

## BACKGROUND: Expert Meeting ‘Improving Vaccine Confidence in the Most Vulnerable Populations’

Vaccination is regarded as a key development in contemporary medicine and one of the most effective public health strategies in history. Key to the success of vaccination is population-level vaccine confidence, which is the belief that vaccines work, are safe, trustworthy, and are an effective medical intervention to protect the population’s health. Despite the historical triumph of vaccination, which has led to the near eradication of many vaccine-preventable diseases (VPDs), societal distrust in the importance, safety, and effectiveness of vaccination has resulted in waning vaccine confidence, contributing to the increased burden of VPDs across global systems.

In July 2022, the IFA-led expert meeting ‘Improving Vaccination Confidence in the Most Vulnerable Populations’, held in Brussels, Belgium, gathered leaders of public health and patient advocacy organizations, alongside experts in immunization and health policy to discuss and determine tangible actions to improve vaccination uptake rates in the most vulnerable populations across Europe.

Together, there was a commitment and shared consensus amongst all delegates of the expert meeting on five key action items to improve vaccination uptake rates in Europe. Critical actions include forming effective and targeted communication strategies, knowledge generation through data collection, the development of immunization guidelines for older adults and vulnerable populations, ensuring the prioritization of vaccination across the health workforce and integrating a life-course approach to immunization across health systems. All stakeholders must commit to life-course-integrated vaccination resources, messages, and campaigns to strengthen public health systems and ensure vaccination is included in global agendas.

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Bruna Swerts, Director of Strategic Communications | [bswerts@ifa.ngo](mailto:bswerts@ifa.ngo)

The [International Federation on Ageing](#) (IFA) is an international, non-governmental organization (NGO) with a unique membership base comprising government, NGOs, academics, industry, and individuals in over 80 countries. Nearly 50 years old, the IFA has become known as a leading and innovative organization that works across disciplines and sectors toward common goals that improve the lives of older people. Through the IFA’s formal relations with the World Health Organization (WHO) and general consultative status at the United Nations and its agencies, the IFA is in the position to advocate directly with member states and contribute to and inform intergovernmental dialogue.