



EAP SURVEY SHOWS LACK OF VACCINE CONFIDENCE AMONG EUROPEAN PARENTS

Thursday, the 24th of January 2020

The European Academy of Paediatrics (EAP) carried out a large-scale survey in 18 European countries¹ on parents' attitudes and behaviours towards their children's vaccination.² Run by EAP's Research in Ambulatory Settings Network (EAPRASnet), the research shows that although most parents believe in the importance of childhood vaccination, there is significant lack of vaccine confidence in certain European countries (with Bulgaria and Poland having the lowest rates).

Among its main findings, the research results suggest that:

- parents who consulted homeopaths and general practitioners are more hesitant to vaccinate their children than parents who consulted paediatricians or nurses.
- Vaccine confidence among parents who only completed their elementary or high school education is lower compared to parents with higher education levels.

The questionnaire, developed by the EAPRASnet steering committee, included an hesitancy score based on 21 questions, such as "It is better for my child to develop immunity by getting sick than by getting vaccinated" and "My child does not need vaccines for diseases that are not common anymore".

Even though vaccines save up to 3 million lives worldwide every year, too many children remain unvaccinated, which leads to disease outbreaks. In Europe, vaccine hesitancy is one of the major reasons for low vaccine uptake.

The survey, gathered 5,736 responses from parents of children between 1 and 4 years old, who answered a web-based questionnaire. The first results were presented at the EAP Spring Meeting in May 2019, and the full study is now available in [Vaccine \(ScienceDirect\)](#).

The EAPRASnet survey results highlight the need for response plans. EAP calls on monitoring and continuous medical education efforts, with a special focus on health professionals who are less likely to recommend vaccination.

The full [Vaccine confidence among parents: Large scale study in eighteen European countries](#) can be found at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2019.11.068>

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¹ Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Moldova, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Ukraine.

² Adamos Hadjipanayisab, Diegovan Esso, Stefano del Torso, Hans Jürgen Dornbusch, Kyriaki Michailidou, Nadia Minicuci, Ruzha Pancheva, Aida Mujkic, Karin Geitmann, Garyfallia Syridou, Peter Altorjai, Angela Pasinato, Arunas Valiulis, Paul Soler, Olga Cirstea, Károly Illy, Liesbeth Mollema, Artur Mazur, Ana Neves, Jernej Zavrsnik, Fedir Lapii, Elisavet Efstathiou, Mascha Kamphuis, Zachi Grossman. *Vaccine confidence among parents: Large scale study in eighteen European countries*. ScienceDirect 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2019.11.068>; published 14 December 2019

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Notes to Editors

About EAP

The European Academy of Paediatrics (EAP) is an association promoting the health of children and young people across the European continent. It aims to improve standards in training, service and research and to represent the professional interests of paediatricians in the EU. Founded in 1961 and established as a pan-European entity in 1995 (under the name Confederation of European Specialists in Paediatrics [CEPS]), it incorporates the section of paediatrics of the European Union of Medical Specialists, and is an influent advocate of children, youth and the medical profession in the political arena. www.eapaediatrics.eu

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