

# Eliminating HPV caused cancers in Europe as a public health problem

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## 1. HPV caused cancers: a quick primer

**HPV (human papillomavirus) is a very common sexually transmitted infection.** Up to 90% of sexually active women and men will acquire HPV at some point in their lives

**Worldwide, HPV is believed to cause about 5% of all cancers in men and women worldwide, and is implicated in almost all cervical cancers.**

**HPV is also estimated to cause 70% of oropharyngeal cancers, 90% of anal cancers, 60% of penile cancers, 75% of vaginal cancers and 70% of vulval cancers.** HPV is also associated with several other cancers in the tissues of the head and neck.

HPV is thought to be responsible for about 53,000 new cases of cancer annually across 31 European countries, with about 20% of these cases occurring in men.

## 2. Preventing HPV caused cancers

**HPV related cancers and diseases can be prevented by HPV vaccination.** This is most effective when administered in adolescence, before exposure to the virus through sexual activity.

**Vaccination is transformative.** A large scale study in Scotland found that, compared with unvaccinated women born in 1988, vaccinated women born in 1995 and 1996 had an almost 90% reduction in the highest risk cervical pre-cancers.



## 2. Preventing HPV caused cancers

**However vaccination of females alone will not provide effective protection for men against HPV infection.**

100% vaccination rates for females is unlikely and men who have sex with men are completely unprotected by female only vaccination programmes.

Vaccinating both sexes (known as 'universal' or 'gender-neutral' vaccination) provides much greater levels of protection for everyone. Its efficacy lies in preventing the transmission of HPV between the sexes and in same-sex couples, reducing the circulation of the virus overall and creating what is termed '**herd protection**'.



## 2. Preventing HPV caused cancers

**All EU countries, with the exception of Poland, now provide HPV vaccination programmes for girls.**

Whilst most EU countries do not *currently* provide HPV vaccination to boys – 10 do, or have made commitments to do so:

Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands and Sweden.



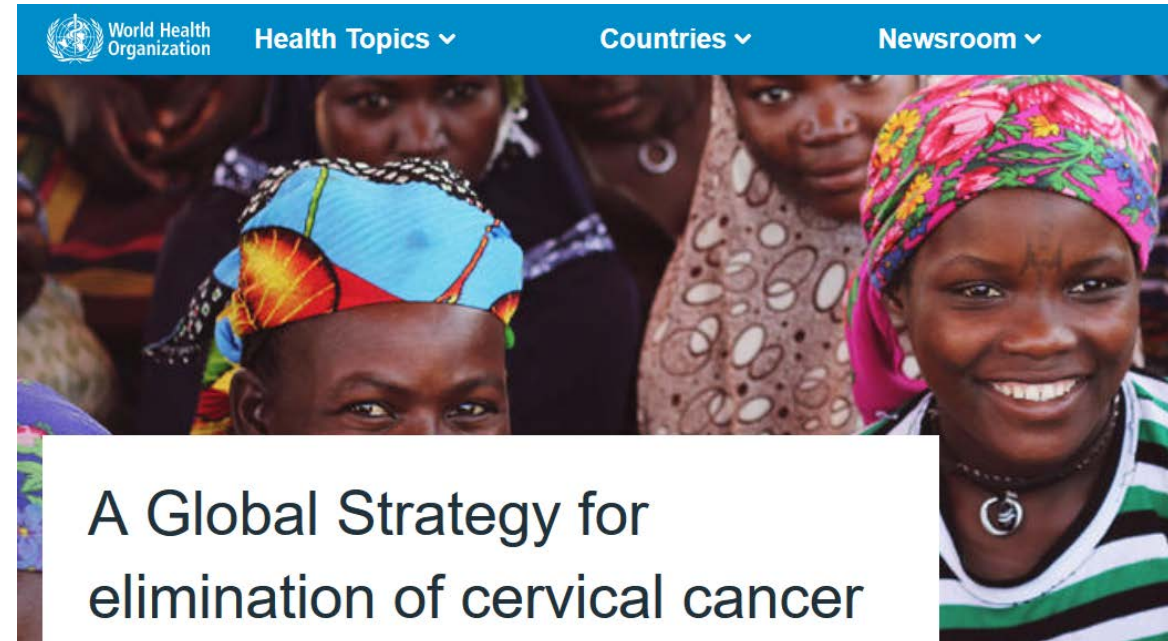


## 3. The opportunity for action – a global endeavour

The World Health Organisation (WHO) seeks to make a cancer elimination goal a global target.

To be approved at the World Health Assembly in May, the Global Strategy outlines the following threshold:

***“We will have eliminated cervical cancer as a public health problem when all countries reach an incidence rate of less than 4 cases per 100 000 women. This should happen within the lifetime of today’s young girls.”***



## 3. The opportunity for action – a global endeavour

Individual countries, such as Australia, are offering inspiring global leadership as to what can be achieved with political will and resolute actions on vaccination, screening and treatment. **Its elimination strategy by 2035 is already ahead of track.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DfyNYk5Ki7U&feature=youtu.be>



The screenshot shows a CNN Health article. The header includes the CNN logo, 'health' tag, and navigation links for Food, Fitness, Wellness, Parenting, and Vital Signs. The main headline is 'LIVING TO 100' and the article title is 'Australia set to 'eliminate' cervical cancer by 2028'. The byline is 'By Nina Avramova, CNN' and the update time is 'Updated 1518 GMT (2318 HKT) October 3, 2018'. The main image is a microscopic view of cells with a play button overlay. Below the image is a video player with the title 'Cervical cancer can be prevented 01:11'. To the right is a 'News & buzz' sidebar with three items: 'U.S. about-face raises questions about cruise quarantine', 'Struggling to quit sugar? You might not be sleeping enough', and 'Planning Analytics: Become a financial analyst in 10 minutes!'. At the bottom left is a 'Story highlights' section with two bullet points: 'By 2028 Australia will have four or less cervical cancer cases per 100,000 women, models suggest' and 'Australia would be the first country eliminate cervical cancer'. At the bottom right is a '(CNN) —' paragraph: '(CNN) — Australia is set to be the first country to eliminate cervical cancer, aided by its national vaccination and screening programs, says a new study. The country is on track to meet the threshold of four or less new cases per 100,000 women each year, effectively eliminating the cancer by 2028, finds the new study published Wednesday.'



## 4. ECCO's proposed Action Plan

### ECCO 2019 European Cancer Summit resolution:

'By 2030, effective strategies to eliminate cancers caused by HPV as a public health problem should be implemented in all European countries.'



## 4. ECCO's proposed Action Plan

### HPV vaccination:

- **By 2025**, all European country cancer plans should include actions towards achieving population based and gender-neutral HPV vaccination, if not already in place.
- **By 2030**, gender neutral vaccination programmes against the HPV infection should be in place in all European countries.
- **The target vaccination rate by 2030** in all European countries should be at least 90% of adolescents for both genders

## 4. ECCO's proposed Action Plan

### Screening and Early Diagnosis:

- **By 2030**, at least 70% of women in Europe should have been screened for cervical cancer with an appropriate high precision HPV test within the last 5 years.
- **This coverage should be reached, at minimum, at 35 and 45 years of age**, as part of an organised programme
- **By 2025**, all European country cancer plans should include actions towards achieving the 70% screening target, if not already achieved.

## **5. An EU Cancer Plan is an ideal means for cross border cooperation towards eliminating HPV caused cancers**

- **Setting common and achievable goals is a great means of breaking down silos.** Countries, professions, systems, stakeholders and the public can all come together in playing their part in achieving a major and historic public health milestone.
- **Gender neutral vaccination, high quality cervical cancer screening and a number of actions on treatment and research can take us there.** See ECCO Action Plan.

## 5. An EU Cancer Mission should support elimination of HPV caused cancers as a public health problem

- A **‘Mission’ requires targets**. Eliminating HPV cancers is more straight forward than landing on the moon.
- **The EU Cancer Mission should have a strong prevention element**, including in respect to researching the impact of existing prevention programmes and interventions
- This should also include **secondary prevention** aspects and promotion of further technology improvements

# POLICY DEPARTMENT FOR ECONOMIC, SCIENTIFIC AND QUALITY OF LIFE POLICIES

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## Let's get SMART with the European Cancer Plan!

Supporting WHO strategy, by formally committing all EU member states to work towards elimination of HPV caused cancers can be:

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Attainable**
- **Relevant**
- **Time-based**





**Thank you for your  
attention!**