

European audience members speak on the significance of October 24 webinar, “How to end the pandemic”

Our reporters
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Educators, health workers and others who participated in watching the live October 24 webinar, “How to end the pandemic,” spoke to the *World Socialist Web Site* to express their support for the event.

The October 24 meeting brought together a panel of leading scientists internationally, who made a powerful case for the global elimination of the virus that causes COVID-19. It also included workers involved in the fight against the pandemic, including David O’Sullivan, a London bus driver victimised for fighting to alert his co-workers to the dangers of the virus, and Lisa Diaz, a UK parent who has organised online school strikes against the policy of “herd immunity” in schools.

The event evoked an enthusiastic response among audience members across Europe and internationally.

In France, Annabelle, a health sector worker and member of the Facebook group Zero Covid Solidaire, said, “I think you are one of the only ones to be seeking to present this material. The most important for me was to see that this was an international event, and that it was not only based on the science, but really aimed toward the rank-and-file. It was aimed at ensuring that the workers and the citizens organise themselves and create their own groups to act and be able to pass to action.

“I ask myself sometimes what I can do so that there can be a pressure group that would be created on a national and actually international scale on this question. That is what is lacking. For the moment, the governments are pursuing policies that are criminal. Only Bolsonaro has recently had some little problems created for himself, but as for all the others they are all still there with the same policy of ‘living with the

virus.’ And this is anything but a safe policy.”

In Germany, Martin, an educator from Dresden, said, “As an educator, I found the webinar for an elimination strategy impressive for several reasons. First, based on its composition alone, it emphasised the need and possibility for an internationally coordinated pandemic policy.

“Second, it demonstrated how parents, educators, and even workers from all other sectors can arm themselves with a scientific program as a clear alternative to prevailing pandemic policies. Instead of enduring the contagion and being burdened with all the social consequences, it is possible to fight and defeat the pandemic in a humane and democratic, egalitarian, i.e., a socialist way. To show this possibility is the lasting great success of the webinar.”

Maxine Walker, a long time WSWS reader in the UK, said, “The recent webinar on ‘How to Stop the Pandemic’ was a breath of fresh air. It showed that the virus—which has killed many millions worldwide—can be effectively fought by global cooperation, scientific methods, intensive public health measures and public education. Here in the UK, listening to scientists explain their findings and agree on how it must be fought, showed the colossal crime that UK capitalists and their parliamentary, media and Establishment servants commit when they intone that we ‘have to live with the virus’.

“Living with the virus means many deaths and long-term illnesses,” she said. “Deaths fall heavily on essential workers, the old, people with disabilities and the poor. Even children are now being sacrificed in this process as schools are recklessly re-opened and infection rates soar. These groups are regarded as

disposable—sacrifices laid on the altar of profit. Alongside this has gone a vicious attack on science and scientists/public health experts and the cultivation of irrationality, magical thought and scientific ignorance.

“It has been depressing to see the resulting marches calling for ‘freedom’ from even tiny public health measures, vaccines etc. It is admirable that the SEP arranged this international webinar and has consistently put forward the case for elimination of the virus and explained the science behind it. That is in the interests of the global working class and what socialists should be doing.”

Ruth, a teacher from the Isle of Wight, said, “The short video clips at the start from ordinary people made it clear: COVID is real, it’s not over, and it’s endangering ordinary working people and our families every day. Then the presentations from the scientists showed again and again that this is a choice, and a choice made not by us but by politicians.

“Michael Baker from New Zealand showed how the world has always chosen the path of elimination and eradication with every dangerous infectious disease except influenza, which we suppress with vaccination and other measures.

“Margorzata Gasperowicz’s evidence showed how an elimination strategy is not only possible but has actually allowed more freedom to the parts of Canada that have followed this path as well as even fewer deaths than the states that followed a mitigation strategy.

“It’s really useful to be able to go back to YouTube and rewatch sections of the webinar as there’s so much useful scientific information in there. It’s particularly hard to be in the UK at this time where we have a government that is conducting an experiment on its own people by letting the virus run rampant with no mitigations at all.

“I hope many more people watch the webinar and see that another way is possible, and we don’t have to ‘live with the virus’ as they call it.”

Chris Porter, a lecturer at a university in England, said, “The webinar was a devastating exposé on just what is possible, and how a wider understanding of those possibilities has been artificially stunted by the capitalist class, in part through the disingenuous use and abuse of concepts like ‘follow the science’ and ‘disinformation’.”

Dave, a care worker from the north west of England said, “I thought it was an amazing event though, and built a strong scientific case for the eradication of the virus. All the speakers gave very good contributions, based on their scientific expertise. Eradication is possible but only through the intervention of the international working class.”



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