



European Immunization Week 2007

An initiative to boost awareness and
increase the success
of immunization programmes





European Immunization Week

16-22 April 2007

Table of contents

<u>Introduction</u>	Page 1
<u>Why European Immunization Week?</u>	Page 2
<u>History</u>	Page 3
<u>Goal and objectives</u>	Page 4
<u>Collaboration</u>	Page 5
<u>Strategic Approach</u>	Page 6
<u>Regional activities</u>	Page 9
<u>Activities in Member States</u>	Page 13
<u>Recommendations</u>	Page 21

© World Health Organization 2007

All rights reserved. The Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organization welcomes requests for permission to reproduce or translate its publications, in part or in full. The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Where the designation "country or area" appears in the headings of tables, it covers countries, territories, cities, or areas. Dotted lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement. The mention of specific companies or of certain manufacturers' products does not imply that they are endorsed or recommended by the World Health Organization in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned. Errors and omissions excepted, the names of proprietary products are distinguished by initial capital letters. The World Health Organization does not warrant that the information contained in this publication is complete and correct and shall not be liable for any damages incurred as a result of its use. The views expressed by authors or editors do not necessarily represent the decisions or the stated policy of the World Health Organization.



European Immunization Week

16-22 April 2007

Introduction

The WHO Regional Committee in 2005 adopted a resolution (EUR/RC55/R7) which urged all European Region countries “to support, where appropriate, the implementation of an immunization week within the Region for advocacy to promote immunization”. As a result, the first European Immunization Week was launched as a pilot in October 2005.

The second European Immunization Week took place 16-22 April 2007. A large number of activities aimed at reaching out to high-risk groups through advocacy, communications and supplementary immunization. This report introduces the strategic approach and the activities carried out during this exciting week in April 2007.

Twenty-five countries from across the WHO European Region saw the opportunities of creating regional synergy and became actively engaged in the initiative. With the aim to strengthen immunization systems, in an overall context of health systems strengthening, the initiative targeted the individual challenges of immunization systems in each participating country.

European Immunization Week 2007 was a vibrant week. Ministers, first ladies, celebrities, experts, health workers, volunteers and many others joined the national activities and contributed to the immense, positive press interest brought about by the initiative. In snapshots, 850 000 printed information products were distributed across the Region, more than 700 000 SMS, radio or TV messages were sent out, more than 200 workshops or conferences were held, and almost 1.5 million immunization shots were given to children to protect them against the vaccine-preventable diseases that kill and debilitate thousands of children worldwide each year.

Current report is based on the evaluation documents and feedback received from all participating countries.

Why European Immunization Week?

Immunization – a great success

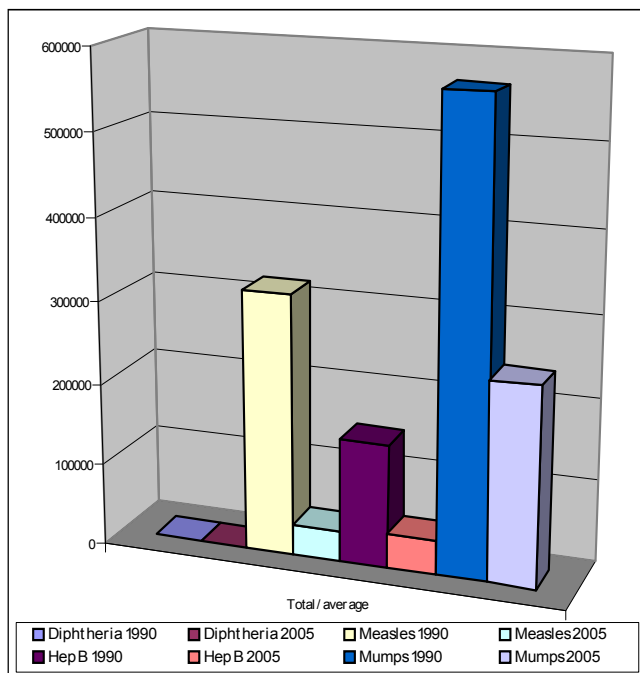
Great challenges have been overcome with immunization, and a remarkable decline in suffering and death has been the result of this powerful prevention mechanism. This simple intervention, preventing disease before it takes hold, today controls most infectious diseases in the WHO European Region.

The fight must continue

Still, the fight against infectious diseases must be maintained to reach the children who are still unvaccinated and at risk.

The challenges are clear:

- If immunization loses priority, highly contagious diseases - such as diphtheria, measles, even polio - will re-emerge.
- Vaccine-preventable diseases kill up to 32 000 young children in the WHO European Region every year.
- Vulnerable and high-risk unimmunized population groups exist in all countries.
- Outbreaks of infectious diseases continue to spread in the Region.
- Public confidence in vaccines is affected by groups, web sites or the press questioning the necessity and safety of vaccination.
- In times of competing health priorities, immunization in some countries is losing political commitment.



Examples of cases of major vaccine-preventable diseases in the WHO European Region in 1990 and 2005 (diphtheria, measles, hepatitis B and mumps) (National reports)



Global distribution of the 1.4 million annual deaths from vaccine-preventable diseases in children under 5 years (WHO)

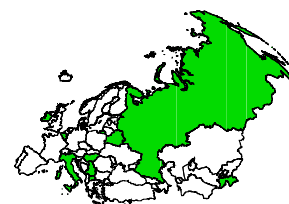
Countries across the Region see an increasing need to provide accurate, balanced and understandable information about the risks of diseases and the benefits of vaccination.

As a response to this request from Member States, European Immunization Week has been initiated, providing a framework for countries to boost awareness and strengthen their immunization systems.

History

Pilot 2005

European Immunization Week was piloted in October 2005 with nine Member States: Belarus, Belgium, Hungary, Ireland, Italy (South Tyrol), Russian Federation, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia.



Countries that participated in European Immunization Week 2005

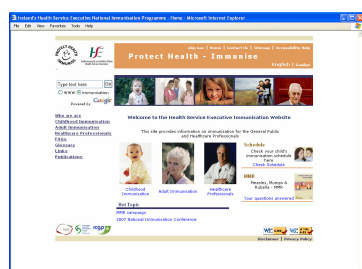
Towards 2007

A regional evaluation report for the pilot phase, based on evaluation reports from all participating countries, was used as the starting point for planning the next European Immunization Week. A *Lessons Learnt and Next Steps* meeting with 18 countries, in September 2006, further refined and defined the initiative for the future.

A key recommendation was changing the timing of the initiative to springtime. The second Immunization Week therefore took place one and a half year later – in April 2007.

A few highlights from 2005

- **Ireland** launched www.immunisation.ie – a resource base for parents and health workers.
- Wrestling with a strong anti-vaccine movement, the Italian province of **South Tyrol** succeeded in creating a more positive and balanced media debate about immunization.
- Mobile teams in **The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** vaccinated almost 2 000 children in traditionally hard-to-reach communities.
- A brunch and workshop was held with journalists in **Serbia**, to provide balanced information about immunization.
- **Tajikistan** explored key target groups in detail through a Knowledge, Attitude and Practice study.
- A rubella campaign was launched in **Belarus**, targeting unprotected adolescents.



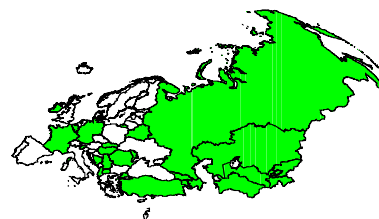
The Irish immunization web site for parents and health professionals was launched as part of European Immunization Week 2005. The web site meets the WHO quality requirements for web sites on immunization.

Goal and objectives

Goal

The long-term goal of European Immunization Week is to increase vaccination by:

- Raising awareness of the need and right of every child to be protected against vaccine-preventable diseases.
- Strengthening immunization systems in the overall context of health systems strengthening.
- Placing a special focus on vulnerable, high-risk groups.



25 countries participating!

Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy (South Tyrol), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malta, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan

Strategic objectives

The strategic objectives of the second European Immunization Week were to:

- Consolidate European Immunization Week as an annual and Region-wide initiative, building on the lessons learnt from the pilot phase.
- Engage and support Member States from all parts of the WHO European Region, creating the synergy of one common message across the Region.
- Provide balanced and targeted information to critical target groups, taking into account the individual challenges in each of the participating countries.
- Engage key target groups in national and sub-national activities, aimed at raising awareness and understanding of the risks of diseases and the benefits of vaccination.

Key target groups

Based on national challenges, the key target groups for European Immunization Week are defined as:

- Parents, carers, children and adolescents - specific focus on high-risk groups
- Professional health workers
- Political decision makers
- Media

Key message and slogan

Stressing the importance of each and every life, European Immunization Week has defined one key message:

⇒ Timely immunization is vital for *every* child!

The easily translated slogan is used widely by the participating countries:

⇒ **Prevent. Protect. Immunize.**



European Immunization Week

16-22 April 2007

Collaboration

Working together

European Immunization Week is the result of close collaboration between regional and national counterparts:

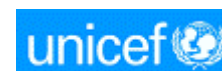
Coordination. European Immunization Week is led and coordinated by the WHO Regional Office for Europe.

Implementation. Participating countries use the initiative to highlight immunization, in an effort to increase the success of their immunization programmes - through targeted advocacy and communication and vaccination of high-risk groups.

Partnership. A range of important regional and national partners support the planning and implementation of European Immunization Week. Major partners in 2007 included national NGOs and donors, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).



EUROPE



National coordination

Most of the participating countries establish a national working group - a forum for planning, discussion and resource mobilization. Ministry of health representatives here work together with relevant national counterparts: other ministries or public institutes, health professionals, non-governmental organizations, donors and others.

The countries make a great effort to involve sub-national and local levels, and in many countries the initiative is quite decentralized with diverse activities in each participating region or federal state. In 2007, some countries met an unexpected request from the sub-national levels to become part of the Immunization Week and involved many more regions than first anticipated.

Highlights from the evaluation questionnaires*

- ⇒ **80%** of the countries formed a working group to plan the Immunization Week.
- ⇒ The majority, **45%**, held 4-6 working group meetings; **20%** held up to 10 meetings.
- ⇒ **70%** of the countries are planning to continue meeting in the working group, mainly to plan for next year's Immunization Week
- ⇒ **28%** of the countries started their planning process in 2006.
- ⇒ **20%** of the countries started their planning process in March 2007.

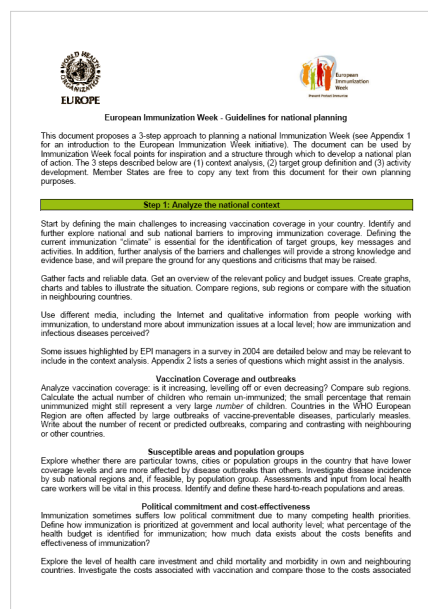
Strategic Approach: a 3-step process

Aiming for an effective and targeted approach for all activities of European Immunization Week, a “3-step approach” is suggested to all countries. The approach is outlined in the guidelines for planning, which have been shared with all participating countries and are available on the European Immunization Week web site.

Step 1: Situation analysis: Analyzing the main immunization barriers. This process defines the key problems of ensuring maximum protection against vaccine-preventable diseases in the country. For example, vaccination coverage data can be used to identify communities or areas with low uptake. Further analysis of the reasons for this low uptake may reveal parental concerns about safety, or health care workers not promoting immunization, or limited physical access to immunization services. The situation analysis is crucial to define the persons or groups that could be approached in Immunization Week activities.

Step 2: Target group analysis: Identifying and defining the critical target groups - and the most effective ways to engage and reach them. Taking the example of “parents”, this will include to further analyze the reasons why parents are not taking their children for vaccination. This might be carried out by “knowledge, attitude and practice” studies, focus group interviews or questionnaires. The process identifies, not only the reasons for unwillingness to vaccinate (fear, poor knowledge, lack of trust, lack of access), but also their channels of influence - i.e. where the parents obtain information about immunization and how their opinions are formed.

Step 3: Planning, implementing and evaluating activities: Based on step 1 and step 2 above, activities are developed, ensuring that the right target groups are reached by the most appropriate messages and activities - and through the most effective communication channels. During this phase, an evaluation framework should be designed, to measure the impact of any activities that are implemented. The evaluation is critical to measure whether the activities achieve the desired results and ensure that improvements can continuously be made.



Highlights from the evaluation questionnaires*

- ⇒ **56%** of the countries are developing national evaluation reports for EIW 2007.
- ⇒ **64%** of the countries collected information to “*assess a possible change in awareness, attitude or behaviour*” of their target groups.
- ⇒ The **preferred** methods for collecting this information were immunization coverage data comparisons, feedback received by key stakeholders and questionnaires.

*Feedback received
from 23 out of 25 Member States

Strategic Approach: strengthening immunization systems

A cross-cutting initiative, European Immunization Week 2007 was successful in targeting various elements of immunization systems. With the goal to increase the success of immunization programmes - in the context of health systems strengthening - the initiative focussed on the *specific* challenges encountered in *each* of the participating countries.

Below snapshots of just a few of the activities carried out show the breadth of the initiative and its ability to be tailored to the individual challenges of each participating Member State.

Risk groups

Reaching **vulnerable, high-risk children** was an overarching theme, which all countries but two included in their objectives. **Young adults** were another key target group in France, Germany and in Belgium (Flemish Community) where posters and leaflets aimed at attracting the attention of teenagers, providing them with the responsibility for their own vaccinations. Turkey provided vaccinations to different risk groups, including **women of child-bearing age**.

Target groups



Child immunized during Immunization Week in Tajikistan

Parents were a key target group in most countries, and a range of events and information materials were developed for this group. Belarus initiated an opinion poll on immunization to identify parents' awareness and knowledge levels. In the Russian Federation, the activities to reach families that did not come back for second doses of immunization included 'family-supervision' visits to hundreds of families.

Health professionals were another important group. The Italian province of South Tyrol organized eight seminars for both medical and non-medical staff with the aim to harmonize the information provided to parents by all representatives of the health sector. In Armenia, health professionals were

actively involved in the planning phase, and a range of information materials were produced to inform key health staff about immunization. Facing the problem that immunization is not part of the curricula at the medical academy, Uzbekistan organized a symposium for graduate medical students to introduce them to immunization safety issues.

Bosnia and Herzegovina organized round-table meetings for **decision makers** in order to discuss mapping of vulnerable groups and to establish a forum for discussion on immunization in the country. Azerbaijan was successful in actively engaging their First Lady; a doctor herself she provided polio vaccines to children at the launch of the Immunization Week.



Azerbaijan's First Lady providing polio vaccines at the launch of the Immunization Week

Also the **media** was successfully approached across the Region with a palette of initiatives: press releases and conferences, fact sheets, festive launch events and much more. Uzbekistan conducted an essay competition among journalists to engage journalists in a positive debate and to publish



Certificate for medical students in Uzbekistan

Strategic Approach: strengthening immunization systems

Approach

All countries produced **information materials** for their key target groups - a total of 1 501 696 were distributed across the Region - and 11 countries provided **supplementary vaccination** to 546 901 persons in high-risk groups.

Some countries used the Immunization Week as an opportunity to **boost an already planned immunization event**. In Tajikistan, the supplementary immunization campaign planned for April-May was integrated with their Immunization Week. Georgia used the Immunization Week to realize some key elements of a newly launched immunization communication plan.

A range of countries organized **trainings, conferences or workshops** at national and subnational levels, the major one being Ireland's high-level national immunization conference with almost 400 participants.

Albania, Kyrgyzstan, Romania, Russian Federation and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were among the countries that organized **outreach activities** to specifically vulnerable communities, going door to door to hand out information materials, screening children's vaccination status or providing the necessary vaccinations.



Immunization information handed out at Healthy Lifestyle Exposition in Slovakia



Outreach in Albania: door-to-door screening of immunization status

Focus

Measles and rubella played a key role in many of the participating countries. In Ireland, improving routine MMR uptake was the key objective for the Immunization Week, which was used to prepare for a measles campaign planned as part of Ireland's commitment to the WHO European Region measles elimination strategy. **Polio** was another key issue. Tajikistan linked the Immunization Week to their supplementary polio immunization of children living in hard-to-reach border areas.



Irish children and Minister for Health and Children showing Immunization Week towels for newborns



Tajik child immunized against polio

Immunization **quality and safety** was critical in a number of countries, including the central Asian republics, where persistent rumours about unsafe vaccines - especially vaccines produced in specific countries - have been fuelled by the media. Targeting widespread concerns about immunization safety, Moldova used the opportunity of the press launch of the Week to demonstrate the immunization 'cold chain' which is crucial for the quality of vaccines.

Introducing new vaccines was a topic for discussion at a national expert workshop held in Germany, where the **Human Papilloma Virus** vaccine had just been recommended for teenage girls. In Slovakia, new and underused vaccines, such as those against **influenza, viral hepatitis B** and **haemophilus invasive infections**, were key issues in the public awareness campaign conducted, aiming in particular at high-risk Roma communities in the country. **Travel vaccine** was an issue in Malta that issued a leaflet on travel medicine, including vaccinations, as part of their Immunization Week activities.

Regional activities

Support to Member States

WHO Regional Office for Europe provided **strategic, technical, financial and practical** support to the participating Member States during the planning of European Immunization Week 2007:

- ⇒ A visual identity - logo, slogan and colours - ensured harmonization across the Region.
- ⇒ Special emphasis was placed on engaging the countries in the regional planning phase, through a joint planning meeting and requests for feedback on technical papers.
- ⇒ A strategic approach was developed, defining common messages and target groups.
- ⇒ Guidelines for planning provided advice to the countries in their analysis and planning.
- ⇒ A common evaluation framework defined indicators and parameters of success.
- ⇒ Technical support was provided to all countries.
- ⇒ Fourteen country missions were undertaken to support the development of strategies and action plans or to participate in national Immunization Week activities.
- ⇒ Promotional and information materials were developed in four languages and made available to all countries: fact sheets, press releases, posters, stickers and much more.
- ⇒ The European Immunization Week web site was continuously updated with guiding documents, information about the country activities and links to a resource library.
- ⇒ A monthly newsletter disseminated and shared information about the coordination and planning process. Each newsletter issued stories from the participating countries – planned activities, target groups and goals – for inspiration and inter-country exchange.
- ⇒ Regional press work supplemented the extensive national effort to engage and inform the media.



Planning meeting with Member States, September 2006



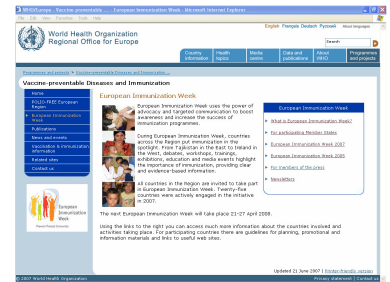
Regional activities

Regional information and promotional materials 2007

To ease and facilitate the planning process in the countries, WHO Regional Office for Europe made a range of written and promotional materials available to all countries.

Web site

The web site was continuously updated with guiding documents, information about country activities and links to useful external web sites and documents. It was used by Member States as a source of information and inspiration.



Guidelines

To increase commonality across the Region and support countries in the planning phase, two documents were produced to guide the countries:

- Guidelines for planning a national Immunization Week
- Guidelines for working with the media

Fact sheet: European Immunization Week at a Glance

This fact sheet, targeted mainly at the media, answered the basic questions concerning the initiative:

- ⇒ Why is it important?
- ⇒ Who is involved?
- ⇒ What is the focus?



Fact sheet: Seven Key Reasons

This fact sheet explained the key reasons why immunization must remain a priority in the WHO European Region:

1. Immunization saves lives.
2. Immunization is a basic right, but not accessible to all.
3. Outbreaks pose a serious threat.
4. Infectious diseases still kill.
5. Diseases can be controlled and eliminated.
6. Immunization is cost-effective.
7. Children depend on health systems to provide safe, effective and cheap immunization.



Regional activities

Press releases

Supplementing the extensive national effort to engage and inform the media, regional press releases were submitted prior to and during European Immunization Week to more than 3 000 journalists from across the Region, through the WHO Offices in Copenhagen, Brussels and Geneva.

Press Release EU/ROM/07
Copenhagen, 12 April 2007

Growing country commitment to immunization: European Immunization Week 2007

To highlight the importance of keeping up immunization, particularly among vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups, 23 countries across the WHO European Region will mark European Immunization Week on 16-22 April 2007. The participating countries – nearly three times as many as before and representing over half the Region's population – will promote immunization through a range of activities.

Why immunization matters
The dramatic decrease in disease outbreaks in recent years has made many contagious diseases a thing of the past for many people in the WHO European Region. Immunization risks falling victim to its own success, and thus losing priority.

Every year, however, vaccine-preventable diseases kill 1.4 million children aged under 5 years worldwide. In the WHO European Region, more than half a million children remain unimmunized and thus unprotected from these diseases. For example, almost 55 500 measles cases were reported in the Region in 2006. Countries in the Region most consistently fight large measles outbreaks, which easily spread across borders. In addition, the re-emergence of diseases eliminated from the Region is a permanent concern. The experts who monitor the European Region's polio-free status recently expressed strong concern about the increasing risk of poliovirus importation from other areas.

"After almost a decade with just a few cases of measles and other vaccine-preventable diseases, people no longer feel at risk. They forget that, if you do not keep up immunization, dangerous diseases such as measles and polio will return. People, especially parents, need to remember why immunization is important," explains Dr Rodica Costina, European Immunization Week Coordinator in Romania.

"In South Tyrol, anti-vaccination groups are very successful in communicating to parents and even to health professionals. Immunization Week provides an opportunity to discuss this critical issue with our political decision-makers," says Dr Giulia Moesetti, European Immunization Week Coordinator in South Tyrol, Italy.

Countries from all corners of the Region have acknowledged the need to provide accurate and balanced information, and are joining forces to promote evidence-based information explaining the risks of disease and the benefits of immunization. Continued that every child deserves a healthy start in life, they are planning promotional activities, primarily to reach vulnerable and hard-to-reach groups.

Press Release EURO/07
19972

"In Kazakhstan, immunization of hard-to-reach groups, including migrants, is a critical issue. Globally, Kazakhstan is in a tough place as regards the number of migrants. European Immunization Week enables us to foster dialogue with these groups on immunization services, and access to primary health care services," says Dr Galina Kurbubayeva, immunization manager from Kazakhstan.

"Immunization is undoubtedly one of the greatest health care successes of modern times, but we must be careful not to rest on our successes. If we do not sustain high vaccination coverage, we will see many negative consequences: not only unnecessary death, disease and suffering but also the economic costs of battling large-scale outbreaks and providing tertiary care. This is the situation that a range of the Region's countries must face," says Dr Marc Danovici, WHO Regional Director for Europe.

Initiative growing fast
European Immunization Week, first held in 2005 with a pilot group of nine countries involved, has grown considerably. Now, 25 countries are taking part, representing 57% of the Region's population. The WHO Regional Office for Europe leads and coordinates European Immunization Week, and involves regional and national partners, including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), support its implementation.

"We started European Immunization Week with a small number of countries. This year, almost half of the Region's Member States have decided to take up this challenge to maintain the success story of immunization in our Region, using the impetus of Immunization Week to boost awareness and increase the success of their immunization programmes. This shows that European Immunization Week provides countries with a new opportunity to deal with important issues related to immunization," says Dr Gordon Magnusson, Director, Division of Health Programmes at the WHO Regional Office for Europe.

The Regional Office web site offers further information on European Immunization Week (http://www.euro.who.int/acc20050606_1) and <http://www.euro.who.int>.

For more information contact:

TECHNICAL INFORMATION:	PRESS INFORMATION:
Dr Nicole Engvall Regional Adviser, Vaccine-preventable Diseases and Immunization WHO Regional Office for Europe Sønderborg 8, DK-2300 Copenhagen Ø, Denmark Tel.: +45 5017 1450, Fax: +45 5017 1803 E-mail: NEM@euro.who.int	Ms Laila Nørgaard Press and Media Relations Officer WHO Regional Office for Europe Sønderborg 8, DK-2300 Copenhagen Ø, Denmark Tel.: +45 50 17 13 44, Fax: +45 50 17 18 80 E-mail: L.NEM@euro.who.int
Ms Kerrie Haberbusch and Immunization Technical Officer, Vaccine-preventable Diseases and Immunization Tel.: +45 5017 1405, Fax: +45 5017 1803 E-mail: KAM@euro.who.int	Press materials can be found on the Regional Office web site (http://www.euro.who.int/immunization)

Promotional materials

A wealth of promotional materials was produced at national levels, in the many languages of the European Region. For inspiration, some materials were designed by the WHO Regional Office for Europe as well and made available for all countries:

- Poster
- Sticker
- T-shirt
- Folder





European Immunization Week

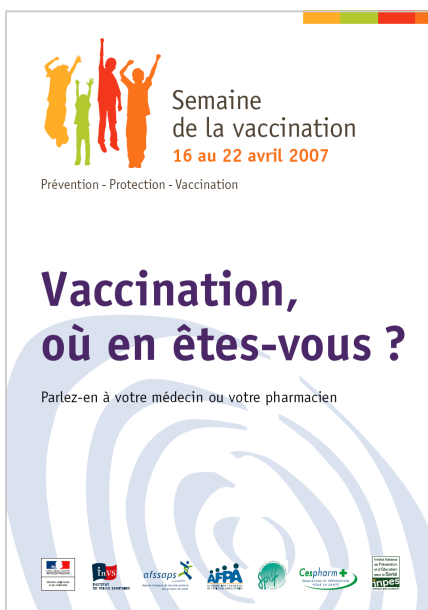
16-22 April 2007

Regional activities

Adoption of regional materials



A range of countries used the regional layouts as a starting point for their own materials. T-shirts, stickers and posters were revised to fit the national context. Below are some examples of how the regional poster was adjusted:



French poster



Serbian poster



Albanian poster



Russian poster

Activities in Member States

Overview : countries activities 2007*

An overview of - just a selection of - the activities carried out across the Region shows the breath and outreach of the initiative:

- ⇒ **125** different information materials developed
- ⇒ **1 501 696** information products distributed in total
- ⇒ **1 313 996** folders and leaflets distributed
- ⇒ **22 370** fact sheets distributed
- ⇒ **281** workshops or conferences held
- ⇒ **264** press releases issued
- ⇒ **34 231** immunization cards updated
- ⇒ **28** competitions held
- ⇒ **701 202** SMS messages sent out
- ⇒ **2 394** radio, TV or newspaper messages/announcements sent out
- ⇒ **546 901** high-risk persons immunized
- ⇒ **1 491 352** vaccinations provided in total
- ⇒ **2 382** training sessions carried out
- ⇒ **6 650** school lessons on immunization conducted
- ⇒ **106** web pages developed

*Data reported from 23 out of 25 Member States

Press coverage

The participating countries reported about extensive and positive media interest across the Region. Below are some examples of press coverage from Romania, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan:

Политика
Доктор Ишмет Тайяд: «Узбекистан успешно сотрудничает с ВОЗ»
17 Апрель 2007 17:53

www.dip.uz. Сетевые в Национальном пресс-конференции Минздрава УзР. Директор Турнова отметил, что сотрудничество Узбекистана с ВОЗ имеет огромное значение. Глава представительства ЮНИСЕФ в Узбекистане Рах Хасанов поблагодарил узбекские власти за то, что Минздрав подлечились к этой кампании. По его словам, иммунизация спасает в год от смерти около 2 млн. детей и ЮНИСЕФ предоставляет 3 млрд. доз вакцин для детей от полугода, оспы и полиомиелита, что составляет 40 % во всем мире. Глава представительства ВОЗ в Узбекистане доктор Мише Тайяд особо отметил, что Узбекистан успешно сотрудничает с ВОЗ.

Потом экзерт по пр региональному бюро ВОЗ, «Европейская неделя иммунизации» в 2006 г. в Ташкенте и Ташкенте около 800 тысяч человек в в европейских странах тогда из-за его отсутствия в год до 100 вакцин для детей до 15 лет. Напомним, что Узбекистан иммунизации наряду с 24 в Сг.

Участники пресс-конференции в конце мероприятия на узр ВОЗ Директору Худайкулову стало об иммунизации а больше в печати и что

ЕВРОПЕЙСКАЯ НЕДЕЛЯ ИММУНИЗАЦИИ В ТАДЖИКИСТАНЕ

В Таджикистане в рамках Европейской недели иммунизации в Таджикистане, как отметили на состоявшейся по этому случаю в Душанбе пресс-конференции директор Национального центра иммунизации РТ Шамсулло Джиборов, в 1992-1995 годах в республике отмечались случаи массового заболевания детей корью, паратифом, туберкулезом, но благодаря работе медиков по иммунизации уровень заболеваемости удалось снизить.

По его словам, плановая иммунизация населения групп населения пр в основном, оспотом, иными ко многим инфекциям предупредить.

В РТ началась европейская неделя иммунизации

Европейская неделя иммунизации стартовала 16 апреля в Таджикистане. Как отметили на состоявшейся по этому случаю в Душанбе пресс-конференции директор Национального центра иммунизации РТ Шамсулло Джиборов, в 1992-1995 годах в республике отмечались случаи массового заболевания детей корью, паратифом, туберкулезом, но благодаря работе медиков по иммунизации уровень заболеваемости удалось снизить.

По его словам, плановая иммунизация населения групп населения пр в основном, оспотом, иными ко многим инфекциям предупредить.

BEBELUȘII TREBUIE VACCINAȚI

Acoperirea vaccinată în Argeș este aproape de 100%

Începând pe 16 aprilie în județul Argeș s-a început campania de vaccinare împotriva difteriei, tetanosului și a cocii difterice. În județul Argeș sunt 112 localități, din care 109 sunt vaccinate. În prezent, în județul Argeș sunt 112 localități, din care 109 sunt vaccinate. În prezent, în județul Argeș sunt 112 localități, din care 109 sunt vaccinate.

A început o campanie de informare privind cinarea preventivă

Începând pe 16 aprilie în județul Argeș s-a început campania de vaccinare împotriva difteriei, tetanosului și a cocii difterice. În județul Argeș sunt 112 localități, din care 109 sunt vaccinate. În prezent, în județul Argeș sunt 112 localități, din care 109 sunt vaccinate.



European Immunization Week

16-22 April 2007

Activities in Member States

Albania

Internal migration is a major challenge in Albania. The key target group for the Immunization Week was children who missed immunization due to migration from rural areas into big cities. A door-to-door screening was carried out in high-risk communities, where immunization cards were checked and children were immunized. Other information activities to reach the migrant families included TV messages, a TV talk show, a press conference and a “clown show” for children.



Albanian girl immunized during the Immunization Week

Armenia

The main challenges in Armenia are parents’ concerns about vaccine safety and misconceptions that vaccines often cause serious side effects. Timeliness is another issue: while the national immunization coverage averages 95%, the coverage of timely immunization is just 42.3%. The Immunization Week approached both parents, health professionals and political decision makers. This was done through an interactive TV programme, SMS messages, information flyers and posters and a workshop for journalists. In addition, an immunization telephone “hotline” was established for parents and health workers.



The launch of the Immunization Week in Armenia triggered extensive press coverage

Azerbaijan

The preparations in Azerbaijan were extensive, with district level workshops for health staff and local authorities to involve them in the initiative and to identify key barriers to increasing immunization coverage. A key challenge in Azerbaijan is widespread concerns as regards the safety of immunization. The key issue during the Immunization Week therefore was to increase both parents’ and health professionals’ knowledge of immunization quality and safety. This was done through the distribution of information materials, conferences for health workers and press events, including round table meetings with the media. To supplement these information activities, 110 000 children, especially from high-risk communities, were vaccinated according to the national immunization schedule.



In the Azerbaijani Absheron District children waiting to be immunized were treated with a huge Immunization Week cake

Belarus

Belarus was one of the pilot countries involved in the Immunization Week initiative in 2005. The risk of complacency was then identified as the main issue, and a need for balanced and targeted information was identified. During the Immunization Week 2007, Belarus continued this effort by distributing a range of information products, including flyers, posters and fact sheets, to key target groups, supplemented by TV and radio messages. In addition, several press meetings were held to inform and engage the media in the initiative. To identify awareness and knowledge levels, health specialist consultations were initiated, and an opinion poll on immunization was carried out.



Azerbaijani immunization information leaflet

Activities in Member States

Belgium

The Immunization Week in Belgium was used as an opportunity to vaccinate traditionally difficult to reach ethnical groups in the country. In addition, all vaccinators in Belgium received a booklet with updated information on vaccination. In the Flemish community, a key focus was to improve vaccine information to young adults, with the purpose to make them feel responsible for their own vaccinations after secondary school. Posters and leaflets aimed at attracting the attention of these young adults. A range of information activities targeted mainly general practitioners and vaccinators; including a symposium for general practitioners and the launch of a new web site, www.vaccinatieweek.be. In the French community, a symposium for vaccinators concerning vaccination policies aimed to promote accessibility to high-quality prevention services.



Belgian immunization information web site launched as part of the Immunization Week in Flanders

Bosnia and Herzegovina

At the time of the Immunization Week in April 2007, Bosnia and Herzegovina was fighting a measles outbreak, mainly affecting high-risk groups in the society. The key objective of the Immunization Week therefore was to advocate the right of every child to free immunization, with a special focus on identifying strategies to reach vulnerable, high-risk children. The key target groups were policy makers and primary health care workers. Roundtable meetings with decision makers were held in each of the three entities in the country, with the purpose to raise awareness and to discuss mapping of vulnerable groups – as well as to provide a forum for discussion on immunization in the country. In addition, catch-up immunization of non-immunized children was carried out, and a range of information materials were distributed to parents and children.



Girl in Bosnia and Herzegovina dressed in a European Immunization Week T-shirt. (N. Popovic, UNICEF BIH)

France

France used a network approach in their Immunization Week, forming a partnership with pharmacists, paediatricians, infection specialists and health agencies. Five regions in the country were actively engaged in the Immunization Week, each of them implementing activities to target the specific issues and challenges in their areas. These activities included conferences for general practitioners and for the general public. One region targeted young adults, focusing on measles-mumps-rubella, pertussis and hepatitis B, through information from health workers. Other regions organized symposiums for health workers or set up public exhibitions. All regions distributed posters and leaflets to the public and information materials to health workers, including physicians, pharmacists and nurses. Most of the regions additionally launched a web site providing information about the events taking place.



French advertisement offering immunization information materials for free, for health professionals and for the general public

Georgia

In Georgia, a key issue is groups of vulnerable and under-served population groups that remain unprotected from infectious diseases. During the Immunization Week, Georgia focused on the school children and raising their awareness of the importance of immunization. This was done through immunization focused lessons in schools across the country. A TV talk show on immunization was also shown, aiming at both parents and health professionals. In addition, supplementary immunization was carried out in one region with 230 children being vaccinated according to the national routine immunization schedule.

Activities in Member States

Germany

Immunization of adolescents is a key issue in Germany. The existence of large pockets of unimmunized young persons became evident when, during the last measles outbreak, the cases were mainly among adolescents. As the Human Papilloma Virus vaccine had just been recommended for all girls aged 12-17 years in Germany, this was also a topic during the Immunization Week. At the national level, an expert workshop on immunization for adolescents was held at the Robert Koch Institute in Berlin. The Immunization Week was opened with a press conference at the federal Ministry of Health with high-level political representation. Several federal institutes provided new or updated leaflets or information material. In addition, media campaigns and regional and local events took place in a number of states, focusing on routine immunization.



Hungarian balloons with Immunization Week slogan

Hungary

The challenges in Hungary are difficulty in reaching high-risk communities, concerns among some parents about the safety of vaccines and a lack of knowledge among health workers on providing guidance to parents about immunization. Approaching both parents and health professionals, Hungary used the Immunization Week to increase awareness of the benefits of immunization. Conferences and trainings for health specialists and health professionals were organized. Health promotion days for the general public took place, and information materials to inform about the risks of diseases and the benefits of immunization were distributed. In addition, school lessons and competitions on immunization were initiated to inform and engage children in the initiative.



Training for Hungarian school nurses

Ireland

Ireland participated in the Immunization Week pilot in 2005 and identified distrust in vaccines as a key issue. The measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine uptake in Ireland has always been lower than for other vaccines, and improving routine MMR coverage was the focus in 2007. The Immunization Week was used as an opportunity to prepare for a measles campaign planned as part of Ireland's commitment to the WHO strategy to eliminate measles in the European Region. The Week was launched by the Irish Minister for Health and Children at a high-level national conference in Dublin with almost 400 delegates from the health sector. Throughout the Week, media campaigns and regional and local events were conducted, focusing on the importance of routine MMR. A range of information products, including a towel with immunization messages for all newborns, were distributed as well.



WHO Director, Irish Minister for Health and Children and Irish immunization manager launching the Week - showing towel distributed to all newborns



South Tyrolean information leaflet for parents
- produced in German and Italian

Italy (South Tyrol)

South Tyrol in Italy was one of the pilot areas participating in the Immunization Week in 2005. There is widespread distrust in vaccines in some population groups in South Tyrol, and conflicting messages – also from health professionals – concerning the necessity and risks of vaccines put pressure on the parents. The focus of the Immunization Week in 2007 was harmonization of information by all public health professionals who are in contact with pregnant women and parents of babies and young children. Eight training workshops for medical and non-medical staff were held in order to debate this issue. In addition, immunization information



European Immunization Week

16-22 April 2007

Activities in Member States

Kazakhstan

Migrant groups are traditionally hard to reach with immunization and other health services, and Kazakhstan is on a global 9th place as regards the number of migrants. The Immunization Week was therefore used as an opportunity to focus on the migrant children and adults who remain unprotected from infectious diseases. A range of partners were actively involved, including - quite untraditionally for health services - the migration police. The activities included a national workshop on immunization and the distribution of a parent immunization booklet and other information materials. The Immunization Week was launched by the Minister of Health at a press conference.



Kazakh leaflet for parents

Kyrgyzstan

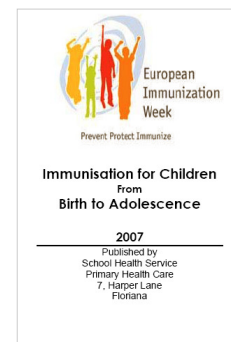


Door-to-door campaign in a newly inhabited quarter around Bishek City

Kyrgyzstan has identified migrants and seasonal workers from rural areas settling in new districts around the capital city of Bishkek as a main risk group. Due to mistrust and lack of knowledge that they are entitled to free primary health care services, they seldom register with a health facility and therefore regularly miss childhood vaccinations. In the preparations for the Immunization Week, Kyrgyzstan mapped unimmunized children in seven districts around Bishkek. During the Week itself, community leaders and local health workers went door to door in the communities to distribute information materials to parents and encourage them to register for immunization.

Malta

In Malta, distrust in vaccines and lack of knowledge about immunization among some parents is a key challenge. The Immunization Week was used to inform parents about immunization, with a focus on providing adequate, balanced and evidence-based information about immunization safety and the possible risks associated with vaccination. An information leaflet was distributed to all parents of primary school children, in both English and Maltese, on immunization "from birth to adolescence". A leaflet on travel medicine, including vaccinations, was also issued and distributed through health centres.



Leaflet printed in English and Maltese

Moldova

Concerns about the safety of immunization is widespread in Moldova, and this was the key issue of the country's activities during the Immunization Week. A journalist poll identified questions and worries related to immunization, while an expert 'questions and answers session' focused on some of these sensitive issues in a TV news programme. At the press launch of the Week, the immunization 'cold chain' which is crucial for the quality of vaccines was demonstrated.

Activities in Member States

Romania



Improving social inclusion of minorities is a priority in Romania. During the Immunization Week, policy makers and health workers were engaged in roundtable discussions and meetings on ways of improving the immunization coverage, placing a focus on minority groups. Launching the initiative, the Minister of Public Health distributed vaccination cards in a maternity health facility. During the Week, children in high-risk communities were vaccinated with a total of more than 26 500 vaccinations provided. In addition, a wealth of local activities were implemented; information materials were distributed in high-risk communities, training sessions were organized for teachers and

students and for doctors and nurses, and a web page and an immunization telephone hotline was launched.

Russian Federation

The Russian Federation used the Immunization Week to focus on the large cohorts of unimmunized children in the country. The aim was to facilitate positive attitudes towards and trust in immunization. A wealth of activities were implemented in 86 of the 89 territories in the Federation. 'Open-door' days were held in polyclinics in 15 territories; 27 immunization telephone 'hotlines' were established; information materials were translated into 12 different local languages; posters, banners, billboards and videos were displayed in many areas. Activities to reach drop-out and high-risk children included 'family-supervision' visits to 818 families and outreach teams in 20 territories visiting remote and hard-to-reach areas. A comprehensive media campaign included 86 press conferences, web site information, local media articles, radio and TV shows on the Immunization Week as well as the distribution of fact sheets and flyers. The involvement of prominent political and public figures in many areas spurred the media interest. In 54 territories population surveys were conducted to assess the awareness about immunization, showing, in general, a positive attitude towards immunization. In addition, a total of 330 000 vaccinations, primarily polio, were given to children in high-risk communities.



Poster from the Russian Federation

Serbia

Serbia participated in the Immunization Week in 2005 and identified low vaccination uptake in marginalized population groups as a key problem. This was reflected in the Immunization Week in 2007 which targeted primarily Roma in poor and illegal settlements in the major cities. To ensure involvement of the target group, meetings were held with Roma leaders and district immunization coordinators in the preparation phase. Door-to-door distribution of Roma language information materials was organized along with a theatre play in a children's theatre in Belgrade, highlighting Immunization Week messages. In addition, almost 3 000 high-risk children were immunized against measles, mumps, rubella or Hepatitis B. Training for health care staff was also organized, and key decision makers were sensitized to the challenges of immunization through policy conferences and information material with relevant immunization data.



Child with Immunization Week information materials in Serbia

Activities in Member States

Slovakia

In Slovakia, a lack of knowledge and distrust in vaccines among some parents is a challenge which leads to difficulties in reaching specific population groups. The Immunization Week was used as an opportunity to maintain and increase the general awareness of the importance and benefits of immunization in the general population as well in the high-risk Roma minority group. In the public awareness campaign conducted a press conference was organized, and information materials were distributed, also in Roma language. In addition, trainings for health workers and school lessons on immunization were held along with outreach activities to Roma communities. Not only routine immunization was the focus, but also new and underused vaccines, such as those against hepatitis B and haemophilus invasive infections. Preparing for the flu season, there was a focus on influenza vaccinations, especially among high-risk groups.



Press conference in Slovakia

Tajikistan

Tajikistan was part of the Immunization Week pilot in 2005, where a knowledge, attitudes and practice study identified key barriers to immunization. Two critical issues in Tajikistan are the fear of adverse events, connected to rumours about bad vaccines, and a relatively high drop-out rate. In line with this, Tajikistan used the Immunization Week 2007 as an opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of immunization, and especially its cost-effectiveness. TV and radio spots highlighted key messages along with posters and flyers in busses and other public places. Two press conferences were organized, and a competition for the best health employee was held. Round-table meetings with regional high-level representation aimed at increasing the understanding of immunization among key decision makers. In addition, the Immunization Week was integrated with a planned supplementary polio immunization of more than 135 000 children in 26 hard-to-reach border areas in the country.



Immunization Week poster in health clinic in Tajikistan

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Raising awareness of the importance of immunization and increasing immunization coverage among the most vulnerable population groups were the aims of The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, that participated in European Immunization Week in both 2005 and 2007. The key high-risk groups in the country include children living in rural areas, Roma communities and street children. Information flyers on immunization were distributed door-to-door in Roma communities, and around 12 000 children were immunized, among them 400 children who had not previously received any immunization at all. TV messages, newspaper messages and a radio jingle on immunization aimed at highlighting immunization to the general public. School lessons on immunization were also organized. A workshop for high-level health professionals and key health partners provided a forum for debate on immunization and for discussion on how to reach the vulnerable populations. A press conference with health authorities and local media was also



Immunization in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Activities in Member States

Turkey

In Turkey, lack of knowledge about immunization, little contact with the health care system and confusion about the safety or necessity of immunization among some parents are challenges that leads to pockets of unimmunized children. The Immunization Week in Turkey aimed at young women and families in traditionally hard-to-reach communities, especially those with children below 5 years of age. They were approached through a long range of activities, including painting and short essay competitions at primary schools, marching activities with banners and bazaar stalls. A range of press activities were carried out, and opening ceremonies were held in all 81 participating provinces. TV messages, SMS messages and information materials supplemented the activities, including the distribution of 5 million flyers to primary schools. In addition, almost 300 000 vaccinations were given to children and women of child-bearing age to update their vaccination status according to the national immunization schedule.



Turkish Immunization Week posters

Turkmenistan



The government of Turkmenistan introduced the Immunization Week on their web site

A key aim of the Immunization Week in Turkmenistan was to reach high-risk, unimmunized groups, especially migrants living in large cities where they work at markets or in shops and very seldom register with the health system. Activities to reach this group were held at public places such as markets and public transportation where information materials were distributed. Door-to-door distribution of materials was organized as well. Another key topic was the measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, which Turkmenistan introduced in the routine immunization schedule in 2006. The importance of MMR and the other routine vaccines was also highlighted to the general population through numerous activities, including TV, radio and newspaper messages and the distribution of vaccination calendars, vaccination cards and information materials from health clinics and public places. To motivate health professionals and to

sensitize them to the importance of providing guidance to parents, there were contests of the best vaccination nurse, family doctor and immunologist, and a range of round table discussions were organized. In addition, hard-to-reach population groups were immunized according to the national immunization schedule.

Uzbekistan

In Uzbekistan, a challenge is persistent rumours among the population that 'foreign' vaccines from certain countries are ineffective and unsafe. The media has played a key role in fuelling these rumours. In an attempt to engage the media in a positive debate about immunization, Uzbekistan conducted an essay competition among journalists during the Immunization Week. The three best essays won an award, and the articles were published in national newspapers, thus disseminating the positive immunization messages to a wider audience. To target the problem of immunization not being part of the curricula at medical academy, a symposium was held for graduate students to introduce them to immunization safety issues, to increase understanding and knowledge. A public awareness campaign included information materials distributed door-to-door to parents, TV and radio messages, SMS messages and workshops organized in five major cities in the country. In addition, almost 1 million vaccinations were given to children, according to the national immunization schedule.



Uzbek graduate students from medical academy during immunization symposium



European Immunization Week

16-22 April 2007

Beyond 2007

Following European Immunization Week 2007, concerted effort has been put into collecting information and evidence about the activities carried out and the results of the initiative. Each participating country has completed an evaluation questionnaire, and a range of countries have developed full evaluation reports.

The feedback from the countries has been very encouraging with a strong request to continue and expand the initiative. The outcome of a major region-wide meeting for European immunization programme managers in April 2007 further stressed this request. As a consequence, **the next European Immunization Week will take place on 21-27 April 2008.**

All countries in the WHO European Region have received a letter inviting them to join the initiative. A planning meeting for participating countries and partners will be held in September 2007. Based on the requests and needs in the countries, more guiding documents and European Immunization Week materials will be developed at the WHO Regional Office for Europe.

All countries are strongly encouraged to start their planning at an early stage; to form working groups, involve partners and initiate resource mobilization activities. WHO Regional Office for Europe will continue to provide technical assistance in the planning and will support all participating countries throughout the process. Guided by the results, successes and challenges of 2007, the planning of the third European Immunization Week has already commenced.

Highlights from the evaluation questionnaires

- ⇒ The question "Would you recommend that your country participates in European Immunization Week next year?" gets positive replies from all participating countries.
- ⇒ "Overall, do you think that European Immunization Week 2007 was..." scores a "**successful**" from 78% of the countries, and a "**partially successful**" from 22%.
- ⇒ When asked whether they believe EIW will increase immunization coverage nationally or in specific groups, after one or a few years, **100%** of the countries reply yes.
- ⇒ **60%** of the countries had defined "specific criteria of success and/or indicators" for their Immunization Week.
- ⇒ Considering only these criteria of success and comparing them with the results of their Immunization Week, **60%** of these countries deem their Immunization Week "successful"; while **40%** deem it "partially successful".

The second European Immunization Week was launched on 16-22 April 2007. A large number of activities aimed at reaching out to high-risk groups through advocacy, communications and supplementary immunization. Twenty-five countries from across the WHO European Region saw the opportunities of creating regional synergy and became actively engaged. Ministers, first ladies, celebrities, experts, health professionals and many others joined the national activities and contributed to the immense, positive press interest brought about by the initiative. With the aim to strengthen immunization systems, in an overall context of health systems strengthening, the initiative proved successful in targeting the challenges of immunization systems in each specific participating country. European Immunization Week was an exciting week: 850 000 printed information products were distributed across the Region, more than 700 000 SMS, radio or TV messages were sent out, more than 200 workshops or conferences were held, and almost 1.5 million immunization shots were given to children to protect them against the vaccine-preventable diseases that kill and debilitate thousands of children worldwide each year.



EUROPE

World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe

Address Scherfigsvej 8, DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø

Phone +45 39 17 17 17

Fax +45 39 17 18 18

E-mail vaccine@euro.who.int

Internet www.euro.who.int/vaccine



European Immunization Week