

# WHO Epidemiological Brief

A monthly publication on vaccine-preventable diseases and immunization data and analysis

## Highlighting in the WHO European Region:

- Update on measles in the European Region
- Update on rubella in the European Region

### Summary

The European Region faces another challenging year in terms of measles cases, with more than 13 000 cases already reported from January to April 2012. Measles incidence has decreased on a regional level since the beginning of the year, but Ukraine continues to experience a large outbreak with 8 200 cases reported in period January - April. Several other countries are also reporting an increased number of cases.

More than 15 000 rubella cases have been reported in the Region this year, with most cases occurring in Romania, Poland, Ukraine and the Russian Federation. Cases are decreasing in Romania and increasing in Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

Surveillance data reported by Member States continues to suffer from challenges in timeliness and completeness, both for measles and rubella data.

### Update on measles and rubella in the European Region

#### Measles in 2012

Member States of the European Region of the World Health Organization reported 13 233 cases of measles in the first four months of 2012. Measles cases were reported from 32 Member States in 2012. Most of the cases were reported by Ukraine (8 200), Romania (1 766), the Russian Federation (1 470), France (476), United Kingdom (440), Italy (339) and Spain (229).

Based on surveillance information, the Region faces another challenging year. Measles incidence has, however, decreased since February as the number of

monthly reported cases fell from 4 490 in January to 2 713 in April.

Taking into account reporting delays for March and April, January 2012 was not followed with an increase number of cases in consecutive months. Although the total number of measles cases for January 2012 was higher than the same month in 2010 and 2011, in those years cases increased significantly after the month of January, while in 2012 the Region has seen a decrease in cases per month since January. Assuming this trend continues, the total number of cases in 2012 should not exceed the total number of cases in 2011, when Member States reported 37 688 measles (Figure 1).

Completeness and timelines of surveillance data reporting from Member States to international organizations remains suboptimal. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Turkey have not provided any surveillance reports since the beginning of 2012. Furthermore, countries continuously update data as new information from case investigations becomes available. Therefore, a report one month may look different from the next month due to this update in information by the Member State. A total of 22 countries reported measles by month in January, 21 in February, 23 in March and 19 in April. That said, the possibility of measles re-emerging in currently unaffected countries still exists, due to susceptible population in the Region.

#### Measles in April 2012 (monthly report):

A total of 2 713 measles cases was reported in April (19 countries reporting cases, 24 "zero" reports, 8 countries no report). An outbreak continues in Ukraine, with the total number of cases with onset in April (1 797) lower than in March (2 095). The number of cases is increasing in Romania (85 cases in March, 317 in April), Belgium (3 in March, 31 in April) and Kazakhstan (8 in March, 20 in April). Estonia (4) and The Republic of Moldova (1) reported their first measles cases of the year during April.

The regional measles database is missing April data from 8 of the 51 Member States that provide monthly reports (two Member States do not report on a monthly basis). The Regional Office is following-up with Member States for verification and updating of surveillance data.

## Rubella in 2012

As of 1 June, 15 216 rubella cases were reported in 2012 by 19 of the 41 Member States reporting monthly rubella data. Monthly data from 12 Member States are not available. Timeliness and completeness of rubella reporting faces similar challenges to those faced with measles reporting.

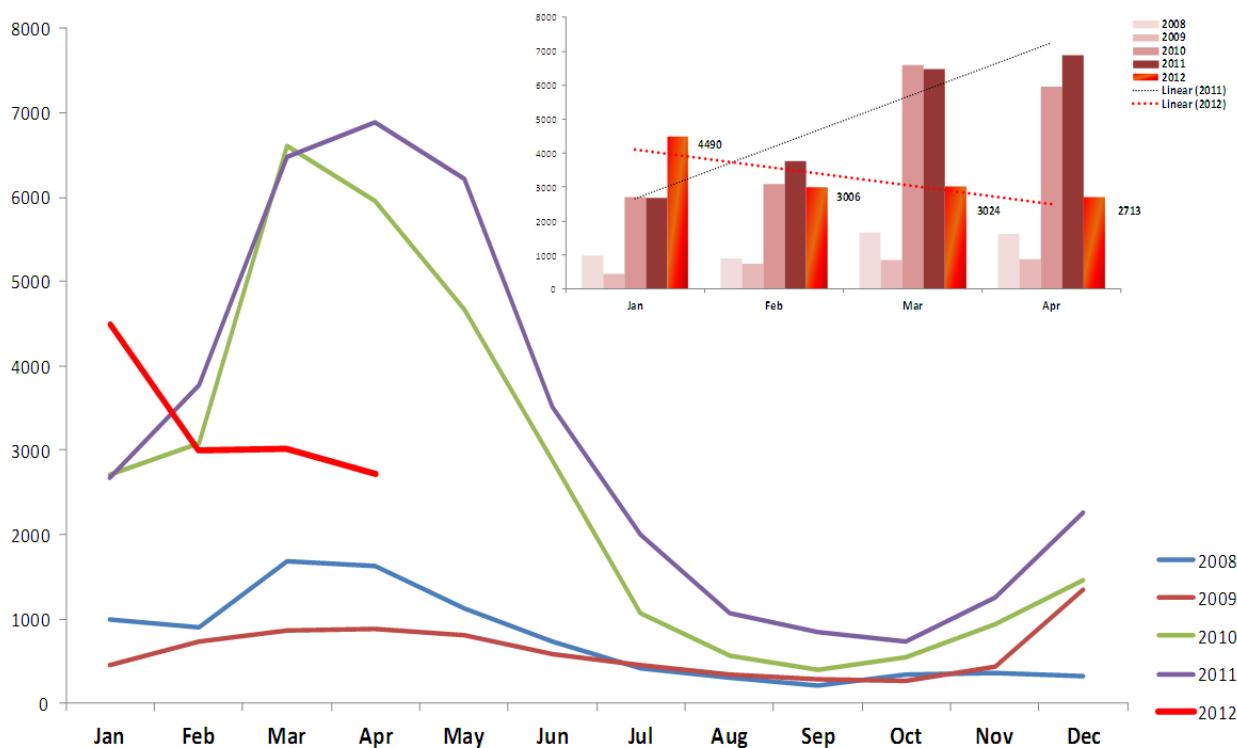
In the first four months of 2012, most rubella cases are reported from Romania (12 476), Poland (1 148 for January – March), Ukraine (942 for February – April) and the Russian Federation (530).

## Rubella in April 2012 (monthly report):

A total of 10 Member States reported 2 509 rubella cases with onset in April 2012. The highest number of cases is reported from Romania (1 874) where there has been a significant decrease in cases since February and March (4 051 and 5 701, respectively). Ukraine reported 432 cases of rubella in April, an increase from the previous month. A similar increase in rubella cases is being experienced in the Russian Federation (from 166 in March to 178 in April). April surveillance data from Poland is still missing.

Reports for April were received from 38 Member States, with 28 of them providing a “zero” report (no cases with onset in April).

**Figure 1: Number of reported measles cases in the European Region by month in period 2008-2012 and trends for first four months in 2011 and 2012**









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Monthly Summary Table 4. Measles and rubella laboratory test results, January – March 2012 (data as of 1 June 2012)

Country	Specimen* (Serum, Oral Fluid, Swab, Urine and other)								Reporting		
	Tested for measles	Positive for measles (%)	Measles Equivocal	Negative for measles	Tested for rubella	Positive for rubella (%)	Rubella Equivocal	Negative for rubella	% Completeness	% Timeliness	Month of last report
Albania	4	0 (0.0)	0	4	0	0	0	0	100.0%	75.0%	Apr
Andorra											No Lab
Armenia	16	0 (0.0)	0	16	16	0 (0.0)	0	16	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Austria	414	7 (2.0)	0	407	1744	4 (0.0)	0	1740	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Azerbaijan	15	0 (0.0)	0	15	15	1 (7.0)	0	14	25.0%	25.0%	Jan
Belarus	151	15 (10.0)	0	136	140	2 (1.0)	0	138	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Belgium	82	16 (20.0)	3	63	24	3 (13.0)	4	17	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Bosnia and Herzegovina											No Report
Bulgaria	30	1 (3.0)	0	29	32	1 (3.0)	0	31	100.0%	75.0%	Apr
Croatia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Cyprus	1	1 (100.0)	0	0	0	0	0	0	100.0%	50.0%	Apr
Czech Republic	27	10 (37.0)	0	17	10	0 (0.0)	0	10	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Denmark	177	7 (4.0)	5	165	135	7 (5.0)	8	120	75.0%	25.0%	Mar
Estonia	26	2 (8.0)	0	24	167	2 (1.0)	0	165	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Finland	285	23 (8.0)	0	262	244	2 (1.0)	0	242	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
France	364	111 (30.0)	3	244	0	0	0	0	100.0%	75.0%	Apr
Georgia	44	0 (0.0)	1	43	45	2 (4.0)	4	39	100.0%	50.0%	Apr
Germany	125	18 (14.0)	1	106	19	0 (0.0)	0	19	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Greece	3	0 (0.0)	0	3	65	12 (18.0)	0	53	100.0%	50.0%	Apr
Hungary	26	3 (12.0)	0	23	163	10 (6.0)	0	152	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Iceland	23	0 (0.0)	0	23	46	2 (4.0)	0	44	100.0%	50.0%	Apr
Ireland	140	5 (4.0)	7	128	575	1 (0.0)	2	572	100.0%	75.0%	Apr
Israel	92	7 (8.0)	0	85	315	33 (10.0)	0	282	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Italy											No Report
Kazakhstan	134	43 (32.0)	1	90	156	4 (3.0)	3	149	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Kyrgyzstan	113	0 (0.0)	0	113	113	3 (3.0)	2	108	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Latvia	188	15 (8.0)	4	169	180	3 (2.0)	5	172	100.0%	50.0%	Apr
Lithuania	5	2 (40.0)	3	0	4	0 (0.0)	0	4	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Luxembourg	37	0 (0.0)	0	37	23	0 (0.0)	1	22	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Malta	9	0 (0.0)	0	9	425	5 (1.0)	0	420	100.0%	75.0%	Apr
Monaco											No Lab
Montenegro											No Lab
Netherlands	23	0 (0.0)	0	23	21	0 (0.0)	0	21	75.0%	25.0%	Mar
Norway	26	3 (12.0)	0	23	12	1 (8.0)	0	11	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Poland	42	1 (2.0)	2	39	14	1 (7.0)	0	13	75.0%	75.0%	Mar
Portugal	13	3 (23.0)	0	10	0	0	0	0	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Republic of Moldova	38	11 (29.0)	0	27	38	2 (5.0)	0	36	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Romania	3383	1689 (50.0)	29	1665	8059	5369 (67.0)	162	2528	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Russian Federation	4308	1663 (39.0)	2	2643	2752	469 (17.0)	3	2280	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
San Marino											No Lab
Serbia	16	1 (6.0)	0	15	33	0 (0.0)	0	33	100.0%	75.0%	Apr
Slovakia	5	1 (20.0)	0	4	2	0 (0.0)	0	2	100.0%	75.0%	Apr
Slovenia	28	6 (21.0)	1	21	16	0 (0.0)	0	16	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Spain											No Report
Sweden											No Report
Switzerland	18	15 (83.0)	0	3	8	8 (100.0)	0	0	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Tajikistan	12	2 (17.0)	0	10	12	0 (0.0)	0	12	75.0%	25.0%	Mar
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	0	0	0	0	1	0 (0.0)	0	1	25.0%	0.0%	Jan
Turkey	657	4 (1.0)	4	649	657	21 (3.0)	16	620	75.0%	75.0%	Mar
Turkmenistan	8	0 (0.0)	0	8	8	0 (0.0)	0	8	50.0%	50.0%	Feb
Ukraine	534	301 (56.0)	8	225	312	77 (25.0)	1	234	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
United Kingdom	2946	607 (21.0)	0	2339	577	44 (8.0)	0	533	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
Uzbekistan	10	0 (0.0)	0	10	10	0 (0.0)	0	10	100.0%	100.0%	Apr
<b>Total / Average</b>	<b>14598</b>	<b>4593 (31%)</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>9925</b>	<b>17188</b>	<b>6089 (35%)</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>10887</b>	<b>90.8%</b>	<b>77.7%</b>	

\*Specimen based data are not population based, and should not be interpreted as indicators for epidemiological surveillance. Laboratories may have received more than 1 clinical sample or may have conducted more than 1 test for a given case reported in Table 1.

Data source : Aggregated monthly data provided by regional measles and rubella laboratory network.

