

VAX-ACTION

Tackling Effectively Vaccine Hesitancy in Europe

NEWSLETTER

November 2024/ Vol. 2

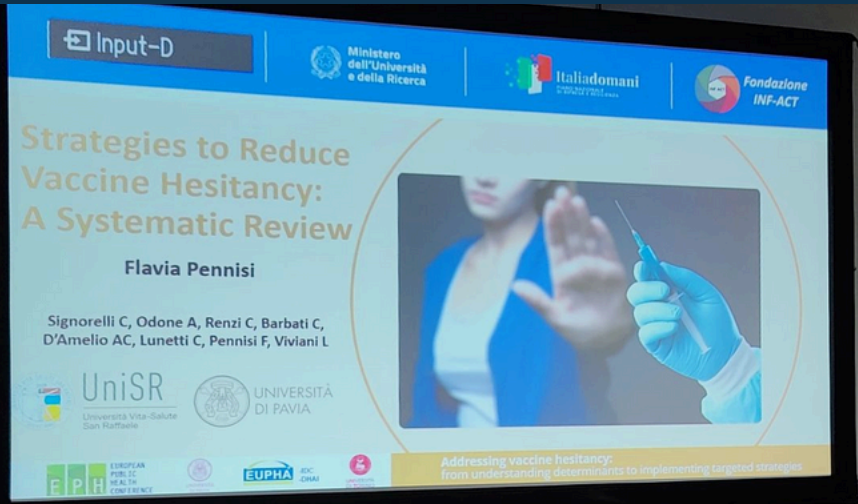
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EPH Conference, Lisbon

Vax-Action participated in two dissemination events during the European Public Health (EPH) Conference, which was held in Lisbon, Portugal from 12-15 November 2024. The Conference is Europe's biggest annual public health event, and brought together over 3000 experts and stakeholders from the field of Public Health from around the world.

HaDEA EPH Pre-Conference

Vax-Action was honoured to be invited to the HaDEA Pre-Conference workshop: "Best practices in EU-wide projects contributing to achieving the objectives of EU Health policies", November 12, 2024, organised in the scope of the EPH Conference in Lisbon, 12-15 November 2024.

The session brought together different actions funded under the [EU4Health](#) Programme with focus on prevention of non-communicable diseases, including cancer, and vaccination. These are topic areas where there is sufficient scope and rationale for collaborative approaches and where evidence-informed policies or interventions can be expected to contribute to innovative, resilient, efficient and sustainable health systems. The session explored obstacles and enabling factors that determine impact and success of such knowledge transfer, and how this can be supported by actions undertaken at a cross-country and national level.

Vax-Action: tackling effectively vaccine hesitancy in Europe was presented as an illustration of best practices implementation in the area of vaccination, the session chair was Agnes Mathieu-Mendes – Head of Unit, HaDEA A.2, and the Moderator was Raffaella Bucciardini – Director Health Equity Unit, Istituto Superiore di Sanita, Italy, with Vax-Action presentation by Coordinator Tiago Correia – Associate Professor, Universidade Nova de Lisboa – Portugal.

TOP NEWS

Vax-Action Events

EPH Conference, Lisbon:

HaDEA Pre-Conference and
Vaccine Hesitancy Workshop

ASPHER Deans & Directors Retreat,
Porto

SGMS EU4Health Hands-on Workshop

ASPHER Public Health Emergencies
Task Force

EPH Conference Workshop

Addressing vaccine hesitancy: from understanding determinants to implementing targeted strategies

Vax-Action Work Package 2 partners took part in the workshop 'Addressing vaccine hesitancy: from understanding determinants to implementing targeted strategies,' on 13 November, which was held as part of the EPH Conference in Lisbon. Chaired by Prof. Anna Odone, University of Pavia, it focussed on a pan-European perspective on vaccine hesitancy and the effectiveness of interventions to counteract it. The session provided insights into the determinants of vaccine hesitancy and shared strategies to mitigate it through innovative approaches, digital tools, and policy adaptations, particularly in the context of pandemic threats. Dr. Flavia Pennisi presented The Vax-Action Project results of Work Package 2 systematic review of evidence-based interventions to address vaccine hesitancy.

The presentations and panel discussions with Professor Maria Gańczak (Vice President, EUPHA Infectious Diseases Control Section) provided comparative analyses of European vaccination policies, highlighting diverse strategies for implementing public health interventions.

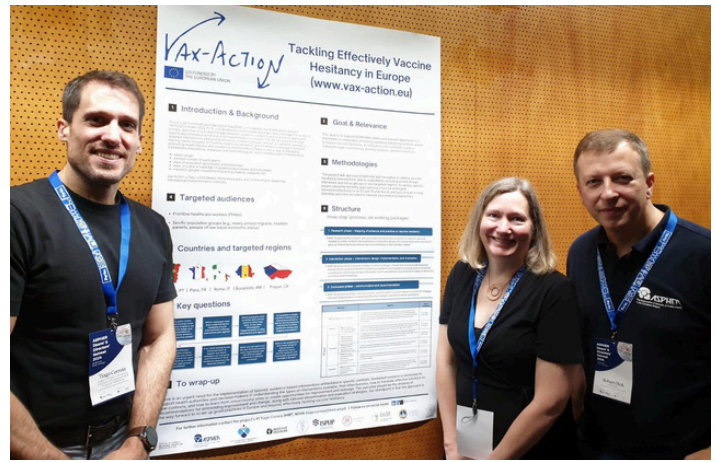
Key Messages included:

- Tailored data collection and evidence-based strategies are essential to combat vaccine hesitancy.
- Flexible, historically informed approaches can adapt to new challenges, ensuring culturally sensitive and effective public health policies.

ASPHER Deans' & Directors' Retreat

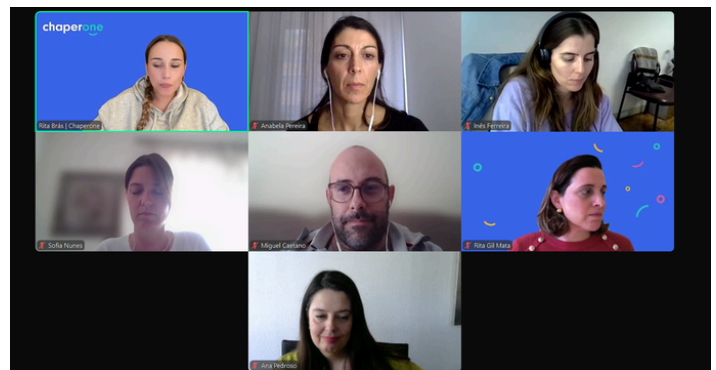
An overview of the Vax-Action project was presented as a poster for the 2024 ASPHER Deans' & Directors' Retreat, which took place from 05 - 08 June 2024 hosted by the University of Porto, Portugal.

The Retreat welcomed approximately 140 delegates from across ASPHER's member schools of public health and included participation from dignitaries: Professor Ana Paula Martins, Minister of Health,



Portugal; Dr. Natasha Azzopardi-Muscat, Director of Country Health Policies & Systems, World Health Organization; Professor Luis Eugenio Souza, President, World Federation of Public Health Associations.

SGMS Hands-on Workshop for EU4Health

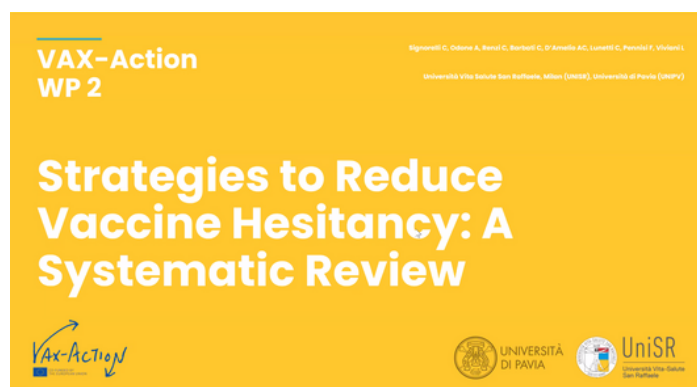


Vax-Action served as a good practice example for a recent Hands-on Workshop for EU4Health organised by Secretaria Geral do Ministério da Saúde do Governo (SGMS) de Portugal. SGMS, as the National Focal Point for the EU4Health Programme, is running three highly practical online sessions, focusing on key aspects of the EU4Health application form, including the project plan, impact section and budget.

Vax-Action coordinators were invited to the first session on 19 November 'From Idea to Project Plan' to discuss Funding opportunities in the scope of the EU4Health Programme. Anabela Pereira (IHMT-UNL) participated, representing Professor Tiago Correia and the Vax-Action team for two interventions: "Presentation of a case of success – The Vax-Action project" to discuss the submission process of the Vax-Action proposal to the EU4Health Programme as an example of a case of success in obtaining funding; and the 'Vax-Action – Project Plan'.

ASPHER Public Health Emergencies Task Force

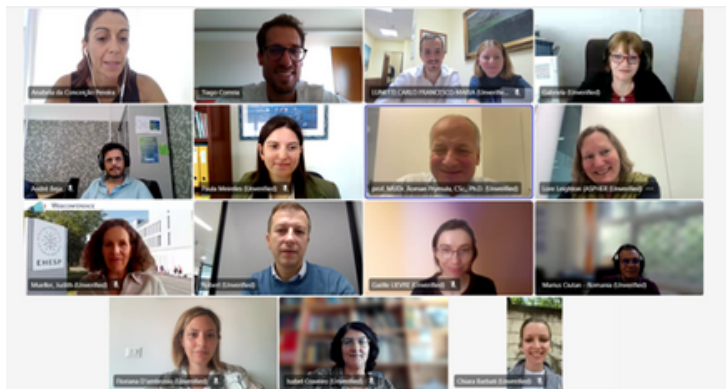
The ASPHER Public Health Emergencies (PHE) Task Force invited the Vax-Action team to join their 17 October meeting to update on the project's progress. The PHE Task Force (formerly the ASPHER Covid-19 Task Force) brings together academic public health experts from across Europe to consider the lessons that can and must be learned from the pandemic, while at the same time focussing on the future and preparedness for threats that are on the horizon.



A presentation featuring the Vax-Action's systematic review results from Work Package (WP) 2 was given by Professor Carlo Lunetti from San Raffaele University, Milan, Italy. After the presentation, participants engaged in a robust discussion on diverse topics, contributing to a collective reflection on vaccine hesitancy interventions.

The need to continue building trust and boosting vaccine information, focusing on making interventions more inclusive, equal, and sustainable, was emphasized. Also, the challenge of finding new ways of convincing people to take vaccines was noted. The Task Force looks forward to following the ongoing and future developments of Vax-Action.

Vax-Action Partners Meeting



The Vax-Action Consortium held a scheduled partners meeting on 10 September, during which the WP2 team formally presented the Systematic Review Results, and the Consortium discussed the beginning of the WP3, WP4 and WP5 work regarding designing the interventions.

The meeting served as an important check point for the project as partners reviewed the results of the mapping of content and outcomes of interventions aimed to address vaccine hesitancy in the northern hemisphere. The WP sought to identify and answer questions on public health evidence on large-scale vaccination programs used in the design and implementation of interventions aimed to increase vaccine uptake; challenges to overcome for feasibility of such interventions in diverse populations and regions; and survey successful pilot activities and the extent to which they have, or not, been informing the implementation to other populations and regions.

The review will inform the design of WP3, WP4 and WP5 interventions to ensure a robust and cohesive action plan targetted to frontline health workers and vulnerable populations to reduce vaccine hesitancy in EU member states and beyond.

Vax-Action Partners



About Vax-Action

The main objective of Vax-Action is to support EU Member States and relevant stakeholders to implement a combination of tailored, evidence-based interventions aimed to reduce vaccine hesitancy. The combination will be based on evaluation of effectiveness of interventions that build on the existing evidence with interventions to be conducted in selected target regions in five EU member states (Portugal, Italy, France, Romania, and Czechia).

Vax-Action interventions and recommendations are designed to build on sound theory, existing evidence, and best practice in application of evaluation using a co-design model to engage Frontline Healthcare Workers (FHWs), specific vulnerable population groups (e.g., newly arrived migrants, hesitant parents, people of low socio-economic status) to tailor interventions to their requirements and the specific issues raised by recently approved vaccines for emergent diseases/infections/virus such as Covid-19 and mpox, mass vaccination and loss of trust in long-standing vaccines included in national vaccination programmes.

Learn more about Vax-Action at <https://vax-action.eu>.



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