



EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY
SCIENCE MEDICINES HEALTH

3 June 2026
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European Medicines Agency

Vaccine confidence advisory group – 29 April 2026

Summary of discussion

The meeting was attended by 20 experts and 8 EMA staff. Meeting participants were welcomed by the co-chairs and participants briefly introduced themselves and their work relevant for vaccine communication/vaccine confidence. The group includes vaccinologists, academics, patient representatives, regulatory authorities, social science specialists and healthcare professionals, spanning different disciplines and across geographical locations.

The group's [terms of reference document](#) was presented, including the objectives of the advisory group, such as contributing to environmental analysis of the vaccine hesitancy landscape and mis-disinformation; advising on EMA's ongoing initiatives to increase vaccine confidence and on specific emerging issues; contributing to improve EMA's benefit-risk communication to the public and helping to amplify the Agency's science outreach and public health messages.

EMA's misinformation framework was presented, including the three pillars upon which all the work rests: gathering insights through stakeholder listening, collaborating with stakeholders and public health bodies, and trust-building activities.

Furthermore, the Agency's work on vaccines outreach was presented, including its goal of increasing knowledge and trust in the quality, safety and effectiveness of vaccines, and empowering the EU public and healthcare professionals to take well-informed vaccination decisions. This latter aspect of improving public knowledge based on scientific evidence was highlighted by members as very relevant, together with the importance of supporting the provision of clinical guidance by healthcare professionals.

The discussion identified the multi-factorial nature of mistrust on vaccines, with recent geopolitical events and viral spread of narratives through social media as having a large impact. Members agreed on the need to focus on increasing dissemination of accurate and evidence-based information, adapting communications to different age groups, channels and geographies. To achieve this, it is very important to carry out stakeholder research and anticipate potential emerging issues by strengthening social listening. This should enable to identify emerging concerns as well as hesitancy spilling over from different geographical areas. It was also suggested to run seminars/trainings for media. Informing citizens promptly and transparently when issues arise and communicating on existing uncertainties are key areas to achieve citizens' trust. In patients' views, real stories reflecting patients' lived experience on the consequences of infectious diseases are some of the most effective ways to highlight the benefits of protecting people through vaccination.



The meeting was closed with the agreement to schedule the following meeting in July 2026.

List of invitees

European Medicines Agency (EMA):

- Melanie Carr, Head of Stakeholders and Communication
- Marco Cavaleri, Head of Public Health Threats
- Juan Garcia Burgos, Head of Public and Stakeholder Engagement Department
- Monika Benstetter, Head of Communication
- Nicholas Perombelon, Head of Vaccines and therapies for infectious diseases
- Ragini Shivji, Pharmaceutical Quality Office technical lead for vaccines
- Florence Borrelly-Konyakhin, Senior Liaison Coordinator (support)
- Rosa Gonzalez-Quevedo, Senior strategic support and regulatory science specialist

External invitees:

- Jorge Batista, Senior Professional Affairs Advisor, Pharmaceutical Group of the European Union (PGEU), Brussels, Belgium
- Paolo Bonanni, Professor of Hygiene and Public Health, University of Florence, Italy
- Frederic Boudier, Prof. Risk Management, Risk communication, University of Stavanger, Norway
- Robert Califf, Adjunct Professor of Medicine in the Division of Cardiology, Duke University School of Medicine, US
- Hans J. Dornbusch, Chair of the Vaccination Strategic Advisory Group, European Academy of Paediatrics (EAP), Lecturer Infectious Diseases at Medical University of Graz, Austria
- Sarah Eitze, Health Psychologist, Post-doctoral researcher, Erfurt University, Germany
- Bruce Gellin, Professor of Medicine, Georgetown University School of Medicine, and Senior Advisor, Georgetown University Global Health Institute, US
- Agnes Kant, Professor at Leiden University and Director of LAREB (Netherlands Pharmacovigilance System), The Netherlands
- Heidi J. Larson, Professor of Anthropology, Risk and Decision Science, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, UK
- Jean-Daniel Lelievre, Head of the clinical department at INSERM - Vaccine research Institute and Professor in Immunology at Université Paris Est Créteil, France
- Seth Mnookin, Professor and department head, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, US
- Elena Maria Moya, Board member of FEP (Spanish Patients Forum) and Vice president of AEM (Spanish association of meningitis), Spain
- Hanna Nohynek, Chief Physician, Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland
- Paul Offit, Professor, Department of Pediatrics, The Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, and Adjunct Associate Professor, The Wistar Institute of Anatomy and Biology, US
- Mike Osterholm, Director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy (CIDRAP), US
- Shanti Pal, Team Lead, Pharmacovigilance, Regulation and Safety, World Health Organization, Switzerland
- Zoi Dorothea Pana, Professor of Paediatric Epidemiology, Member of the European Academy of Paediatrics, Cyprus
- Roman Prymula, Professor at Charles University Prague, Czechia

- Julian Spinks, General Medical Practitioner (GP), member of the European Federation of Neurological Associations (EFNA), Brussels, Belgium
- Stefano del Torso, Paediatrician, member of European Academy of Paediatrics (EAP), Brussels, Belgium
- Pierre Van Damme, Director of the Centre for the Evaluation of Vaccination (CEV), University of Antwerp, Belgium