



# Highlights of European Immunization Week 2018

Report on regional and country activities



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This Report aims to highlight activities conducted in 2018 to celebrate European Immunization Week (EIW), a WHO-led initiative introduced in 2005 to promote immunization as a cornerstone of public health and to raise awareness regarding the benefits vaccines bring to entire communities.

## Keywords

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# European Immunization Week 2018

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## Introduction

Since its initiation with eight pilot countries in 2005, European Immunization Week (EIW) has grown to become an annual event engaging all countries of the WHO European Region. In cooperation with World Immunization Week (WIW) and important partners, such as the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the European Commission, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and Rotary, EIW aims to bring important stakeholders together to promote the value and benefits of vaccination and thereby also foster stronger partnerships both at the regional and country level.

Today EIW stands as one of the most visible annual health campaigns in the Region. The main objective of this year's EIW was to raise awareness of the importance of vaccination as an individual right and a shared responsibility. As in previous years, scores of conferences, technical meetings and expert panel debates were organized. Health care workers received additional training, parents were reminded about their children's scheduled vaccines and public events were organized in parks, city centres and health care centres to raise awareness among the general population. Media attention and social media engagement were ensured through the launching of reports, social media messages and infographics, press releases, radio and television shows, videos as well as web stories.

EIW's aim to promote the value, importance and benefits of vaccination is embedded in the larger framework of the European Vaccine Action Plan (EVAP), which was endorsed by all 53 Member States at the 64th session of the Regional Committee for Europe in September 2014 to address the specific needs and challenges related to immunization in the WHO European Region. EVAP's five objectives constitute priority areas to be addressed at both the regional and national level and are reflected in some of the activities countries conduct during EIW.



High-level  
engagement



Fostering  
partnerships



Information  
sharing



Social  
media

# A call to action



## High-level engagement at the regional and national level

In addition to public awareness campaigns, countries organize press conferences, trainings and workshops each year in the framework of EIW, which ensure broad and high-level engagement at the country level. This includes the participation of ministers and other government and civil society representatives as well as the official support of WHO, UNICEF, Rotary, local NGOs and associations. Ministers of health of numerous countries, such as **Germany, Georgia, Luxembourg, Monaco, Portugal, San Marino, Serbia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**, actively engaged in press conferences to call for an increase in national vaccination coverage.

In addition, **Belarus** organized a press conference for media representatives, which followed supervisory visits to 15 districts of the country aiming to improve local immunization coverage. **Bosnia and Herzegovina** used EIW 2018 to focus on childhood immunization and organized a series of workshops targeting epidemiologists, paediatricians and family medicine specialists in various cities throughout the country. WHO and UNICEF in collaboration with the Ministry of Health of **Kyrgyzstan** organized a joint press conference launching EIW 2018 activities in the country. This coincided with the introduction of two new vaccines (rotavirus and inactivated polio vaccine (IPV)) into the national routine immunization schedule. Additionally, trained health care providers in **Lithuania** gave a workshop on awareness raising in the field of immunization.

### National stakeholders unite for EIW

On the occasion of EIW, Serbia organized a national stakeholders meeting in cooperation with WHO to mark the successful development of a seasonal inactivated trivalent influenza vaccine. With its newly established influenza-vaccine manufacturing capacity, Serbia is hoping to become a regional supply hub for this vaccine. Further, a joint press conference was held by the Ministry of Health, the Institute of Public Health of Serbia and WHO to convey EIW 2018's key messages on immunization.



*Press conference in Serbia (left to right): Ms Ann Moein, Chief, WHO, HQ/IPR Influenza Preparedness and Response; Dr Zsofia Puzstai, WHO Representative in Serbia; Dr Verica Jovanovic, Director, Institute of Public Health; Dr Meho Mahmutovic, State Secretary at the Ministry of Health*

©WHO

## Vaccines – a smart investment for a healthy future

In Portugal, the Regional Health Administration of Lisbon and Tagus Valley (ARSLTV) in cooperation with the Directorate-General of Health (DGS) organized a joint high-level press meeting. The Director General for Health, Graça Freitas, gave a speech highlighting future strategies in the framework of the National Vaccination Plan.



Source: [http://www.arslvt.min-saude.pt/frontoffice/pages/2?news\\_id=1648](http://www.arslvt.min-saude.pt/frontoffice/pages/2?news_id=1648)

## Joint roundtable meeting to discuss immunization and measles elimination

During EIW, Albania organized a high-level meeting on the importance of vaccination and prevention of measles with key stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Institute for Public Health, UNICEF, UNDP and WHO. Further, a nationwide public health campaign was launched to raise awareness regarding the benefits and effectiveness of the measles vaccine.

## EIW featured on national TV

In both Kyrgyzstan and Malta, immunization experts and government representatives utilized TV channels to highlight the importance of vaccination in the context of EIW.



©WHO

## Malta

Dr Christopher Barbara, member of the Maltese Advisory Committee on Immunization Programmes (ACIP) and Clinical Chairman of the Pathology Department at the Mater Dei Hospital, was interviewed by Television Malta (TVM) regarding the importance of the measles vaccine as well as the country's overall immunization coverage. This feature was later broadcast on two other Maltese TV Stations, One TV and NET TV, as well as on a local radio station (Radju tal-Knisja).



Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEjpWxlaEPw>

## Kyrgyzstan

To celebrate EIW and the country's high coverage rates, the Ministry of Health in cooperation with UNICEF and WHO gave a press conference, which was later broadcast on live television to reach a larger audience (ELTR TV).

### Press conference to raise nationwide awareness

In addition to the translation and distribution of official WHO campaign material, Azerbaijan conducted a press conference at the Republic Centre for Hygiene and Epidemiology to promote the value of immunization at the national level. This conference was later highlighted by a local TV channel and various newspapers.

### Large-scale conference on measles

Poland's National Institute of Public Health (PZH) organized a large-scale conference in collaboration with the WHO Country Office and the Ministry of Health to address the country's current epidemiological situation with regard to measles and solutions of how to increase overall immunization coverage.

### Open conference on immunization

In Slovenia, the National Institute of Public Health (NIJZ) organized a conference, which was open not only for experts, but also journalists to discuss the current status of immunization coverage in the country. In collaboration with the WHO Country Office, the NIJZ prepared information, education and promotion materials, which were widely distributed.

"In Slovenia, we are lucky that vaccination is available to almost every individual. [...] There is no better way to reduce the risk of these diseases than by vaccination," said Professor Maja Sočan, Head of the Department for Communicable Diseases at the NIJZ.

### The Whole of Syria approach focused on immunization

As a response to the public health crisis in Syria, WHO and UNICEF created an operational hub in Gaziantep, Turkey, in 2013 to better coordinate immunization programmes in northern Syria as well as to be able to deliver a more rapid and effective response to urgencies on the ground. In cooperation with the Syrian Immunization Group (SIG), their mission is to leave no one behind. For EIW, this field office organized a press conference addressing the importance of vaccination and inter-agency collaboration as a response to the ongoing measles outbreaks in north-western Syria.



*Health worker of the Syrian Immunization Group (SIG) administering the Oral Poliovirus Vaccine (OPV) to a child in northern Syria*

©SIG

## Official statements

*“We need dedicated action to identify and address the root causes of vulnerability in our Region that allow outbreaks to persist”*

**Dr Zsuzsanna Jakab**

**WHO Regional Director for Europe**

“European Immunization Week is not only a time to reflect on our successes, but also to highlight the steps needed to close the remaining immunization gaps. We need dedicated action to identify and address the root causes of vulnerability in our Region that allow outbreaks to persist. Over 20 000 measles cases in 2017 were a dramatic warning that we have not done enough.”

“Over the last decades, we have benefitted from vaccines as a safe, accessible and effective public health intervention. However, every missed vaccination is a missed opportunity to stop the spread of disease and protect the most vulnerable. I personally urge every individual to take responsibility to vaccinate, so that we can together protect ourselves and those around us.”



*Dr Zsuzsanna Jakab  
WHO Regional Director for Europe*

©WHO



*HRH Crown Princess Mary of Denmark  
Patron of the WHO Regional Office for Europe*

©WHO

**HRH Crown Princess Mary of Denmark**  
**Patron of the WHO Regional Office for Europe**

“Few interventions can match the impact vaccination has had on the improvement of global health. Vaccination has created enormous opportunities for global sustainable development that would have been unthinkable without it.”

“Every one of us plays a role in achieving a healthier future for all. By ensuring ourselves and our children are vaccinated we prevent the spread of dangerous infections and by seeking and sharing credible and trustworthy information we empower ourselves and others to make the right decisions [...] Vaccination is integral to improving global health and well-being and is an essential contributor to sustained personal, community and global development.”



# Fostering stronger partnerships for immunization



## Involving specific target groups

The principle of involving parents in active campaigns promoting the benefits and importance of vaccines for themselves and their children constitutes a cornerstone of communications and advocacy in the field of immunization. Social media provides a direct way to answer their questions. It is crucial to provide both future and current parents with relevant and evidence-based information so that they can make the safest choice for their children.

Health care providers also play a key role in conveying information accurately and with confidence to parents. Nurses, paediatricians and general practitioners remain parents' most trusted source of information on immunization for themselves and their children.

Each year, countries use EIW to support health care providers in this role and to empower parents who are seeking answers to their questions or information to resolve their uncertainties. In some countries, such as Austria, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Slovakia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine, parent groups organized events to support others in making decisions about immunization. In Montenegro, the Parents Association invited Dr Senad Begić from the National Immunization Institute for Public Health to give a lecture on immunization during pregnancy. The Republic of Moldova created four testimonial videos, which were shared on mass-media platforms to promote peer to peer interaction on how to best communicate with parents and children on immunization. Further, a new collaboration activity was launched this year involving the biggest online community of parents in the country ("Ask a Mom") to spread information on how vaccines work. This campaign was supported by WHO experts, UNICEF as well as the National Public Health Agency and reached about 20 000 parents. Serbia's Polyvalent Care Service centre invited Dr Dejan Novakovic to give a speech on immunization in cooperation with the so-called School of Parenting to launch EIW activities in the country. In Ukraine, a press conference was organized by the Ministry of Health in cooperation with UNICEF, WHO and the local NGO Parents for Vaccination to discuss the relationship between the media and immunization.

Parents Association  
advertising immunization  
event in Montenegro

Source: <https://www.roditelji.me/blog/2018/04/20/u-utorak-roditeljski-kutak-u-podgorici-zasto-je-imunizacija-postala-bauk/>

udruženje  
**Roditelji**

R O D I T E L J S K I K U T A K

TEMA: **ZAŠTO JE IMUNIZACIJA  
POSTALA BAUK?**

GOST: **dr Senad Begić**, epidemiolog Instituta  
za javno zdravlje

utorak, 24. april u 18h, Kidsland

PRIJAVE NA: tel. 020 22 10 00 | [roditeljski.kutak@roditelji.me](mailto:roditeljski.kutak@roditelji.me)

Kidsland, TC Jevrić, Hercegovačka 49



## Marathon and flash-mob spark discussion on immunization

In Moscow, Russian Federation, students of the Faculty of Medicine and Prevention at Sechenov University organized a “game marathon” on immunization. Students were asked about 50 questions on the most pressing and complex issues regarding the safety and efficacy of immunization programmes implemented in Russia. The most active participants later received diplomas and prizes. Following this activity, students staged a flash mob using posters reading “Vaccines work”, Protect yourself and your loved ones! Get vaccinated! ”.



© Sechenov University

## Connecting health care providers with communities

In Turkmenistan, a series of interviews was conducted among pregnant women and young families focusing on the importance of immunization. For one week, special hotlines were installed at primary health care facilities to answer questions regarding immunization, which attracted more than 4500 visitors. Each medical facility conducted staff meetings to remind health care professionals of the important role vaccines play for entire communities. To raise awareness of evidence-based information, medical institutions organized competitions and quizzes for the general public. In addition, concerts, poetry competitions, trainings and workshops as well as television and radio shows on immunization were held throughout the country to underline the benefits and value of immunization.



© WHO



## Targeting health care providers and pregnant women

In addition to translating WHO resources, Bulgaria created an illustrated information campaign targeting specific groups, such as health care providers and pregnant women.

## Targeting sub-populations

This year, Slovakia organized a broad range of activities targeting specific groups. Regional public health care centres (RUVZ) involved school directors to raise awareness of the importance of vaccination in the form of lectures and information sharing. Further, NGOs used the framework of EIW to conduct activities with parents and future parents. Lastly, health care facilities and pre-schools were contacted by regional public health offices via e-mail to circulate information sheets and leaflets. A special campaign was dedicated to reaching at-risk groups in the country, such as the Roma community. Health care workers and education facilities and institutes worked together demonstrating that vaccination a shared responsibility for everyone.



©Parents for Vaccination

## Nurses play a crucial role in immunization

In Ukraine, the NGO Parents for Vaccination's Chairman, Tymofiy Badikov, and Deputy Director on Medical Issues, Tatyana Musich, rewarded nurse Elena Kolesnechenko with the Center for Primary Health Care award of Kyiv City. This celebratory event entitled "Vaccinated - Protected!" officially launched the beginning of EIW in Ukraine.

In the framework of Ukrainian Immunization Week, the NGO Parents for Vaccination also organized meetings inviting public health experts, health care workers, school nurses and teachers as well as parents and children to discuss immunization. Open lessons and a flash mob contest were further organized in schools to support these activities at the sub-national level. Two additional meetings and a series of training sessions were conducted for nurses and teachers in schools in Kyiv. In Kyiv, these events were conducted with the support and participation of the Kyiv Municipal Public Health Centre of the Executive Body of Kyiv City Council (KCC) and Kyiv Municipal Health Centre.

### Prečo vznikol Európsky imunizačný týždeň ?



- očkovanie začína byť podhodnotené kvôli nízkemu výskytu a absencii strachu z infekčných ochorení
- následok: znižovanie zaočkovanosťi alebo jej stagnácia vyúsťujúca do vzniku epidémii
- mediálne antivakcinačné kampane navodzujúce strach z očkovania



*EIW campaign to strengthen herd immunity in Slovakia*

Source: [https://www.ruvzmi.sk/PDF/EIT%202018/EIT\\_prezentacia.pdf](https://www.ruvzmi.sk/PDF/EIT%202018/EIT_prezentacia.pdf)

### EURÓPSKY IMUNIZAČNÝ TÝŽDEŇ

#### Heslo kampane:

„Očkovanie je právo jednotlivca, ale súčasne je spoločnou zodpovednosťou“

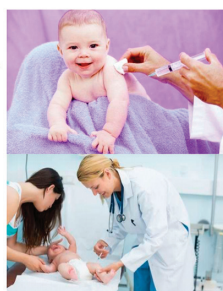
#### Cieľ kampane:

Zvýšiť povedomie širokej verejnosti o dôležitosti očkovania

#### Cieľové skupiny:

**1. odborná verejnosť** (zdravotnícki pracovníci a študenti stredných a vysokých škôl so zdravotníckym zameraním)

**2. laická verejnosť** (rodičia a budúci rodičia, žiaci základných a stredných škôl, rómska komunita a iné rizikové skupiny)



## UN City photo and video exhibit

On the occasion of EIW and WIW, WHO and UNICEF Supply Division collaborated on a photo and video exhibit entitled “Leaving no one behind – saving lives through immunization”. A video showing the vaccine journey and a series of twelve canvases illustrating joint vaccination campaigns in hard-to-reach and often remote areas in five countries:

- Bangladesh (Rohingya refugee crisis and inclusion into the routine immunization system of Bangladesh)
- Romania (measles outbreak response; 2016-present)
- South Sudan (emergency immunization campaign)
- Syria (humanitarian aid and vaccination programmes from Gaziantep, Turkey)
- Ukraine (polio outbreak response in 2015)



©WHO

The exhibit in the UN City building in Copenhagen, Denmark, was officially inaugurated by Robb Butler, Programme Manager of the WHO/Europe’s Vaccine-preventable Diseases and Immunization programme, and Heather Deehan, Chief of the Vaccine Centre in the UNICEF Supply Division.

HRH Crown Princess Mary of Denmark and Dr Zsuzsanna Jakab, WHO Regional Director, visited the exhibit prior to the official opening on Monday 23 April. A statement by the Crown Princess was later published accompanied by official images taken during her visit on Friday. Both on Twitter and Instagram these were among the most successful posts of this year’s EIW campaign.



[clockwise, from left to right]:

©WHO/Alex Shpigunov;

©WHO/Alex Shpigunov;

©WHO; ©UNICEF/

UN060905/Al-Issa

## Partners for immunization

Stronger together – Each year, WHO puts a strong emphasis on inter-agency collaboration with other important stakeholders in the field of immunization to promote the value and benefit of vaccination both at the regional and national level. In their continuous work to engage in joint projects to strengthen national immunization programmes across the Region, WIW and EIW offer the ideal framework to celebrate immunization efforts and further raise awareness of the essential role vaccination plays for people's health and well-being.

Additionally, these activities are embedded in the larger framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), the Global Vaccine Action Plan (GVAP), the European Vaccine Action Plan (EVAP) as well as this year's Immunization Week slogan to promote immunization as an individual right and shared responsibility. Only if we work together, can we meet the goals, objectives and targets inscribed into these guiding documents to help close immunization gaps and achieve further progress towards leaving no one behind.

### ECDC

The European Centre for Prevention and Disease Control (ECDC) focused on measles and rubella, as they released the measles and rubella surveillance report for 2017, an animation on herd immunity and a toolkit prior to EIW with graphics and messages that countries could use. A news item during the week highlighted the increase of measles cases in young adults and teenagers and suggested countries consider catch-up campaigns to close the vaccination gaps.

### European Commission

During EIW, the European Commission launched the "EU Manifesto on Influenza Vaccination – together reducing the burden of influenza" (<http://eu-fightingflu.com/launch-event/>) and a call for stronger EU collaboration among Member States in the fight against preventable diseases ([http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-18-3457\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-18-3457_en.htm)).

### UNICEF

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) collaborated with various WHO country offices and national Ministries of Health, in particular by organizing press conferences, expert panels and conferences as well as by providing online communication material and social media tools.

This year, particular financial and thematic support was provided to **Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova**, the Gaziantep inter-agency operational hub for north-western **Syria (Turkey)**, **Ukraine** and **Uzbekistan**.

### Rotary

Rotary provided substantial support to EIW activities conducted in both **Denmark** and **Ukraine** for this year's EIW campaign, in particular regarding their continuous efforts to eradicate polio (<http://polioeradication.org/>).

# Information sharing



Each year, EIW campaign material is distributed to large audiences, including parents, health care professionals, policy and decision-makers as well as the media. In addition to workshops and public events, the Internet and its diverse social media channels constitute one of the most important pillars to support the annual EIW initiative. Throughout the Region, public health authorities as well as international organizations, local NGOs and professional organizations promote the value of vaccination online.

The WHO Regional Office for Europe supports these activities by providing all 53 Member States with official campaign material as well as adaptable and editable versions and translations. This year, campaign material was translated into more than 10 languages or produced in-country to best target national and sub-national target audiences.

### HOW VACCINES WORK

Vaccines contain a modified form of virus or bacteria that doesn't cause disease, but does "teach" your immune system what to do if you are ever attacked by the real, potentially dangerous virus or bacteria.

When you get vaccinated, your immune system responds just as it does to any other "invader," by creating antibodies to fight off the particular virus or bacteria.

For some diseases, there must be one dose of the vaccine, in a doctor's office. For others, you may be needed to ensure full and lasting protection.

After vaccination your body remembers this specific invader. If you ever come in contact with the real virus or bacteria, the right antibodies quickly destroy it—before it has the chance to make you sick.

#### Herd immunity

When you and nearly everyone else in your community is immune to a contagious disease, it cannot spread easily. Together you prevent the virus or bacteria from reaching those who cannot be vaccinated against it, including babies too young for the vaccine and individuals with health conditions or who are undergoing treatments that weaken their immune systems.

Consult with your doctor and check your family's immunization records to make sure that you are all fully protected.

**Do your part to #immunizeEurope!**

#Vaccineswork to protect you and those around you  
[www.euro.who.int/vaccines](http://www.euro.who.int/vaccines)  
 © WHO/EURO 2018

### RUBELLA

is a contagious disease that can lead to miscarriage, early delivery or birth defects

Babies of unvaccinated women remain at risk as long as rubella is circulating anywhere in the WHO European Region

**DID YOU KNOW...**

- 9 out of 10 women infected with the rubella virus early in pregnancy will lose their baby, or it will be born with congenital rubella syndrome.
- Children born with congenital rubella syndrome can suffer from brain damage, hearing impairment, eye and heart defects.
- Rubella vaccines are safe and effective. They undergo rigorous testing and have a very good safety record after nearly 50 years of use.
- Vaccination provides nearly 100% protection against rubella, and has led to a drastic reduction in rubella cases.

**YOU CAN STOP RUBELLA**

Protect the next generation by making sure you and your family are fully vaccinated.

**Do your part to #immunizeEurope!**

#Vaccineswork  
[www.euro.who.int/vaccines](http://www.euro.who.int/vaccines)  
 © WHO/EURO data as of 2 February 2018

A series of infographics was created by the WHO Regional Office to visually explain how vaccines work, the continuing threat of measles and rubella and the importance of herd immunity. These materials were used by many countries and partners. In addition, some countries developed their own campaign materials in line with the local context and messaging or utilized materials developed by WHO headquarters for World Immunization Week (WIW).

### MEASLES

is a highly contagious and serious disease

Measles **REMAINS A THREAT** in the WHO European Region

**DID YOU KNOW...**

- Measles is **6 TIMES** more infectious than influenza.
- Measles vaccines are safe and effective. They undergo rigorous testing and have a very good safety record after 50 years of use.
- Measles spreads quickly within and across communities unless herd immunity is sustained.
- Two doses of measles vaccines provide nearly 100% protection against measles.

**YOU CAN STOP MEASLES**

Do your part to #immunizeEurope

#Vaccineswork to protect you and those around you  
[www.euro.who.int/vaccines](http://www.euro.who.int/vaccines)  
 © WHO/EURO 2 February 2018

### HERD IMMUNITY

Fighting measles is a SHARED responsibility

**BEFORE VACCINES**

Measles is one of the most contagious diseases affecting humans. Before vaccines were available, there was no way to stop the disease from spreading. Each time a community was exposed to the virus, nearly everyone who had not been infected before contracted the disease. Many suffered serious complications such as pneumonia, deafness or blindness, and many died.

**BUILDING THE HERD**

Measles moves quickly. The higher the number of susceptible individuals there are in a community, the higher each person's individual risk will be of contracting the disease. As more and more people are vaccinated, it becomes more difficult for the virus to find someone new to infect.

**PROTECTION FOR ALL**

Thanks to the measles vaccine, the number of measles cases in the WHO European Region has dropped by over 90% since the 1950s. But the virus still spreads whenever it can find enough people to infect. By stopping the chain of infection, vaccinated children and adults prevent the virus from potentially reaching babies too young to be vaccinated and people who cannot be vaccinated because of weakened or impaired immune systems. At least 95% immunization coverage is needed to achieve the herd immunity protection for all.

**Do your part to #immunizeEurope!**

#Vaccineswork to protect you and those around you  
[www.euro.who.int/vaccines](http://www.euro.who.int/vaccines)  
 © WHO/EURO 2018



For further information and the downloadable version see: <http://www.euro.who.int/en/media-centre/events/events/2018/04/european-immunization-week-2018/download-campaign-material>

Campaign material from France © Santé publique France

## Awareness raising through information sharing

Activities to raise awareness were organized for specific audiences in various forms, ranging from website content, social media tiles and flash mob events to workshops and educational seminars. Some countries used national celebrities and influencers to boost immunization, some engaged in sports events or used public crowded places to spread information.

Armenia, Latvia, Republic of Moldova and Sweden raised awareness by distributing key messages, infographics, and video spots on both mass media and official government websites.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, EIW materials were made available within and beyond the framework of educational workshops for health professionals held in Baja Luka and Mostar.

The Danish Health Authority, Statens Institut and the Danish Medicines Agency published an annual report on the national childhood immunization programme.

France reached a large audience with a newly launched website dedicated to vaccination and published thematic resources as well as campaign material.

This year's EIW campaign in Germany focused on the importance of vaccination for newborn health as well as herd immunity. Posters were put on display in pharmacies, health care settings and public spaces.

More than a dozen health centres in Greece participated in EIW 2018 by distributing information, booklets and by organizing thematic lectures at the provincial level. Further, expert talks were held in Athens.

Hungary launched a nationwide social media campaign highlighting activities conducted by medical students on immunization. Famous influencers and sports icons shared their statements and personal stories on social media.



The spokesperson of the Ministry of Health in Israel sent media messages to the public and the professional community as well as prepared social media posts on the country's high immunization coverage.

Kyrgyzstan focused its 2018 EIW campaign on information sharing for parents and caregivers, health care professionals, policy-makers and the media.

European and World Immunization Week 2018 in Slovenia: vaccination is the right of the individual and responsibility of everyone.

In addition to the dissemination of campaign material, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia invited the press, radio and TV channels to participate in the official launching event of EIW 2018.

Spain produced a special video promoting the importance of immunization and vaccine safety.

Switzerland utilized EIW to promote the launch of the electronic immunization record system. Promotion activities were conducted both among health care workers as well as the general public.

In Tajikistan, a TV spot on immunization was broadcast on national television and leaflets and other campaign material were distributed.

## EIW material translated into 10+ languages

In Belgium, Greece and the Netherlands, EIW campaign material was translated to reach target audiences at the national and sub-national levels.



Italy's Ministry of Health and partners organized a debate on actions proposed by the national action plan to eliminate measles and rubella. In light of the country's recent measles outbreaks and introduction of a mandatory vaccination schedule, this debate was of particular relevance and importance to the country.

San Marino organized a high-level meeting to spread the word that vaccines work. At this meeting, WIW campaign material was distributed.

## Posters distributed and displayed in large public spaces and pharmacies

Germany designed posters reading "Get vaccinated – Your protection is my protection" to raise awareness of the importance of herd immunity to protect babies too young to be vaccinated and people with a weak or impaired immune system. These posters were distributed among pharmacies and further displayed in large public spaces, such as train stations and health care settings. In this context, special training sessions were organized to provide families, in particular pregnant women, with evidence-based information on immunization in order to optimize each child's start in life.



©Bayerisches Staatsministerium für Gesundheit und Pflege



## Targeting large online communities

In the context of EIW, a series of countries launched or expanded their websites highlighting issues related to immunization, such as how vaccines work, herd immunity, national immunization schedules as well as promoting the value and benefits of vaccines for an entire population.

Austria: <http://www.keinemasern.at/>

Czech Republic: <http://www.szu.cz/tema/vakciny>

France: <http://www.semaine-vaccination.fr/>

Sweden: <https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/vaccin-funkar/>

United Kingdom: <https://publichealthengland.exposure.co/childhood-vaccination>



## We protect together

In Sweden, the Public Health Agency launched a new website entitled "vaccines work" to raise awareness regarding the national vaccination programme and to address common questions asked by parents regarding vaccine safety. Further, it provides a large range of brochures, fact sheets, infographics and video material.

## Closing the gaps during EIW

Azerbaijan utilized EIW 2018 to promote catch-up vaccination nationwide in accordance with its national immunization schedule, which was offered at all health facilities in the country. Austria also offered free MMR (measles-mumps-rubella) catch-up vaccines for children, who, for whatever reasons, had missed out on their shots.

Romania's Ministry of Health organized a preparatory workshop for their sub-national MMR enhanced immunization campaign targeting, in particular, vulnerable groups and minorities with low coverage.

## Austria's measles and herd immunity campaign

An Austrian measles and herd immunity campaign poster. It features a cartoon illustration of four people sitting on a black sofa. Each person has a large, colorful balloon (red, green, yellow, blue) with white polka dots on their head, representing measles. To the right of the illustration is a text box in German: "Masern sind sehr ansteckend. Ohne Impfung erkranken 95 von 100 Menschen. Bei 10 von 100 Masern-Fällen ist mit schweren Folgeerkrankungen zu rechnen. Die Masern-Impfung schützt. Verlässlich. Gratis für Menschen jeden Alters. Bei den steirischen Haus- und Kinderärzten und in den Gesundheitsämtern." Below the text box is the logo for "Europäische Impfwoche: 23.-28. April 2018" and the logo for "Das Land Steiermark". At the bottom right, there is a small text box: "Zielgruppenspezifische Sites, die in Regionalmedien zur Masernimpfung einladen."

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A quote from Jörg Pruckner, a man with glasses and a blue shirt. The quote reads: „Vielleicht nimmt sich der eine oder andere Kollege zur Europäischen Impfwoche vor, einmal im eigenen Umfeld – Ordination, Familie, Freunde – besonders genau auf den Impfschutz zu schauen.“ Below the quote is the name "Jörg Pruckner".

## Going digital

For this year's EIW 2018 campaign, Uzbekistan utilized various online platforms, such as local radio and TV channels, to promote immunization by reaching large digital audiences. In this context, news items and interviews with influencers, WHO and UNICEF immunization experts were shared online, while infographics translated into Russian and Uzbek were made available.

# Social media campaign



A social media toolkit containing four flagship social media tiles and suggested posts was distributed by WHO/Europe to country focal points and other important stakeholders and later shared on social media as well as national websites and other online communication channels.

## Social media influencers speak up

On the occasion of EIW in Hungary, multiple influencers and celebrities joined WHO's campaign and shared a video or photo to emphasize the importance of vaccination and encourage people to join the campaign by sharing the message and also their own stories.

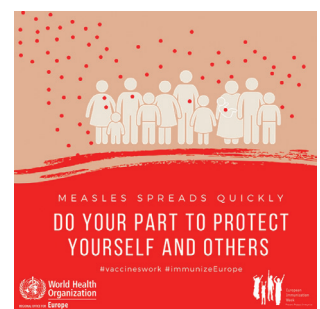
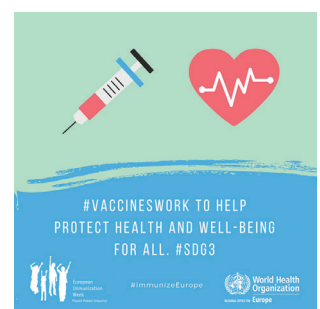


Zsolt Erdei, former professional boxer and president of the Hungarian Boxing Association

© WHO

## Highlighting the importance of the HPV vaccine

Ireland actively used the National Immunization Office's Twitter account to promote EIW through sharing campaign material, focusing in particular on the importance of herd immunity and HPV.



Social media analysis for EIW 2018 indicates that the digital portion of this campaign was successful across all platforms. This year, activities on Twitter using the hashtags #vaccineswork and #immunizeEurope in April succeeded in reaching a high number of tweet impressions. In the framework of WIW and EIW, combined efforts within the Regional Office as well as with other UN agencies and stakeholders helped to spread the word that #vaccineswork!

Join us on social media! @WHO/Europe @WHO/Europe\_VPI

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# Resources

## EIW campaign material

<http://www.euro.who.int/en/media-centre/events/events/2018/04/european-immunization-week-2018/download-campaign-material>

<https://euro.sharefile.com/share/view/sd4c414367c145819/fo5cf4cd-ec6b-470a-9183-3aa639a9f97f>

## Immunize Europe forum

<http://www.immunize-europe.org/>

## Official statements

<http://www.euro.who.int/en/media-centre/sections/statements/2018/statement-european-immunization-week-2018>

<http://www.euro.who.int/en/media-centre/sections/statements/2018/eiw-2018-statement-vaccination-is-our-shared-responsibility>

## Photostory from the exhibit

<http://www.euro.who.int/en/media-centre/events/events/2018/04/european-immunization-week-2018/news/news/2018/04/photo-story-leaving-no-one-behind-saving-lives-through-immunization-exhibit>

## News items

<http://www.euro.who.int/en/media-centre/events/events/2018/04/european-immunization-week-2018/news/news/news>

- European Immunization Week—vaccination is a right and responsibility for all
- WHO supports Turkey to ensure full immunization of refugee children
- Photo story—“Leaving no one behind—saving lives through immunization” exhibit
- Kyrgyzstan raising awareness of the importance of immunization
- European and World Immunization Week 2018 in Slovenia: vaccination is the right of the individual and responsibility of everyone

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## Keep in touch

We are keen to hear about your immunization activities and future plans. Have you evaluated the results of any of your initiatives? Are you planning something innovative? It's always a pleasure to highlight good practice, so keep in touch.

[eueiw@who.int](mailto:eueiw@who.int) or +43 4533 6907

[www.immunize-europe.org](http://www.immunize-europe.org)

## The WHO Regional Office for Europe

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations created in 1948 with the primary responsibility for international health matters and public health. The WHO Regional Office for Europe is one of six regional offices throughout the world, each with its own programme geared to the particular health conditions of the countries it serves.

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Croatia	Republic of Moldova
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