

CSF Meeting

Access to COVID-19 vaccines by undocumented migrants: National strategies and approaches

4 March 2021

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To be effective, COVID-19 vaccination plans must include migrants

As we prepare for one of the world's largest vaccination efforts, and on the occasion of International Migrants Day, we are coming to a critical reckoning: the need for inclusive approaches in our health-related thinking and practices has never been more urgent.

18 December
Organizat

Guidance on developing a national deployment and vaccination plan for COVID-19 vaccines

INTERIM GUIDANCE
16 NOVEMBER 2020

World Health Organization | unicef for every child

COVID-19 vaccination and prioritisation strategies in the EU/EEA

TECHNICAL REPORT

22 December 2020

- Key facts**
- Prioritisation of COVID-19 vaccination should take into account several dimensions and needs to be contextualised.
 - The choice of optimal vaccination strategy depends on the number of years or reducing pressure on the healthcare system.
 - The optimal prioritisation also depends on the character of the disease, its transmission, and the impact against infection and therefore onward transmission.
 - If a vaccine does not protect against transmission, the optimal strategy is to prioritise the vaccination of those groups at highest risk of infection.
 - Substantial reductions in mortality and pressure on the healthcare system can be achieved through the direct protection of high-risk groups, even if viral transmission is not prevented.
 - Vaccination of healthcare workers is beneficial since it in turn reduces the risk of infection and therefore onward transmission, since it would offer indirect protection to patients and other high-risk individuals.

Brussels, 15.10.2020
COM(2020) 680 final

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL

Preparedness for COVID-19 vaccination strategies and vaccine deployment

World

COVID-19: Equitable vaccine access for all, including migrants, is crucial, say UN Special Rapporteurs

News and Press Release • Source: UN HRC • Posted: 23 Jan 2021 • Originally published: 22 Jan 2021 • Origin: [View original](#)

GENEVA (22 January 2021) – UN human rights experts today called on States to ensure migrants are included in national COVID-19 vaccination programmes, which must offer equitable access for all.

"The pandemic has highlighted how now, more than ever, none of us will be safe until everyone is safe. Global access to COVID-19 vaccines for everyone who needs them is the only solution," the UN Special Rapporteurs said.

"The prioritisation of vaccines within countries should include all those who qualify under a priority group, regardless of who they are. Migrants should be granted access to vaccines on an equal basis with provisions for nationals."

Primary country:
World

Source:
UN Human Rights Council

Format:
News and Press Release

Theme:



Where are undocumented people mentioned in the vaccination strategies?

-  **Explicitly include** undocumented people
-  **Explicitly exclude** undocumented people



European countries that include undocumented people in their COVID-19 vaccine strategy*

- Belgium
- France
- Ireland
- Italy
- The Netherlands
- Portugal
- Spain
- United Kingdom

**Not a comprehensive list. Based on PICUM media monitoring and reports from national-level NGOs.*

Ireland

“The HSE does not report undocumented migrants to immigration authorities. It is important that undocumented migrants are encouraged and facilitated to take-up the Covid-19 vaccine.”

- Stephen Donnelly, Minister of Health, 20 January 2021-

France

France announced it will not be making a distinction based on citizenship regarding access to the vaccines.

« À compter du 28 janvier 2020, toute personne n'ayant pas la nationalité française et quelque soit sa situation pourra se faire vacciner en centre de vaccination, même si elle ne dispose pas d'une carte vitale. »

- Official FAQ page from the French government -

Belgium



Regional health minister Alain Maron said:

"A lot of undocumented people live in Brussels. It's out of question to exclude them from the COVID-19 vaccination process. It's a matter of public health."

The Netherlands

The Dutch strategy explicitly mentions undocumented people as a group to be vaccinated.

But Dutch civil society says that so far, no concrete steps have been taken to practically implement this decision.



PICUM @PICUM_post · 13 Jan

Media reports that Dutch govt considers [#COVIDvaccination](#) should be available to undocumented people too. While questions remain as to how this can be done practically, we hope more countries will take the same stand.

Health care for all means better health for everyone.



Jasper Kuipers @KuipersJasper · 13 Jan

Goed nieuws dat corona vaccinaties beschikbaar zijn voor mensen zonder papieren. Nu alvast nadenken over hoe dat praktisch vorm krijgt: leren van het testbeleid. twitter.com/AT5/status/134...



Italy

Under the Vaccines Plan, everyone present in Italy, with or without residence permit, will be vaccinated.

Previously, Italian commissioner for the COVID-19 crisis said in a TV program that undocumented people would be excluded.



Spain

Under the national vaccine plan, undocumented people residing in Spain should have access to COVID-19 vaccines in the same way and according to the same criteria foreseen for the whole population – most likely as “people in a vulnerable socioeconomic situation” or as essential workers.

There are concerns about discrepancies among regions, which are responsible for implementation, and vaccination of people in detention centres, where there are no unified COVID-19 protocols.

Poland

Poland has explicitly limited the access to the COVID-19 vaccinations to every person who resides regularly in the country. Only foreigners with an official right to stay will be given access to a vaccine, not undocumented people.



Dworczyk: any person who has a regular stay in Poland can be vaccinated

TVN24

Highlights: Promising practices

- Undocumented migrants **explicitly or implicitly included in vaccine strategies**
- **Instructions** from governments and health authorities about how to ensure undocumented people get COVID-related care
- Commitment that **personal data will not be shared** with immigration authorities or otherwise used **for purposes not related to public health**
- **Limited documentation required**
- **NGOs actively involved** by governments in the definition of strategies
- **Multi-lingual communication** and outreach and campaigns to inform migrant communities about their right to get vaccine and how to do so

Highlights: Main challenges

- **Administrative barriers** (registration process, need for social security number or health card)
- Lack of guarantees about the safeguarding of data protection and privacy, and related **fears about immigration consequences of data sharing**
- **Lack of accessible and reliable information** about rights and how to get vaccinated
- **Unclear policies and procedures**
- **Lack of consistent implementation** between regions
- Necessity of **two doses** for most vaccines



***If you want to be smart
on public health, you do
not exclude anyone.
Public health knows no
borders and viruses
don't carry passports.***

— Michele LeVoy

PICUM





PLATFORM FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON
UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS

Thank you

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