

[view online](#)

## To what extent is self-determination in health matters negotiable?

### Dear Friends of ELIANT,

The way the coronavirus pandemic was managed – globally, nationally and regionally – was approved and supported by the majority of the world's population. However, it also revealed an alliance between medicine, science and politics and made people aware of the efforts being made worldwide to harmonise health policy strategies and standardise them within the framework of the WHO.

The instruments for such planning and standardisation are, on the one hand, the [Pandemic Agreement](#), as well as the [Intergovernmental Negotiating Body \(INB\)](#), established in December 2021 and tasked with drafting and negotiating the agreements to strengthen pandemic prevention, preparedness and response. On the other hand, there are the negotiations on the revision of the [International Health Regulations \(IHR\)](#), which have received less media attention. All three negotiating instruments are based on the leadership and consensus of the Member States.

The final meetings of the two committees before the vote at the World Health Assembly in May will take place at the end of April and beginning of May. It is clear that the strategy being pursued to combat pandemics envisages vaccination on a broad basis, whereby decisions on its administration, including possible sanctions, are to remain a matter for the individual countries. Against this background, it is evident that political decision-makers are focussing exclusively on the view of the human being of natural science and placing the vaccination paradigm at the centre. This also means, however, that a way of thinking is elevated to a position of global authority which, due to its one-sidedness, can only do very limited justice to the lived reality and the nature of the individual person.

## **Individual self-determination and freedom of expression in health matters need support from civil society!**

Anyone who studies the online documents relating to the Pandemic Agreement will see from parts of the wording the extent to which there is scope for discretion and there are legal grey areas regarding the manner of interpretation and practical implementation. Here it is not reassuring either that, contrary to earlier fears, countries will retain their sovereignty. After all, this is not synonymous with their citizens' rights to self-determination and freedom of expression being respected in health matters. What is needed here is active engaged thinking and a committed response from civil society.

## **Freedom of expression and diversity are part of the foundation of democracy**

Article 18 of the Pandemic Agreement states, among other things, *The Parties shall exchange information and cooperate, in accordance with national law, in preventing misinformation and disinformation, and endeavour to develop best practices to increase the accuracy and reliability of crisis communications.* Here, too, the scope for interpretation becomes evident – particularly with regard to possible restrictions on freedom of expression at national level.

## **Plurality of methods and therapeutic freedom are fundamental democratic rights**

With all due respect for natural science-based medicine, it needs to be supplemented by the insights and experiences from the health research (salutogenesis) of modern integrative medicine. The human mind and spirit are just as tangible in their effects on health as a healthy lifestyle and sufficient physical exercise. However, these aspects do not feature in the ongoing negotiations of the international community of states.

## **Trust and dialogue are needed instead of fear and polarisation**

The extent to which the potential for polarisation currently being experienced in society is ultimately destructive is evident. ELIANT and all its partners are therefore committed to seeking discussion, consultation and critical dialogue in meetings and conferences wherever possible – not only with the authorities in Brussels, but also with those responsible at the WHO. All modern problems and challenges are man-made and need human foundations for constructive solutions.

Thus, a good decade before the pandemic, our **alliance partner, the International Federation of Anthroposophic Medical Associations (IVAA)**, had already begun to enter into collaboration with the relevant WHO bodies in the field of training. This work process was successfully brought to a conclusion on 28 March 2023 with the publication of the training guidelines for anthroposophic medicine in the form of the so-called **Benchmarks**. They combine complete freedom of instruction for the anthroposophical therapeutic

approach with the WHO's internationally applicable standards for good-quality training. This plays an important role in the negotiations for the recognition of anthroposophic medicine in non-European countries, as it is even less well known there than in Europe. Cultivating and protecting one's own identity while at the same time being willing to understand and accept opposing views – this will be of primary importance in the healthcare sector in the coming years.

In the hope that you will continue to work with us to uphold these values, and with warm regards on behalf of the ELIANT team  
Yours Michaela Glöckler

[Here](#) you can support our work – thank you very much!

If you do not yet receive our newsletter, you can [subscribe](#) here.

Our privacy policy: We are a not-for-profit organisation and are pleased to be able to send you our newsletter. Your data is used solely for this purpose. You may correct, delete or block individual items of personal data at any time. For further information see: [www.eliant.eu/en/privacy-policy/](http://www.eliant.eu/en/privacy-policy/)

Alliance ELIANT | Rue du Trône 194 | 1050 Brussels | Belgium | [info@eliant.eu](mailto:info@eliant.eu) | [www.eliant.eu](http://www.eliant.eu)  
[unsubscribe newsletter](#)