.chene@u-bordeaux.fr](mailto:genevieve.chene@u-bordeaux.fr).

- **National Expert Review Committees for assessment of causality for AEFI** are regarded as indicators for strong immunization systems as an integral part of well-functioning health systems. Implementation of such committees in all European countries (currently in appr. 80%) is one of the defined EVAP goals for 2020. National Delegates are kindly asked to lobby for these goals in their respective countries.

- The WHO goal of **measles eradication** in Europe is far from being achieved, particularly affecting Romania (246 cases/million population/year) with a super-proportional death toll, followed by Italy (81), Belgium (33), Bulgaria (23), Greece (19), the Czech Republic (13), Germany (12) and Austria (11). As a consequence, recently mandatory vaccination was introduced in Italy, soon to be followed by France and possibly by other countries, a topic intensively discussed by the working group.

The importance of using all opportunities for immunization, of empathic communication with

vaccination hesitant parents/patients, the role of social and mass media, and the leading position of primary care paediatricians in this context were emphasized. Suggestions for handling vaccination hesitancy have been made by ECPCP, further insights are to be expected from the **EAP parent survey on vaccination confidence** (see minutes of the joint EAPRASnet session).

- In the review process for the **ADVANCE** (“Accelerated development of vaccine benefit-risk collaboration in Europe”) EU/IMI/ECDC project a strong representation of frontline vaccine providers like primary care paediatricians represented by societies like EAP among the stakeholders has been demanded. The final Blueprint providing a guidance for effective interaction between all involved parties is scheduled for the end of 2018.

**Angel Carrasco**, National Delegate from Spain, representing EAP, attended the European Scientific Working Group on Influenza (**ESWI**) **Symposium “Influenza Preventing Policies for Children”** in Leuven on 14 June 2017. Angel reported to the WG the most important data from the Symposium, where experts from Finland, United Kingdom and USA had presented their experience on universal flu vaccination of children in their countries, and where flu epidemiology, burden of disease, complications and different vaccine options for children had been discussed. On invitation by Albert Osterhaus further cooperation with ESWI is planned.

EAP strongly supports the ECDC in its continuous strive towards a Europe wide implementation of **Immunisation Information Systems (IIS)** implying a great potential for improvement on individual and population level, for acceptance of the important role of vaccination in public health and finally for increasing vaccine coverage. **Tarik Derrough**, current head of the ECDC program for Vaccine Preventable Diseases kindly provided the data for an update on the IIS topic presented by Hans Juergen. The release of a technical guidance developed also in collaboration with EAP to support countries with their decision-making processes is to be expected soon. Advocacy activities comprise ECDC publications, Symposia (Joint Session ECDC/WHO/ESPID, Malmö, end of May 2018; Nordic Vaccine Meeting, Helsinki, 14-15 June 2018) and lobbying at EU level as a part of the abovementioned Joint Action on Vaccination.

The session ended with a sketch video on the low risk conferred by vaccines underlining the focus of the growing Vaccination Working Group, **to foster projects with the potential to increase confidence in vaccines and (thereby) immunisation coverage** using the active network already in place.