

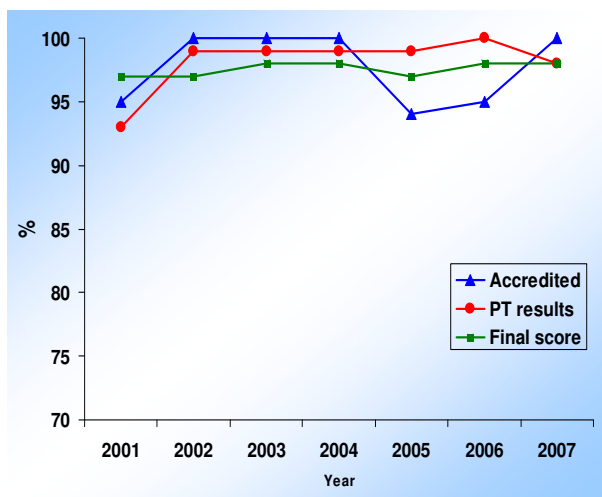
Laboratory Biosafety Workshop for Russian Polio Labs 12-20, November 2007, Moscow, Russian Federation

The WHO Polio Laboratory Network of the European region coordinates the work of 48 laboratories in 37 Member States and has achieved and maintained high quality standards of work. As many of these laboratories are general-purpose virological institutions, they recently faced the challenge of implementing diagnostic procedures for a number of emerging pathogens, including avian influenza. The protection of laboratory staff as well as environment from the potentially dangerous viral pathogens is crucial. The current biosafety practices have been assessed throughout the European polio lab network using a biosafety accreditation checklist which has been especially developed for this purpose in the early 2007. In November 2007, a 9-day biosafety training course for the WHO polio laboratories of the Russian



Federation was organized by the WHO Regional Office for Europe. During the course, 14 virologists received an in-depth training at the State Research Center of Virology and Biotechnology (VECTOR), Russian Federation - a foremost center of biosafety expertise in the Commonwealth of Independent States. The trainees received vital theoretical knowledge and practical skills relevant for BSL 2 and BSL 3 biosafety levels. Among the facilitators were experts from the Regional Office as well as lecturers from "Vector". The workshop has been met with great enthusiasm from the trainees as well as from virologists, members of other WHO laboratory networks (Influenza and Measles/Rubella), expressing their desire to receive similar training. The Regional Office is currently looking for funding sources to continue this activity. Please contact Dr. Eugene Gavrilin, the Polio Laboratory Network Coordinator at the Regional Office, for more information (ega@euro.who.int)

Vital performance statistics for Polio Lab Network in EURO, 2001–2007



As is evident from the graph on the left, the WHO Polio Laboratory Network in Europe has maintained excellent standards of work in 2007. It has come to be expected of the network, and yet, we insiders know at what cost this excellence comes. Nearly religious adherence to protocols to avoid contamination, caring for capricious cell cultures outside of the working hours.. and not to forget the ever-present challenges of shipping samples! In this December edition of the Polio Page which is dedicated to the Polio Laboratory Network, the Regional Office would like to congratulate the virologists with such an excellent achievement and wish them all the best in 2008. Naturally, we also commend our colleagues - clinicians, epidemiologists and field staff - for doing their utmost. We are looking forward to our collaboration next year!

**Table 1. AFP/Polio Weekly Reporting
European Region (all countries), 2007**

Country	Polio Compatible Cases	% Completeness of Reporting	Week of Last Report	Method of Reporting	Country Using "Priority" Coding
Albania	0	94%	52	email	yes
Andorra*	0	100%	52	direct web entry	-
Armenia	1	82%	51	email	yes
Austria	0	98%	51	direct web entry	yes
Azerbaijan	0	94%	52	email	yes
Belarus	0	96%	52	direct web entry	yes
Belgium	0	100%	52	direct web entry	-
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	75%	51	email	partial
Bulgaria	0	92%	52	direct web entry	yes
Croatia*	1	94%	52	direct web entry	yes
Cyprus	0	100%	52	direct web entry	yes
Czech Republic	0	61%	52	email	-
Denmark	0	0%		DNR	-
Estonia	0	100%	52	direct web entry	yes
Finland	0	0%		DNR	-
France	0	0%		DNR	-
Georgia	0	90%	52	email	yes
Germany	0	96%	52	email	yes
Greece	0	92%	50	direct web entry	partial
Hungary	0	98%	52	direct web entry	yes
Iceland	0	0%		DNR	-
Ireland	0	94%	49	direct web entry	yes
Israel	0	94%	52	email	yes
Italy	0	96%	51	direct web entry	yes
Kazakstan	0	88%	52	email	yes
Kyrgyzstan	0	32%	45	email	yes
Latvia	0	98%	52	direct web entry	yes
Lithuania	0	90%	50	direct web entry	yes
Luxembourg	0	0%		DNR	-
Malta*	0	61%	48	email	yes
Moldova		90%	51	direct web entry	yes
Monaco	0	0%		DNR	-
Montenegro	0	71%	52	email	-
Netherlands	0	0%		DNR	-
Norway	0	96%	51	direct web entry	yes
Poland	0	98%	51	direct web entry	yes
Portugal	0	46%	24	email	partial
Romania	0	98%	51	direct web entry	partial
Russian Federation	0	92%	52	email	yes
San Marino	0	0%		DNR	-
Serbia	0	94%	52	email	partial
Slovak Republic	0	98%	52	direct web entry	yes
Slovenia*	0	98%	52	direct web entry	-
Spain	0	100%	52	direct web entry	yes
Sweden	0	100%	52	direct web entry	-
Switzerland	0	96%	50	direct web entry	yes
Tajikistan	0	90%	51	email	yes
T.F.Y.R.Macedonia	0	92%	52	email	no
Turkey	0	98%	52	email	yes
Turkmenistan	0	94%	52	email	yes
Ukraine	0	82%	52	email	yes
United Kingdom	0	0%		DNR	-
Uzbekistan	0	82%	52	email	yes
Average/ Totals	2	92%			

Shaded country name indicates country classified as endemic / recently endemic by the Regional Certification Commission in 1996.

* No AFP cases reported to WHO Regional Office for Europe.

DNR=do not report AFP surveillance data.

**TABLE 2. AFP Reporting - European Region,
Countries with AFP Surveillance, 2006-2007**

Country	2006 (Weeks 1 - 52)			2007 (Weeks 1 - 52)					
	Non-Polio AFP Rate*	% With 2 Stool Specimens**	Surveillance Index***	Number of AFP Cases	Number of Cases Pending §	Number of Cases Priority Pending §§	Non-Polio AFP Rate*	% With 2 Stool Specimens**	Surveillance Index***
Albania	0.36	100%	0.36	10	0	0	1.23	100%	1
Andorra	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Armenia	0	0%	0	14	4	0	2.26	62%	0.92
Austria	0.72	56%	0.48	3	0	0	0.24	33%	0.08
Azerbaijan	0.86	94%	0.81	24	3	0	1.17	100%	1
Belarus	2.73	92%	0.92	51	0	0	3.67	92%	0.94
Belgium	0.35	17%	0.06	9	5	0	0.52	0%	0.06
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.63	100%	0.63	3	1	0	0.48	100%	0.48
Bulgaria	1.83	84%	0.84	13	10	0	1.28	100%	1
Croatia	0	0%	0	1	0	0	0	0%	0
Cyprus	1.83	67%	1	1	0	0	0.62	100%	0.62
Czech Republic	1.03	87%	1	8	0	0	0.56	88%	0.56
Estonia	0.51	100%	0.51	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Georgia	1.11	100%	1	13	0	0	1.66	85%	0.85
Germany	0.55	44%	0.3	64	0	1	0.53	31%	0.24
Greece	1.2	74%	0.74	17	1	0	1.08	65%	0.65
Hungary	0.96	40%	0.58	8	0	0	0.52	38%	0.52
Ireland	1.06	22%	0.56	2	0	0	0.23	50%	0.12
Israel	0.9	6%	0.58	10	0	0	0.52	0%	0.16
Italy	0.64	65%	0.44	56	12	1	0.69	57%	0.49
Kazakhstan	1.5	94%	0.96	61	2	0	1.86	97%	0.98
Kyrgyzstan	1.7	96%	1	30	4	0	1.84	97%	1
Latvia	0.92	100%	0.92	4	0	0	0.95	67%	0.63
Lithuania	2.36	46%	0.85	13	0	0	2.46	62%	1
Malta	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Moldova	0.3	60%	0.24	4	4	0	0.24	25%	0.12
Montenegro	0.81	83%	0.68	15	0	0	2.11	93%	0.93
Norway	1.58	100%	1	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Poland	1.22	27%	0.73	6	1	0	0.67	17%	0.45
Portugal	1.08	71%	0.82	39	1	0	0.65	49%	0.42
Romania	1.16	95%	0.95	20	2	1	0.62	90%	0.56
Russian Federation	1.93	90%	0.92	383	68	14	1.79	92%	0.93
Serbia	1.16	86%	1	9	2	0	0.52	78%	0.4
Slovakia	0.23	100%	0.23	4	0	0	0.47	75%	0.47
Slovenia	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Spain	0.67	43%	0.4	34	0	0	0.54	59%	0.46
Switzerland	1.19	7%	0.14	13	0	0	1.04	8%	0.17
Tajikistan	0.83	100%	0.83	40	7	0	1.6	98%	0.98
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	0.77	100%	0.77	5	0	0	1.32	80%	1
Turkey	0.9	84%	0.77	227	24	4	1.06	85%	0.88
Turkmenistan	1.25	95%	0.95	31	0	0	2.07	90%	0.9
Ukraine	1.89	94%	0.95	117	3	1	1.83	95%	0.97
Uzbekistan	1.15	99%	0.99	103	1	0	1.19	99%	0.99
Average/Total	1.13	82%	0.86	1465	155	22	1.13	82%	0.88
Recently Endemic	1.34	91%	0.93	1105	121	20	1.42	92%	0.94

*Annualized rate per 100 000 children under the age of 15 years. **Bold** = meeting WHO target of 1.0.

Two stool specimens collected at least 24 hrs. apart within 14 days of onset of paralysis and adequately shipped to the laboratory. **Bold = meeting WHO target of 80%.

***Index = non-polio AFP rate up to 1.0 x (% first adequate specimens), **Bold** ? 0.8

§ Total number of AFP cases pending final classification 90 days after Date of onset.

§§ Number of AFP cases assigned a priority coding and pending.