

***Committee: World Health Organization (WHO)***

***Topic: Responding to the Oppositon to Vaccination***

***Delegation: Bulgaria***

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There have been a number of epidemics and pandemics such as cholera, plague, smallpox and influenza throughout the history. Therefore, human have spent considerable efforts to find cures and vaccines are the most valuable results of these efforts. Before the vaccines epidemics and pandemics have killed millions of people. With the invention of vaccines many epidemics and pandemic has ended.

Evidence exists that the Chinese employed smallpox inoculation as early as 1000 CE. In 1718 a vaccine for smallpox had been found by Mary Wortley Montouge. That was a big step in vaccine history. Then, in 1796 Edward Janner used a vaccine used for cows for people to cure smallpox. Louis Pasteur’s rabies vaccine was the next to make an impact on human disease. All these developments have made people understand the importance of vaccines. Therefore, many countries established health organizations. The biggest one of these, the WHO, was founded by 26 countries on April 7th, 1948. This organization is still serving for the worlds health.

In 2020 the world experienced a new pandemic called Covid-19. The pandemic caused a great amount of concern in the world as almost all countries have been affected by the disease and millions of people have died. Serious efforts have been spent to cure the disease by developing a new vaccine. Finally, a few vaccines have been developed and started to be used throughout the world.

In Bulgaria the first Covid-19 case was seen on March 8th, 2020. Five days later on 13th of March we started state of emergency . As a government we set new rules to make pandemic harmless. We decided to close the schools, offices, shopping malls, cinemas and restaurants. We stopped the sport activities and took control of transportation with the other countries. While the world was trying to find the cures for Covid-19 the first vaccine, BionTech, had been introduced in Germany . As soon as it was available commercially millions of doses of BionTech vaccines was disturbed Bulgaria. We started the vaccination on December 27th, 2020 in line with most other countries in the EU. Soon after they were available the other vaccines, Moderna, Oxford-Astra Zeneca and Johnson & Johnson, were introduced to our country. We aim to make most people to get vaccinated so that herd immunity is reached. Therefore, vaccination stands in subways were prepared and more than 100 units were opened by us. Even so just %26 of population got vaccinated. People are reluctant to get vaccinated due to misinformation. Thus, we have to sell the vaccines we have to other countries.

The basic problem is that people can’t reach the true information about vaccines. Moreover, the disinformation in social media affects people negatively and makes them anti-vaxxer. So we have been trying to provide people true information about the Covid-19 vaccine through several means. For this purpose we launched an application, HealthBody+, to provide information about the disease and developments. We spend efforts to make people trust the data we publish daily. Furthermore, we are holding conferences and symposiums. We can also encourage people to get vaccinated by limiting their activities in our community. By having a vaccination card they will be able to get to the public areas such as bank , department stores, hospitals etc. Otherwise they won’t be alllwed to enter.

The negative outcomes of the Covid pandemic are obvious. There are millions of Covid cases and thousands of deaths every day in the World. We have disadvantages as the vaccination rate is low in our country. Even though the pandemic affects Bulgaria badly we try to learn from our mistakes. We are working hard to stop the pandemic and get ready for the pandemics in the future using our experiences.