

Your Lions Club can be a part of this

Lions is already engaged through “Sharing the Vision”, The Lions Measles Initiative, Global Service Action Campaigns, and the Global UN Compact. Your club can support this effort by engaging in local activities such as those listed below.

Community work

Work in coordination with local health authorities to educate the public and improve general uptake of vaccines.

Target activities for communities with low uptake of vaccinations.

Share personal stories of persons affected by the diseases, e.g. through interviews, to increase knowledge of the ongoing presence of measles and rubella in the Region.

Youth programmes/ more engagement of Alpha Leo Clubs & Omega Leo Clubs

Engage the youth in projects in which teenagers educate younger children and their peers on the importance of immunization.

Organize poster, video or music contests among youth groups or schools.

Organize youth sports, documentary or educational quiz events to raise awareness.

Fundraising

Organize gala dinners, marathons/other sports events, and concerts.

Advocacy and education

Raise awareness, e.g. via European Immunization Week activities

Produce educational material for general practitioners' waiting rooms to educate parents and children on:

- measles and rubella
- benefits of vaccinations
- matters related to vaccines such as valid contraindications.

Organize special events/dinners/talks on immunization for health care worker associations.

Use media, such as local television and radio ads, and social networks to reach the general public.

With *your* help, measles and rubella can be eliminated!

Contact us

To discuss your ideas and learn how you can engage and WHO/Europe can help, please contact:

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Useful links

Package for accelerated action 2013-2015:
http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/215480/PACKAGE-FOR-ACCELERATED-ACTION-20132015.pdf

Framework for the verification process in the WHO European Region:

http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/247356/Eliminating-measles-and-rubella-Framework-for-the-verification-process-in-the-WHO-European-Region.pdf

Front cover image: WHO/D. Oganova

Eliminating measles and rubella saves lives and suffering



Why eliminate measles and rubella?

MEASLES is still a major cause of vaccine-preventable disease and mortality worldwide. It is a highly contagious viral disease that can lead to:

- deafness, pneumonia, diarrhoea, encephalitis and death

RUBELLA in pregnant women can be severe and can cause:

- foetal death or Congenital Rubella Syndrome (CRS) in the newborn, often characterized by blindness, deafness, and heart disease

All of these negative consequences are preventable through the use of a safe and effective vaccine. Immunization has reduced the incidence of measles and rubella by over 78% globally and over 90% in the European Region.

But – these diseases are not yet conquered:

Globally, measles kills about 330 children and CRS kills or cripples 300 newborns everyday. In 2013, there were 31 685 cases of measles reported in 38 countries and 39 367 cases of rubella reported in 21 countries of the WHO European Region.

Measles in particular is highly contagious and can affect any country in the WHO European Region. Large outbreaks are at risk of occurring throughout the Region, highlighting the need for all countries to continuously assign high priority to immunization. As people travel in and out of countries, disease may travel with them. The best way to prevent transmission of these diseases is to build population immunity through vaccination.

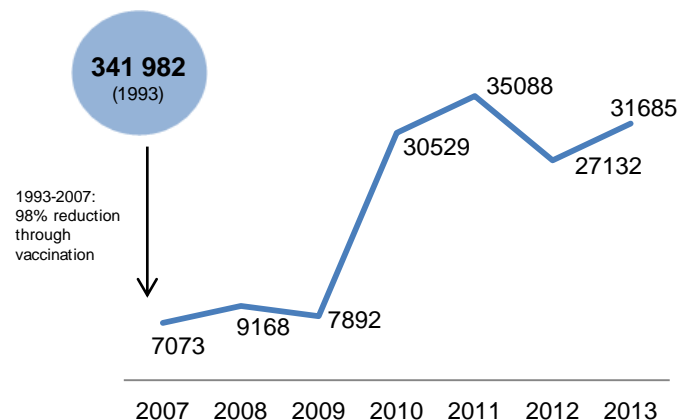
Elimination in Europe is critical for global elimination



Image: WHO/Malin Bring

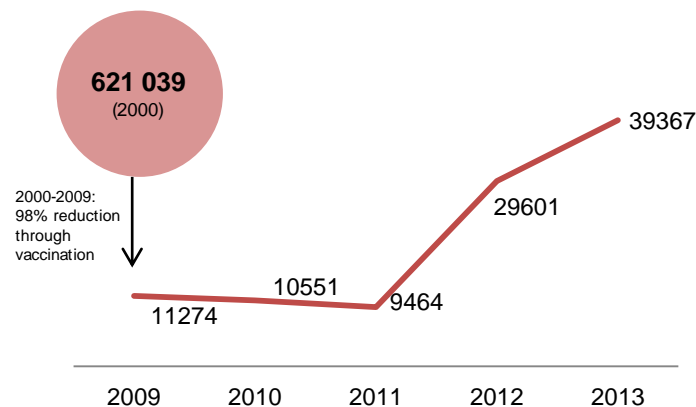
Measles and Rubella in the WHO European Region

Measles (2007-2013)



Data source: WHO Regional Office for Europe

Rubella (2011-2013)



Data source: WHO Regional Office for Europe

What is WHO doing?

The WHO Regional Office and all Member States committed to eliminate measles and rubella from the Region by 2015. However, reaching this target has proven to be difficult, since countries face persisting or re-emerging outbreaks of both diseases.

Therefore, to reach or maintain high immunity in Member States, WHO is increasing its engagement with new strategic partners, ministries of health, policy-makers, laboratories and immunization programme managers, to:

- **recognize and address barriers** to vaccine uptake (countries, district, and community);
- **identify and analyze** under-vaccinated populations;
- **enhance surveillance** of diseases and **immunization monitoring**, for timely detection of outbreaks and inform the population of diseases' risks;
- **improve availability of information about vaccine-preventable diseases/immunization** so people can make informed decisions on immunization.

What can Lions Clubs do?

Eliminating measles and rubella is possible – *but we need your help!*

The organization's cooperation with the WHO Regional Office for Europe will be invaluable. Its contribution can include:

- political advocacy
- fundraising
- informing underimmunized target groups
- raising parents' awareness of the importance of immunization.

As a leader in community and humanitarian service with a large international network, Lions Clubs International has the necessary resources to inform susceptible populations about measles and rubella vaccinations. Lions can mobilize volunteers and resources in countries and work with professional societies and the general public to increase demand for immunization. Regardless of the status of measles and rubella in a country, all countries can benefit from Lions Clubs' involvement.