Major interpellation for written answer with debate G-000010/2017
to the Commission
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Subject: Coordinated efforts at EU level to increase vaccination coverage

Member States retain sovereignty over their vaccination calendar for their citizens. Italy has recently
introduced mandatory vaccination for newborn children in the case of six vaccines additional to the
four that were already obligatory, resulting in a total of ten compulsory vaccines.

The legitimate goal of achieving the highest possible immunisation rates, however, can be attained
through less stringent policies, and most Member States prefer the adoption of ‘recommendation
policies’ or else a mix of obligation/recommendation policies.

A 2016 study shows that countries where a vaccination was mandatory did not in general achieve
better coverage than comparable countries where there was no legal obligation in force1.

A longstanding member of the Advisory Forum of the European Centre for Disease Control has said
that similar results to those of mandatory vaccination policies are likely to be achieved by investing
resources in better organisation and communication programmes2.

– Can the fact that the obligation to carry out a total of ten vaccinations for children aged 0-3 is
  without precedent up to this new legislation be considered a reason to invoke the precautionary
  principle?

– Can the Commission gather evidence on the effectiveness gap between mandatory and non-
  mandatory vaccination policies with regard to immunisation rates?

– How can the EU coordinate actions to improve the effectiveness of vaccination policies and
  increase immunisation rates?

1 http://www.asset-scienceinsociety.eu/reports/page1.html
2 http://www.asset-scienceinsociety.eu/pages/better-organization-can-be-more-useful-compulsory-vaccination