

# Narrative Report: European Immunization Week 2012



European  
Immunization  
Week

Prevent Protect Immunize



An infant gets vaccinated during EIW 2012 at the Main Family Medicine Centre in Pristina.  
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**World Health  
Organization**

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR

**Europe**

# European Immunization Week (EIW) achieved a milestone in 2012 when, for the first time in its seven year existence, all 53 countries of the WHO European Region took part in the initiative.

Such widespread support is particularly critical for the Region as Member States work towards the goal of eliminating measles and rubella by 2015 and as they strive to maintain Europe's polio-free status. The year 2012 was also significant, as it marked the first time that all regions of the world joined together to collectively recognize a "World Immunization Week", giving a global perspective to the initiative.

## Spreading the word to the media and public

For the 2012 initiative, the WHO Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe) defined key messages and encouraged participating countries to focus on these during the week, where appropriate to national needs and situations. One of these messages highlighted the vital role front-line health workers play in national immunization programmes and the importance of providing them with the support they need to be strong advocates for immunization. To emphasize this message, WHO/Europe launched an online immunization resource centre ([www.euro.who.int/vaccine/resourcecentre](http://www.euro.who.int/vaccine/resourcecentre)), which includes job-aids for health workers to use when discussing vaccination with their patients. Additional tools will be added to the resource centre on an ongoing basis. WHO/Europe also interviewed health workers from around the Region and created a short video to reinforce this key message (400+ views on YouTube).



Ireland's National Immunisation Office promoted the importance of MMR vaccination to prevent measles, particularly for those travelling to other parts of Europe. These efforts resulted in significant media coverage, and this was followed up by the release of a report titled "Driving Change in Immunisation" about the role of the National Immunisation Office.



Public health organizations in Belarus collaborated on numerous EIW activities, ranging from press conferences and media interviews, to an online conference hosted on the country's most popular web site, to a contest for designing the best pro-immunization flyer.



WHO/Europe hosted the first-ever EIW Twitter chat during the 2012 initiative. Nearly 500 tweets with the hashtag #immunizeEurope were tweeted during the month of April.



Switzerland released the Android version of its immunization app (released for iPhone during EIW 2011) and cantons organized immunization activities at schools, high schools and universities.



Norway published two separate newsletters to raise awareness about the initiative, one focused on the goal of eliminating measles from Europe by 2015.

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For the third year running, the Ministry of Health of The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia held a musical event for children during EIW. This year it took place in Skopje's Central Park.

EIW once again received a tremendous level of media coverage throughout the Region, with more than 400 instances of coverage in print, online and broadcast media. This included an op-ed co-written by the WHO Regional Director for Europe, Zsuzsanna Jakab, and the Director General of the Danish Health and Medicines Authority, Else Smith. This piece, titled “The urgent need to immunize older age groups”, emphasized the continued need to control measles outbreaks and prevent further cases, another key message WHO/Europe identified for the 2012 initiative. Information about EIW was also featured nearly 250 times on the web sites of ministries of health, public health institutes and other organizations.



Third grade school children in Turkmenistan participated in quizzes on healthy lifestyles and immunization during EIW. The Ministry of Health, with support from UNICEF, also distributed 10,000 immunization calendars and prepared a special television segment on the impact of vaccination on early childhood development.

### Social media activities

A diverse group of partner organizations supported social media activities for EIW 2012 by contributing to the “EIW Week of Guest Bloggers” on the campaign site (eiw.euro.who.int). These guest bloggers included representatives from the GAVI Alliance, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Measles and Rubella Initiative, Shot@Life, ECDC, UNICEF, the European Confederation of Primary Care Paediatricians, as well as other immunization experts from the Region. Overall, the campaign site experienced a significant increase in traffic and activity, as dozens of members posted pictures, blogs, events and comments. This activity was further cemented by a Live Q&A session hosted via the site’s chat function shortly following the 2012 initiative. During this session, more than 30 participants came together to discuss ways to build confidence in vaccines and to share experiences and lessons learned from the 2012 immunization week initiative.

WHO/Europe also hosted its second-ever live Twitter chat during EIW 2012, during which nearly 100 tweets were generated with the hashtag #immunizeEurope over the course of the hour-long chat.



Finland created a quiz on vaccines, which it posted on the Facebook page of the National Institute for Health and Welfare. The Institute also published a press release highlighting the considerable decrease in infant pneumococcal disease following introduction of the pneumococcal vaccine into the national immunization programme.



The Swedish Institute for Communicable Disease Control, the National Board of Health and the Medical Products Agency of Sweden organized a national conference about the childhood vaccination programme on 24 April 2012. Front-line health workers were the target audience of the conference.



Parents in Tajikistan received information about the importance of vaccinating their children.



The First Lady of Georgia and Goodwill Ambassador for WHO/Europe, Sandra Roelofs, once again participated in a press conference with other high-level representatives from government and the medical community. UNICEF Georgia also funded a promotional campaign that included double-sided light boxes, television and radio spots, flyers, booklets and posters advocating for immunization.



Romania’s National Institute of Public Health distributed more than 5,000 information, education and communication materials in 12 districts around the country, focused on messages such as “immunization is a fundamental right” and “immunization saves lives”.



The Turkish Ministry of Health sponsored drawing and essay contests on immunization in primary schools, organized activities to increase demand for adult immunization and conducted training and education seminars for health workers and the public. Friday sermons on immunization were also delivered in mosques throughout the country during EIW.



Malta vaccinated 2,631 children in the fourth year of primary school with a second dose of MMR vaccine, bringing the coverage rate for a second dose of MMR vaccine to 98% in the country.

## Partner support and activities


As in years past, many partner organizations provided important support during EIW 2012 and also coordinated their own activities. The European Centres for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) convened a "Free Thinkers for Measles Elimination" meeting in Stockholm that brought together experts from a wide array of fields to generate new and innovative ideas for promoting measles vaccination in Europe.

UNICEF played a key role in promoting the messages about front-line health workers and produced a video in which a focus group of health workers from Armenia openly discussed the challenges facing them in terms of vaccinating patients.

Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary of Denmark, Patron of the WHO Regional Office for Europe, once again provided a statement of support for EIW encouraging all countries of the Region to continue their efforts to raise immunization awareness and to work towards important regional goals, such as sustaining polio-free status and achieving measles elimination by 2015.

## Country activities

Thanks to the participation of all 53 countries of the Region, the week of EIW was filled from start to finish with excellent activities at the country-level. WHO/Europe wishes to acknowledge and thank all those whose efforts made these activities possible. Though EIW is coordinated on a regional level, the country activities are truly what have made this a highly visible and effective awareness initiative for the Region. WHO/Europe looks forward to working with all Member States of the Region during EIW 2013 and beyond.

 In Lithuania, the Centre for Communicable Diseases and AIDS produced postcards encouraging vaccination, which were distributed online and through public health offices across the country. The Pharmaceutical Students Association also implemented a campaign titled "Be informed, not infected" to advocate for tuberculosis prevention. Lithuanian television and music stars held a concert to mark World Immunization Week, encouraging people to learn about vaccination and make an informed decision about whether to get vaccinated.



The Institute of Public Health in Serbia, supported by the Ministry of Health and the WHO Country Office, held a scientific conference on 24 April 2012 covering pneumococcal and varicella vaccines, measles elimination and polio eradication. An additional 22 specialized meetings related to EIW took place throughout the country, and immunization campaigns for municipalities with coverage of less than 95% for measles and polio vaccination were carried out.



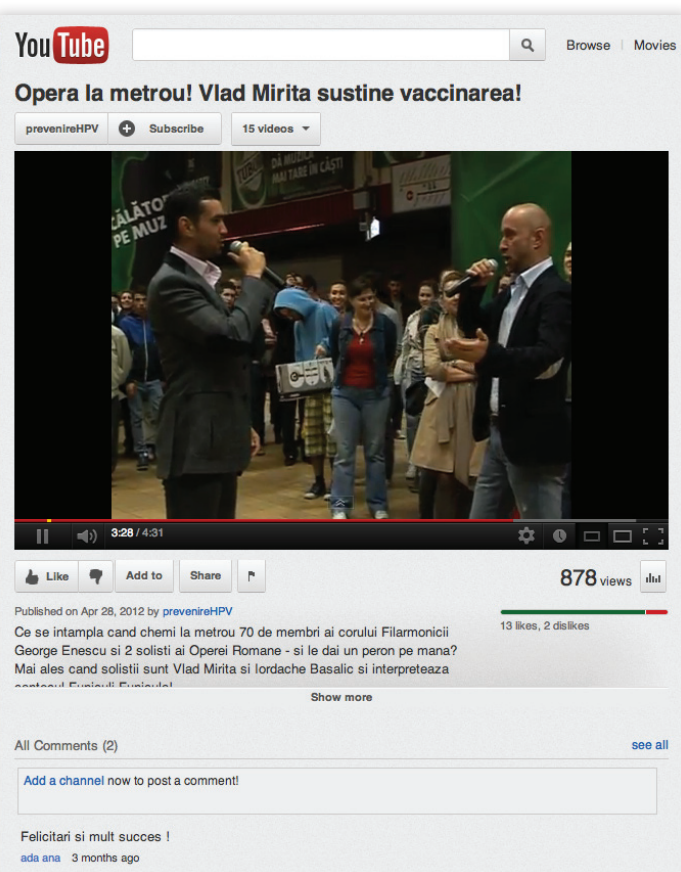
Epidemiologists from regional public health authorities in Slovakia organized more than 70 lectures and meetings throughout the country targeted towards health workers, Roma communities, other risk groups and the public.




In Uzbekistan, a first round of supplemental polio immunization activities during EIW targeted nearly 2 million children under the age of 5 years in 6 provinces considered at higher risk of poliovirus transmission. Reported coverage was 99.8%, and a second round took place 21-26 May 2012.



A health conference on vaccination took place in Flanders, Belgium, during EIW and resulted in the designing of a renewed health goal for vaccination, aimed at effectively protecting Belgians against vaccine-preventable diseases throughout their entire lives.



**Opera la metrou! Vlad Mirita sustine vaccinarea!**

preventireHPV  15 videos

Published on Apr 28, 2012 by [preventireHPV](#)

Ce se intampla cand chemi la metrou 70 de membri ai corului Filarmonicii George Enescu si 2 solisti ai Operei Romane - si le dai un peron pe mana? Mai ales cand solistii sunt Vlad Mirita si Iordache Basalic si interpreteaza [cantaletul Evului de Aur](#).

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Felicitari si mult succes!  
[ada ana](#) 3 months ago

A flashmob to promote immunization was organized at the largest metro station in Bucharest, Romania. This unique, first-of-its-kind immunization awareness activity featured two opera singers, a back-up chorus and a collection of EIW promotional materials. YouTube videos of the flashmob have received 1,500+ views.