

# BUDGET FOR PREVENTION IN THE EU

Vaccination is a very cost-effective investment that represents a relatively low portion of national healthcare spending compared to its substantial benefits, which extend well beyond individual health and benefit the entire society.<sup>1</sup>

Invest in vaccination for a safer and healthier future for all.



## PREVENTION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES SHOULD BECOME A PRIORITY

Vaccination is a key public health tool which saves lives and can contribute to the sustainability of healthcare systems by reducing the burden of infectious diseases and reducing the use of antibiotics.<sup>2</sup>

### VACCINATION BUDGETS AND DECISION-MAKING INVOLVE MULTIPLE FACTORS

Vaccination investments include several major components beyond the cost of vaccines.<sup>3</sup>



The governance of vaccination programmes and the different actors involved vary from one country to another.

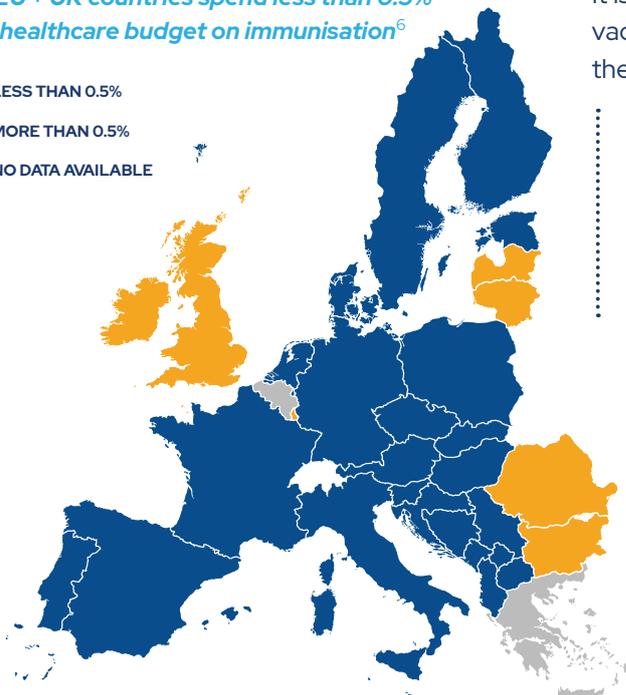
In most EU countries, there is a dedicated agency in charge of developing and overseeing the implementation of national vaccination plans and programmes, which is often supported by technical advisory groups or committees.

The budget sources and financing pathways of vaccination programmes also vary between countries and can involve multiple actors, for example: central government, regional authorities and social health insurance funds.<sup>4</sup>

### BUDGETS FOR PREVENTION AND VACCINATION ARE LOW ACROSS THE EU

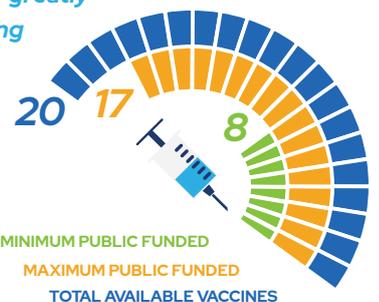
77% of EU + UK countries spend less than 0.5% of their healthcare budget on immunisation<sup>6</sup>

- LESS THAN 0.5%
- MORE THAN 0.5%
- NO DATA AVAILABLE



It is difficult for countries to estimate funds allocated to vaccination due to high variability and reliability in terms of the level of publicly available data.<sup>6</sup>

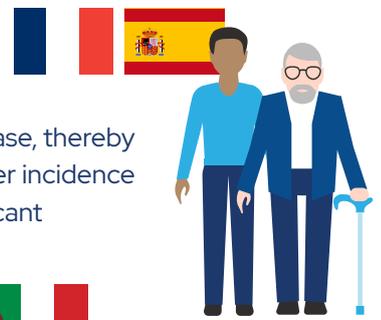
Available vaccines are able to protect the population from up to 20 infectious diseases. However, the number of publicly funded vaccines can differ greatly across EU countries, ranging from 17 in some countries to just 8 in others.<sup>5,6</sup>



Underinvestment has also contributed to gaps in the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccination and the maintenance of routine vaccination services during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>7</sup>

## A LIFE-COURSE APPROACH TO IMMUNISATION IS CRUCIAL

A life-course immunisation (LCI) approach enables adults to age with reduced risk of disease, thereby enabling healthy, active and productive ageing.<sup>8</sup> This preventive approach, resulting in lower incidence of infectious disease, can help to reduce existing inequalities and potentially lead to significant savings for healthcare systems over time.



13 recommended vaccines for adults

Across the EU, there are more recommended and publicly funded vaccines for children than for adults. Italy leads, with 17 vaccines publicly funded for children. France and Spain have the most exhaustive schedule for adults, with 13 vaccines publicly funded.<sup>10</sup>

In a healthcare professional survey, insufficient budget allocated to LCI was identified as a barrier to achieving high vaccination coverage at all ages.<sup>8</sup>



17 recommended vaccines for children

More funds should be dedicated to prevention and specific consideration should be given to the budget allocation for adults, including older adults. In addition, education from an early age on the importance of life-course immunisation is crucial to successfully implement a life-course approach to immunisation.<sup>9</sup>



Vaccinating an individual against up to 17 diseases throughout their entire life has been estimated to cost only around €3,395 (including administration costs).

This is much lower than the cost of many mass secondary preventive interventions.

The maximum cost of vaccinating an individual throughout life in France (82 years life expectancy<sup>11</sup>) is nearly three times less than the cost of antithrombotic drugs for the prevention of recurrent stroke over 25 years, and in some cases may also reduce the risk of stroke and other adverse cardiovascular events.<sup>12,13</sup>



## INVEST IN VACCINATION, INCENTIVISE INNOVATION, INCREASE RESILIENCE



## WE NEED SUSTAINABLE BUDGETS FOR VACCINATION TO MAXIMISE PROTECTION OF EU CITIZENS

Financial sustainability of vaccination programmes, including through investment and reliable funding, is key to ensuring **sustainable, equitable and effective vaccination programmes** in all EU Member States.<sup>14</sup> Sustainable vaccination budgets should **cover a multi-year period, include other age categories, be dynamic and leave room for new vaccines**, and have **clear public health objectives**, for example increasing vaccination coverage rates.

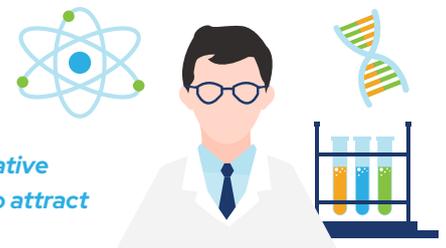


58% of European countries that did not publicly fund influenza vaccines for children and adolescents experienced lower coverage rates than countries where it was publicly funded.<sup>16</sup>

A study in Italy found that a small increase in public health expenditure was associated with an increase in measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccination coverage.<sup>15</sup>

Adequate financing of vaccination programmes is important to establish resilient immunisation systems and provide sustainable protection of the population against vaccine-preventable diseases.<sup>6</sup>

## INVESTMENT IN RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IS CRITICAL



*Given the complexity of vaccine research and development, a supportive and innovative R&D environment is critical for the development of new vaccine technologies, and to attract skilled scientists and sustainable investment in the EU.<sup>17</sup>*

A sustainable regulatory, policy, access and market environment is important for investment in innovation to develop and introduce new and improved vaccines and technologies.<sup>18</sup> Horizon scanning, anticipation of new vaccines and early collaboration with vaccine developers is key to ensuring citizens have prompt access to vaccines.

Research and innovation have enabled the continued development of new vaccines that provide protection against more diseases.<sup>19</sup> The rapid development and approval of COVID-19 vaccines shows how continuous investment in research helps to address emerging threats and protect the population.



*Continuous investment in vaccination is needed to secure faster access for citizens, reward the value of innovation and incentivise manufacturers to invest in R&D.*

## INVESTMENT IN VACCINATION IS KEY TO INCREASING HEALTHCARE SYSTEM RESILIENCE



Vaccination contributes to resilient, sustainable healthcare systems that can respond to infectious disease outbreaks, public health risks and emergencies.<sup>20</sup> Vaccination has contributed to the decline of many infectious diseases and their associated morbidity and mortality, helping keep people healthy and outside of the healthcare system, and is thus a key factor for the long-term sustainability of healthcare systems.<sup>5</sup>



*The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the profound health, economic and social implications of vulnerabilities in healthcare systems and brought to light the need to strengthen the capacity of healthcare systems to respond swiftly and effectively to threats, including through prompt vaccine development and roll-out.<sup>21</sup>*

Improving the delivery of vaccination services is key to strengthening healthcare systems. The ability to deliver a sustainable vaccination programme that prevents disease is one measure of the extent to which a healthcare system is resilient, fit for purpose and responsive.<sup>22</sup>



## INVEST IN A SAFER EUROPEAN UNION

- ▶ **The level of investment in vaccines should take into consideration the far-reaching benefits of vaccination,** which protects the entire population and economy against potentially resource-intensive outbreaks, prevents the resurgence of infectious diseases, and provides a significant return on investment.<sup>1,23</sup>



*Every Euro invested in adult vaccination (starting at age 50) yields €4 of future economic revenue over the remaining lifetime of the cohort.<sup>24</sup>*

- ▶ **EU countries should make vaccination programmes against all vaccine preventable diseases a public health priority and ensure necessary levels of financing to support high programme performance, including sustainable and high vaccination coverage rates for all vaccines included in the national programme.<sup>6</sup>** This includes: expanding programmes to all age categories, introduction of new vaccines, timely monitoring of vaccination coverage rates for all vaccines in the national programme and regular public communication campaigns.

**Specifically, policymakers should:**

- Ensure short-term investment to strengthen vaccination systems and access overall.
  - Secure sustainable financing options to strengthen vaccination programmes and ensure they can meet today's and tomorrow's public health needs.
  - Leverage EU recover and resilience funds to strengthen vaccination infrastructures.
  - Define vaccination budget as a key health indicator to measure healthcare system sustainability.
- ▶ **Vaccination policies should go beyond their focus on childhood protection and embrace a life-course approach to vaccination, providing equal access to necessary vaccines for all age groups.<sup>12</sup>** Educating the public and other key stakeholders about the importance of vaccination at all ages is also crucial.

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