ImmuHubs: Improving Vaccine Access, Uptake, and Long-Term Protection of Citizens Identified in Disadvantaged, Isolated, and Difficult-to-Reach Population Groups

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Background/Need

• Due to the rise in vaccine-preventable diseases and barriers to vaccine access and uptake, populations in Europe are falling short of the 95% recommended vaccination uptake
• The Ukraine refugee crisis compounds the need for a project that aims to vaccinate those at-risk

Systematic Review Initial Outcomes

We find that many communities require diversified vaccination approaches because of the unique barriers they present with.

Conclusions

• Innovative Immunisation Hubs will be tailored to 3 different population groups identified in the systematic review, namely 1) disadvantaged, 2) isolated, and 3) difficult-to-reach groups
• Being able to reach certain groups may be dependent on breaking down barriers to vaccine access. Tangible goals include:
  ➢ More user-centric and privacy-oriented digital tools
  ➢ More effective vaccine-preventable disease surveillance
  ➢ Improving vaccine policy, disseminating correct vaccine knowledge

Future Directions

• The systematic review will be submitted to MDPI Vaccines Special Issue "Vaccines: Uptake and Equity in Times of the COVID-19 Pandemic" https://www.mdpi.com/journal/vaccines/special_issues/COVID-19_Vaccines"
• Physical immunisation Hubs will be established in Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Poland, Portugal, and Serbia. Hubs in Portugal and Poland will include Ukrainian cross-border populations
• ImmuHubs project would establish an innovation technology platform (including mobile apps, chatbots and analog tools) to expand access to communities while being sufficiently adaptable to address public health emergencies, such as a refugee crisis and a global pandemic

Acknowledgments: (SA) I would like to thank Barbara Rath for her continuous guidance and mentorship.
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Methods

• ImmuHubs establishes innovative immunization hubs on the ground in 6 European countries (in progress)
• In preparation, we conducted a systematic review (45 studies representing 16 included out of 53 total countries)