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PRESS RELEASE

Compulsory vaccinations, consequences in the short and long term

The decision of the Italian Government [to make vaccines mandatory](#) for children who attend state schools has renewed the debate over vaccination policies. Compulsory vaccinations might lead to an improvement in immunization rates, but in the end have high cost, especially in term of litigation. This is what Darina O’Flanagan – previous Director of Health Protection Surveillance Centre Ireland and a member of the Advisory Forum of the European Centre for Disease Control – [told us in a video interview](#). According to O’Flanagan, better results can be achieved through a more efficient organisation and communication efforts, as proved by experiences from countries like Finland or the United Kingdom.

The Italian decree does not involve health care workers, for whom vaccines are not mandatory, even when they deal with at-risk patients. However, “their institutional role and ethical purpose is to take care of a subgroup of citizens particularly weak, because of their health conditions”, as stated by Massimo Valsecchi, former Director of the Department of Prevention of the Local Health Unit in Verona, Italy. In [an article he wrote on our website](#), Valsecchi explains that policy makers and experts need clear and strong guidelines when choosing to make vaccines mandatory, without thinking it as an easy shortcut to overcome hesitancy and refusal.

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