



JOINT STATEMENT TO THE WHO ROADMAP TO ACCELERATE THE ELIMINATION OF CERVICAL CANCER AS A PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM IN THE WHO EUROPEAN REGION 2022–2030

We, the undersigned organisations, commend the leadership and vision shown by the World Health Organization in promoting a global effort to eliminate cervical cancer as a public health problem by leveraging the full power of prevention through vaccination and screening, treatment, and palliative care, alongside other drivers such as education, awareness, empowerment, and research. In pursuing the goal, our organisations make 3 principal recommendations via this joint statement:

1. Coordinate closely with the EU in achieving elimination of HPV cancers across the full WHO Europe region

The EU's Beating Cancer Plan (2021) has committed its 27 Member States to achieving HPV cancer elimination and to vaccinate at least 90% of the EU target population of girls and to significantly increase the vaccination of boys by 2030. Funding and monitoring tools to support this goal are now being put in place. We urge that the EU and WHO Europe make the elimination of cervical cancer and all other cancers, such as oropharyngeal cancer, caused by HPV a formally shared goal, with accompanying joint action plans. The joint work might include shared initiatives to track progress on the elimination goal, such as adopting the same vaccine uptake tracking approaches that were developed during the Covid-19 pandemic. It could also enable capturing and addressing the coverage gaps especially if present and profound among vulnerable and deprived population groups.

2. Pursue the elimination goal via the most effective strategy, namely, through gender neutral vaccination

We urge WHO Europe and Member States to take full account of latest published evidence, as a growing number of European health systems already have, and unequivocally recommend gender-neutral HPV vaccination (GNV) across all countries in the region. Up to 30% of all the cancer cases caused by HPV in Europe are in males. Female-only HPV vaccination programmes can only partially protect males and fail completely to protect men who have sex with men. GNV also accelerates the protection of females from cervical and other cancers and makes vaccination programmes more resilient.

3. Bring about a whole-society, multi-stakeholder and multi-professional effort to achieve the goal.

The current Roadmap could say much more about the mobilisation of a whole-society approach to HPV cancer elimination. It is of paramount importance that a mind-shifting approach is achieved in this effort. Awareness initiatives need to reach and engage not only the target populations of vaccine and screening campaigns, but also heighten the knowledge and education of the many involved stakeholders, including parents, teachers and a full range of healthcare professionals. Young people and their organisations should be fully engaged in this work. HPV prevention could also be better aligned with efforts to control tobacco use as this can further increase the risk of developing a cancer caused by HPV.



- **Non-State Actor endorsing the Joint Statement -**

- International Federation on Ageing



- European Federation of Nurses Associations



- International Association for Dental Research



- European Network for Smoking and Tobacco Prevention





- International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care



- International Union of Immunological Societies



- EuroHealthNet



- European Public Health Association

