



# Feasibility study cross border vaccination campaigns in the EU/associated countries

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# Scope and objectives

★ **Scope:** A feasibility study to Inform all future cross border vaccination campaigns in the EU and associated countries.

★ **Objectives:**

- ★ Review what has already been done across borders.
- ★ Consider what can be gained by teaming up.
- ★ Document the perceived facilitators and barriers.
- ★ Identify themes for future cross collaboration.

★ **Original scope:** a coordinated EU wide measles catch up vaccination campaign to tackle common immunity gaps, linked to the development of a cross border IIS under WP5.

★ **Limitations and reasons for revising the scope:**

- ★ Difficulties in Identifying common immunity gaps.
- ★ Lack of comparable cross border data on the reasons behind low coverage (vaccine uptake and acceptance).
- ★ Heterogeneous nature of vaccination programmes.

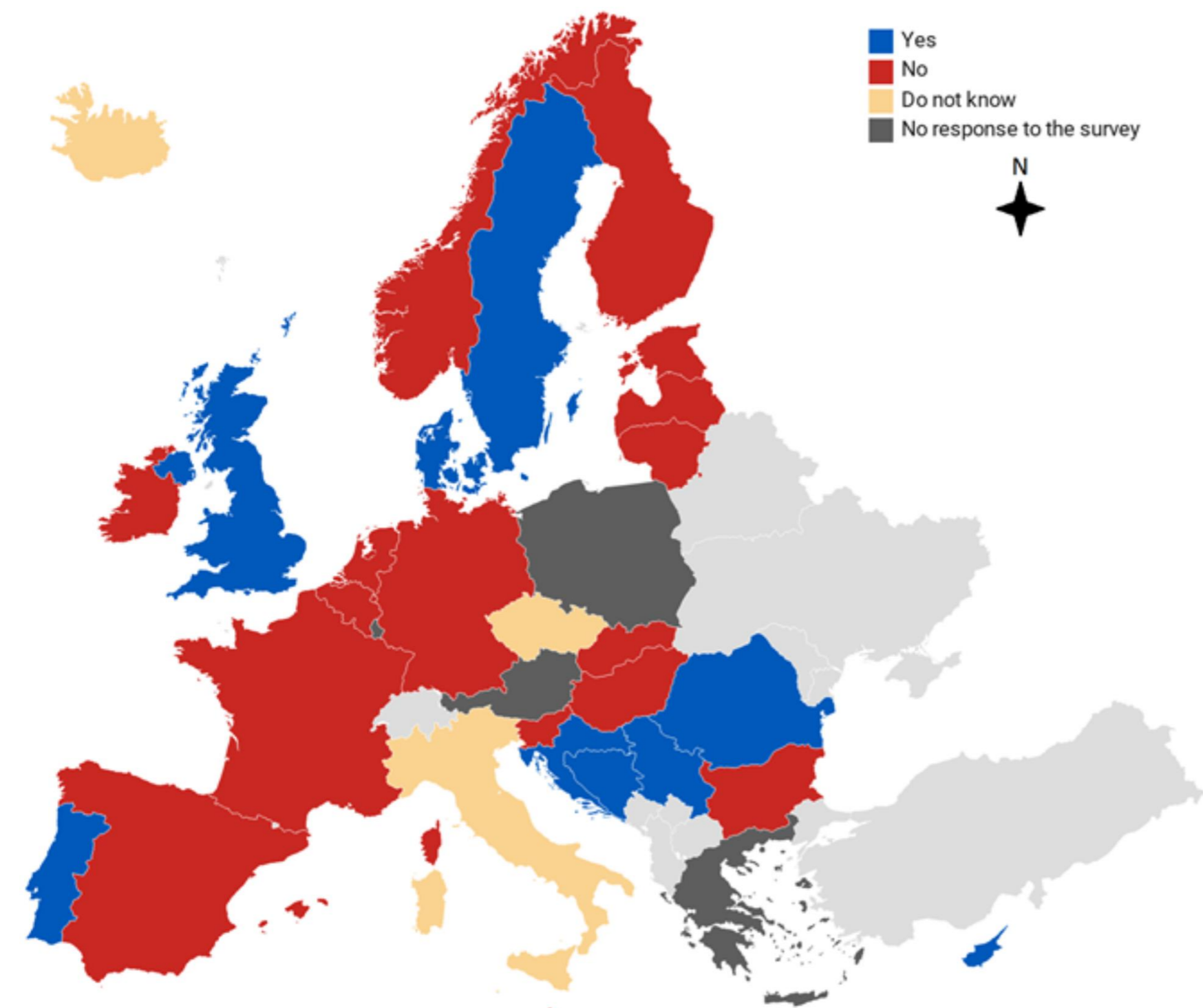


# Methods

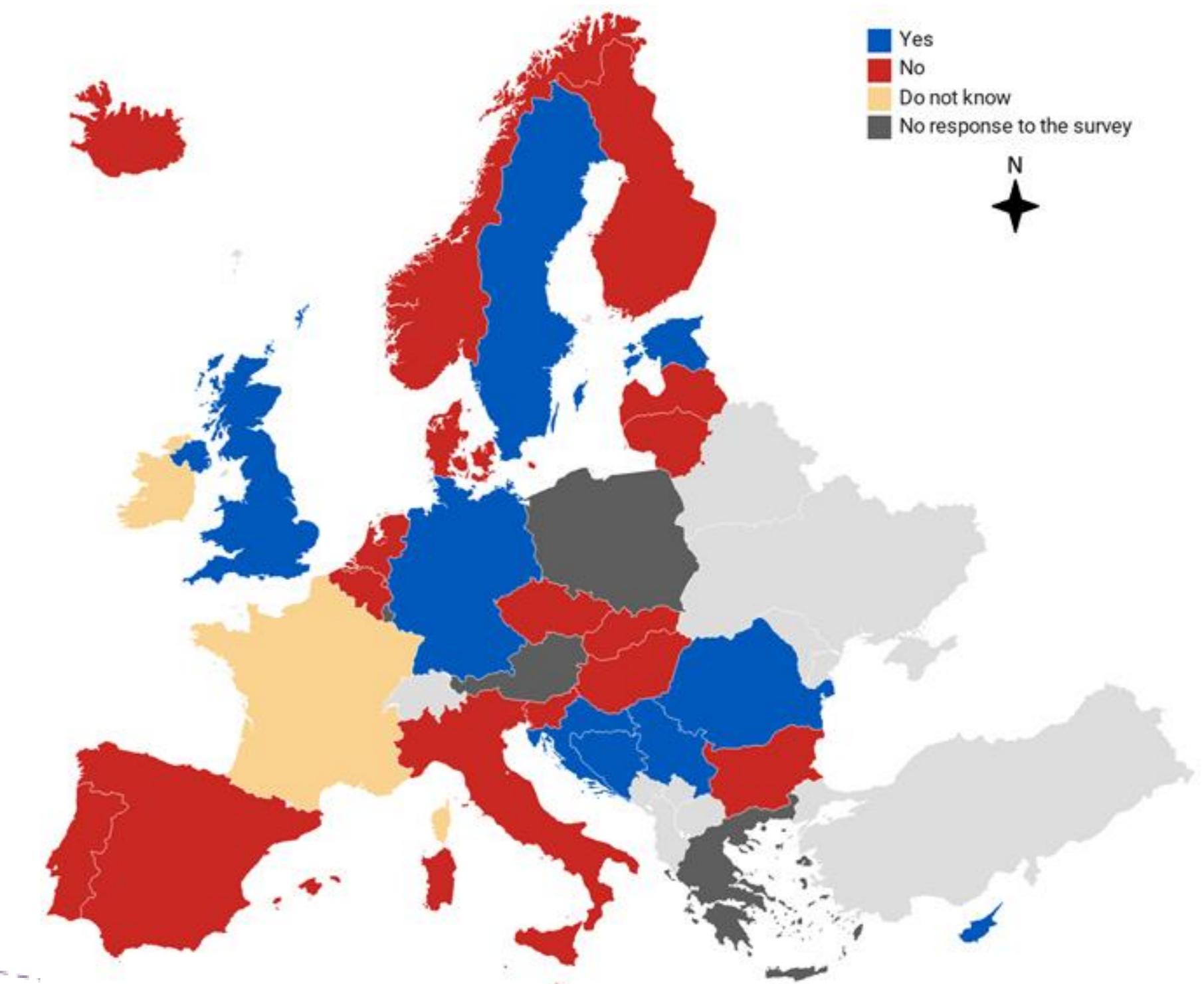
- ★ **Meetings with key opinion leaders** from WHO Europe and ECDC to inform the approach and develop questions.
- ★ **Survey of EU and associated countries in partnership with EU-JAV WP8** on vaccine hesitancy and uptake:
  - ★ Of the 32 countries that were sent the survey, 28 countries responded.
  - ★ The responses were either from an individual or a group representing the NIP.
- ★ **Workshops with relevant public health officials** in EU-JAV participating countries and EU-JAV stakeholders:
  - ★ Regional workshops at the EU-JAV General Assembly in Rome, October 2019 – with the participation of 30 officials representing 19 EU and associated countries and ECDC.
  - ★ Digital workshops with country representatives and EU stakeholders, November and December 2021 - with participation of 10 officials from different EU and associated countries, 8 stakeholder groups and ECDC.



# Results – EU and associated countries reporting having participated in cross border collaborations



Have any studies to barriers and drivers of vaccination, including literature reviews or sharing of data, been done as a collaboration with cross border partners?



Have any interventions to address barriers and drivers to vaccination been done as a collaboration with cross border partners?

# Results – collaboration efforts, benefits, incentives



## ★ Collaboration efforts:

- ★ Research groups.
- ★ A method for tailoring immunisation campaigns to specific low coverage populations or individuals.
- ★ Platforms for technical exchange, such as a neighbourhood collaboration on vaccine coverage and acceptance.
- ★ A Europe wide annual vaccination campaign, European Immunisation Week.

## ★ Benefits:

- ★ Sharing of experiences of studying vaccine hesitancy and best practices between countries.
- ★ Sharing of data.
- ★ Collaboration in reviewing the scientific literature.

## ★ Incentives:

- ★ Platforms for exchange, such as workshops and teleconferences.



# Results – implementation of knowledge from cross border collaborations



★ **Examples** given on how knowledge has been implemented from cross border collaborations:

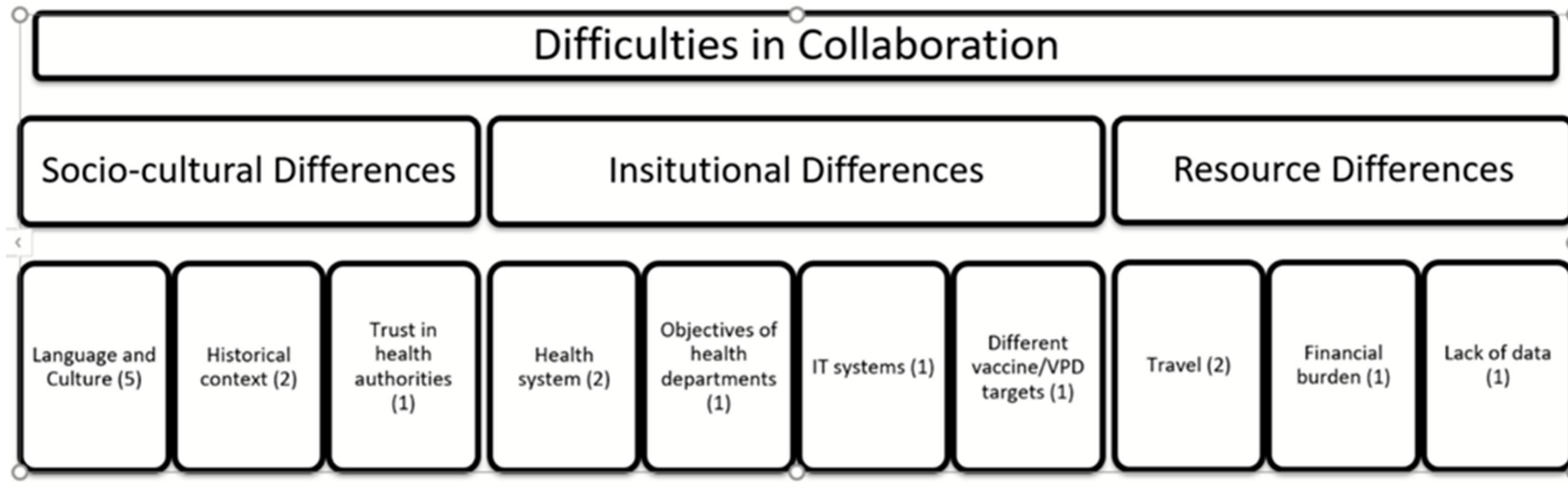
- ★ Improve communication between HCWs and vaccinees.
- ★ Measurements for vaccine acceptance.
- ★ Trainings of vaccine programme administrators.
- ★ Vaccine registration and reminder systems.
- ★ High-level advocacy for political and financial commitments.
- ★ Vaccine decision tool.
- ★ Conferences, seminars.



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# Results – reported difficulties in collaboration



★ Proposals for EU wide and cross border vaccination campaigns must always take account of the local context in order to avoid campaigns becoming more burdensome than beneficial.



# Reflections from experience from covid vaccination

## ★ Platforms for EU wide collaboration:

- ★ Participating in EU mechanism for purchasing of covid vaccines.
- ★ Regular EU technical exchanges through the EU HSC and ECDC NITAG platform.
- ★ WHO Community of Practice on behavioural and cultural insights, including vaccine acceptance and risk communication.

## ★ Neighbourhood collaborations supported by EU:

- ★ Baltic collaboration on vaccine supply.
- ★ Romania, Hungary, Germany and Austria on reaching low vaccination groups.
- ★ Smaller countries in particular have requested support.

## ★ Development of a number of relevant EU funded projects under Horizon 2020/3rd EU Health Programme that can provide learnings to take forward.



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# Results – themes where value can be gained from cross border collaboration



- ★ We have identified 13 themes where value can be gained by cross border collaboration, based on
  - ★ analyses of participant statements during the workshops; and
  - ★ results from the survey.
  
- ★ These themes can be used as an operational hook for public health officials working at EU level and in the NIPs, as well as broader partners and stakeholders that are actively working on projects to enhance vaccination coverage.
  
- ★ We will present examples of activities relating to 6/13 themes before asking the panel to comment and provide their vision. The 6 themes are:
  - ★ Low vaccination populations
  - ★ Communication strategies
  - ★ Neighbourhood and twinning initiatives
  - ★ Comparable data on vaccine acceptance
  - ★ Coordinated literature reviews
  - ★ Training healthcare workers



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# Example theme #1: Low vaccination populations

- Specific strategies to reach low vaccination groups.
- Low vaccination amongst migrant workers and migrant groups/diaspora.
- Take account of regional differences within countries.
- Unknown vaccination status of foreign workers and families.
- Check vaccination status of children before they start school.



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## Example theme #2: Communication strategies

- ★ Sharing patient stories such as HPV/cervical cancer patient story from Ireland, Laura Brennan.
- ★ Reach social media users, such as mothers who are on Facebook, with messages on the benefits of vaccine.
- ★ Explaining the risks of not vaccinating children.
- ★ Anti-vaccine discourse/disinformation on social media.
- ★ Work with media to communicate benefits of vaccination.



## Example theme #3: Neighbourhood and twinning initiatives

- ★ Platforms for exchange and support in small groups.
- ★ High value of EU wide and locally established platforms for regular knowledge sharing and exchange with neighbouring countries.
- ★ Access or hesitancy issues that are common to diaspora living in several EU/EEA countries.



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## Example theme #4: Comparable data on vaccine acceptance

- ★ Sharing of tools and experience on behavioural and cultural insights relating to the pandemic and vaccine acceptance.
- ★ Developing formats for comparing data and identifying trends cross border.



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## Example theme #5: Coordinated literature reviews

- ★ Common reviews of the latest science to support development of key messages.
- ★ Examples of good practice on how to support HCWs and increase coverage in low population groups.
- ★ Identify new practices for “real time” social media monitoring of questions and disinformation.



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## Example #6: Training healthcare workers

- ★ HCWs not sufficiently aware of need to check vaccination status of adults.
- ★ More vaccinology and communication skills in curricula for HCWs.
- ★ Groups of HCW and students that are anti-vaccination.
- ★ Training to improve communication skills amongst HCWs.
- ★ Concerns over unvaccinated HCWs.



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# 13 themes for EU wide and cross border campaigns



Comparable data on vaccine acceptance

**Discussion points:**

- 1) What is YOUR vision for enhanced cross border collaboration on these themes by 2030?
- 2) What 1-2 steps can YOU take in own context to move in the direction of this vision?

