



THE DONOR PERSPECTIVE ON HOW TO ENSURE A SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY OF BLOOD AND BLOOD COMPONENTS – IFBDO

CONTINUOUSLY AND IN TIMES OF CRISIS



A sustainable supply of blood and blood components critically depends on a healthy, stable, reliable and flexible population of whole blood and apheresis donors.

Several EU countries do have such donors.

To build and maintain a population of healthy and loyal blood and plasma donors support and funding from health authorities are required

- There exists evidence that in many countries additional staff and apheresis equipment are needed, as well as additional funding for donor education and donation campaigns.

It would be highly desirable that in all member states blood legislation includes the institution of *actually national* blood systems and that nationally-recognized blood donor organizations and associations are promoted and adequately supported, based on the principle of voluntary unpaid donation (VNRBD).

National self-sufficiency plans for blood and blood components, including plasma for fractionation, should be systematically in place, ideally in a view of European self-sufficiency. It should be clearly specified that this objective be pursued sharing strategic goals with blood donor organizations, where present, and protecting the health and rights of blood donors.



Up-to-date principles of social marketing should be applied to recruitment, retention and education of blood and plasma donors if a secure and safe blood and plasma supply is to be ensured, especially in case of exceptional events.

It is fundamental for any well performing national blood system to establish a long-lasting relationship with donors and their social environment, since this can enhance security, consistency and flexibility of supply, cost-effectiveness and blood safety.

There is evidence* that blood donor organizations and associations can represent a very valuable resource for national blood systems, contributing to the establishment of appropriate social marketing policies within which they can play a strategic role in enhancing the efficiency, cost-effectiveness and sustainability of national and domestic blood systems. Even more so in times of crisis.

**Ricciuti E, Bufali MV. The health and social impact of blood donors associations: a social return on investment (SROI) analysis. Evaluation and Program Planning.2019;73:204–13.*



VNR donors, both whole blood and apheresis donors, are an excellent example of healthy and loyal donors, willing to donate when needed, and ready to proactively react to important changes (e.g. COVID-19 pandemic)

- The safety of donations is high because most of them are regular donors, familiar with the rules for donation and well-known to the blood centres they refer to.

Hence, VNRBD should be a priority interest of Public Health and should not be jeopardized.

FIODS/IFBDO is composed of many nationally-recognized blood donor associations from 72 countries all around the world, representing and managing voluntary unpaid donors. These numerous associations strive to recruit and retain healthy VNR donors, as well as to co-operate with the relevant national blood systems and/or stimulate/help governments to establish national systems where they are not in place.

A robust, well-performing, adequately regulated and regularly supervised national blood system, based on VNRBD, where donor availability and health, as well as planning and security of supply, are priorities, is of paramount importance in order to guarantee an adequate and sustainable supply, continuously and in times of crisis.