OHE

The Broader Economic Benefits of COVID-19 Vaccination in the Netherlands

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COVID-19 continues to impose a significant **burden on healthcare systems** and, due to productivity losses, on **the national economy**, particularly when other infectious diseases like **influenza and RSV** co-circulate. Access to annual vaccination remains essential to sustain population immunity, curb variant emergence, and mitigate its burden on the economy.

Methods

We used a cost-of-illness analysis (COI) to quantify the economic burden of COVID-19 and assess the broader economic benefits of immunisation using three main scenarios:

- No further annual autumn vaccinations
- Annual autumn vaccination of population aged 60+ years and high-risk groups in line with the Dutch Health Council's 2023 recommendations
- Extended annual autumn vaccination of the general population aged 50+ and 18+

Key takeaways

Despite current COVID-19 vaccination efforts, a substantial economic burden persists.

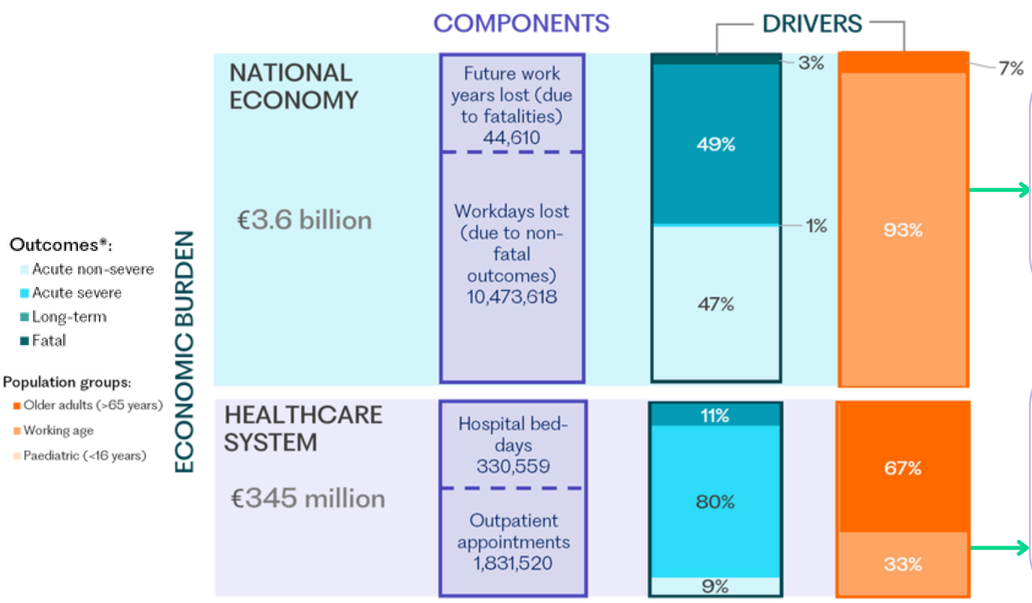
- The **total economic burden** of COVID-19 without annual autumn vaccination is almost **€4 billion per year**.
- Productivity losses due to COVID-19 generate a substantial impact on the national economy (€3.6 billion)
- Acute non-severe and long-term COVID-19 outcomes, especially among the working-age population, drive the majority of the cost to the national economy.

Annual autumn COVID-19 vaccination of people aged 60+ based on Autumn 2023 uptake rates (range 32%-63% depending on 5-year age group for 60+) and high-risk groups saves about €210 million per year.

- Of the €210 million, the healthcare system saves €83 million yearly (24% of its COVID-19 burden), the national economy benefits €127 million (3% of its burden).

Economic burden of COVID-19 in the Netherlands with no annual autumn vaccination

Without ongoing annual vaccination, COVID-19 could cost the Netherlands almost **€4 billion** annually. The COVID-19 impact on the national economy is driven by productivity losses among the working population while the healthcare system impact is driven by COVID in older adults.



Productivity losses are largely due to non-severe illness (47%) and long-COVID (49%). Cases in the working age population drive **93%** of the national economy burden.

Healthcare utilisation is mostly (80%) driven by acute severe infections. Cases in older adults (65+) drive over two thirds (**67%**) of healthcare system costs.

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INSIGHTS FOR HEALTHCARE RESILIENCE AND ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

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Economic benefits of COVID-19 vaccination in the Netherlands

COVID-19 vaccination programmes help safeguard national productivity, reduce strain on healthcare systems, and protect vulnerable populations.

Annual autumn COVID-19 vaccination targeting individuals aged 60+ and high-risk groups, in line with the Dutch Health Council's 2023 recommendations, would generate

€210 million

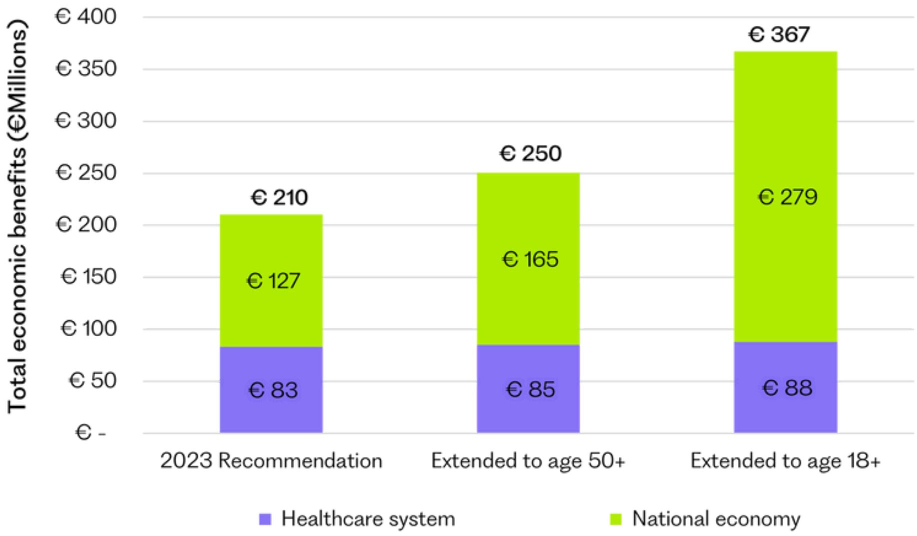
in annual economic benefits.

Extending COVID-19 vaccination eligibility to the general population aged **50+** and **18+** would increase the total economic benefit to

€250 million and €367 million per year

respectively.

Extension of the population eligible for COVID-19 vaccination would generate additional economic benefits as a result of **productivity gains.**



Note: All vaccination scenarios include eligibility for high-risk groups, such as immunocompromised individuals, frontline health and social care workers and care home residents.

We call on policymakers to:

- Provide **continued investment in endemic COVID-19 vaccination programmes** and pandemic preparedness to safeguard economic resilience and public health.
- Adapt a decision-making and funding framework that applies an investment model for prevention that **recognises the broader economic benefits of preventive interventions.**

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