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Stateless populations were frequently left out of vaccination campaigns which were aimed at the broader population due to uncertainties of their legal status and lack of documentation, resulting in difficulties to access vaccinations and treatments.

Stateless persons were in some cases included in the national vaccination plans, for example in Portugal and Spain, where access to the vaccination is not based on legal status or nationality. In Portugal, vaccinations for stateless persons were prioritised based on health risks, as for the rest of the population. In Spain, vaccinations are available to all persons residing on the territory.

The COVID-19 Emergency Statelessness Fund (CESF), a global consortium of NGOs and citizenship rights activists initiated by the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion (ISI), published a roadmap to address the impact of COVID-19 on stateless people.1077 The roadmap aims to support stakeholders by informing and guiding them on developing an inclusive response related to the rights and wellbeing of stateless people.

In France, financial support was provided to lower-income households and young people who were already receiving help from other financial services, including people holding stateless status. However, this support was subject to certain criteria being met, and in many cases the benefits did not extend to stateless people.

UNHCR published a report on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on stateless people, warning of the risk of vaccination gaps as the majority of national immunization plans did not include this group.1078 The report recommended that extra efforts were needed to reach stateless persons as they may face additional barriers, such as a lack of identity documents, fear of coming forward for the vaccination due to uncertainties with their legal status, the cost of vaccination in countries where health care insurance is required and where free vaccinations are only available to nationals, and discriminatory and inconsistent vaccination distribution practices.1079

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- 1077COVID-19 Emergency Statelessness Fund Consortium. (June 2021). Together We Can: The COVID-19 Impact on Stateless People and a Roadmap for Change. https://files.institutesi.org/together_we_can_report_2021.pdf
- 1078United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2021, June 22). UNHCR warns of vaccine gap risk for world's stateless. https://www.unhcr.org/news/press/2021/6/60d06e444/unhcr-warns-vaccine-gap-risk-worlds-stateless.html
- 1079United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (June 2021). The Impact of COVID-19 on Stateless Populations: Policy recommendations and good practices on vaccine access and civil registration. https://www.refworld.org/docid/60b8d6d84.htm

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