



EUROPE

## Euro Polio Page June 2007

Vaccine-preventable Diseases and Immunization Programme  
Division of Health Programmes

### European Region Remains Free of Polio

The European Regional Certification Commission (RCC) met at the WHO Regional Office for Europe, Copenhagen from 13-15 June 2007 to review the status of polio eradication in the Region. The meeting was attended by seven members of the RCC, the WHO secretariat and representatives of the polio programmes of selected countries. Of the 53 Member States in the Region, 50 (94%) submitted reports on their 2006 activities. The RCC reviewed the updates and heard presentations on the Regional Polio Laboratory Network and laboratory containment of wild polioviruses. Representatives from the Global Polio Eradication Initiative and the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Certification Commission reported on the status of global and regional polio eradication efforts, respectively. Representatives of Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Netherlands, Tajikistan and Turkey gave special presentations on their national polio eradication programmes. WHO Regional Office for Europe (EURO) staff reported on progress towards a strategic plan for sustaining the polio-free status of the Region.

After reviewing all available country reports and supplemental information provided by the Secretariat, the RCC concluded that the Region remains free of wild poliovirus transmission five years following certification. The RCC was greatly concerned that, in spite of progress achieved globally, the risk of importation of wild poliovirus into the European Region remains very high and that following an importation, wild poliovirus could spread in geographical areas and/or subpopulations with low immunization coverage. The RCC wishes to reemphasize the importance of all countries within the Region maintaining uniformly high routine immunization coverage and high-quality surveillance for polio as well as other vaccine-preventable diseases. The RCC emphasized that the current global situation calls for the strong political commitment of all WHO Member States to stop poliovirus transmission and provide sustained financial support for the global polio eradication programme.

The RCC made the following general recommendations regarding the polio eradication initiative in the Region:

1. The RCC strongly encourages all countries to conduct annual National Certification Commission (NCC) meetings as a demonstration of national commitment to sustain polio-free status.
2. The European RCC requests that the Global Certification Commission establish clear terms of reference for NCCs in the post certification phase.
3. While AFP remains the gold standard for polio surveillance, the RCC endorses the use of enterovirus surveillance (primarily aseptic meningitis surveillance) as an adjunct to AFP, emphasizing the timely collection and analysis of stool specimens.
4. The RCC recommends Member States assure adequate financial support for continuing high-quality, laboratory-based national surveillance systems.
5. After reviewing the available data from each national program, the RCC considered the following member states to be at high risk for poliovirus transmission following an importation: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Tajikistan plus the Northern Caucasian region of Russia and the southern and eastern areas of Turkey. The RCC considered that the following countries were at intermediate risk of transmission in the case of an importation of wild poliovirus: Greece, Netherlands, Turkey (remainder of country), Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The RCC extended its gratitude to the outgoing RCC Chairperson, Sir Joseph Smith, who led the Commission from its inception, including the historic June 2002 meeting in which the European Region was declared to be polio-free. Dr. David Salisbury, of the United Kingdom, is the new chair of the RCC.

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

	Polio compatible cases	% Completeness of reporting	Week of last report	Method of reporting	Country using "priority"
Albania	0	82%	21	email	yes
Andorra*	0	95%	21	direct web entry	-
Armenia	0	73%	21	email	yes
Austria	0	100%	21	direct web entry	yes
Azerbaijan	0	100%	21	email	yes
Belarus	0	100%	21	direct web entry	yes
Belgium	0	100%	21	direct web entry	-
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	78%	21	email	partial
Bulgaria	0	91%	21	direct web entry	yes
Croatia*	0	100%	21	direct web entry	yes
Cyprus	0	100%	21	direct web entry	yes
Czech Republic	0	73%	21	email	
Denmark	0	0%		DNR	-
Estonia	0	100%	21	direct web entry	yes
Finland	0	0%		DNR	-
France	0	0%		DNR	-
Georgia	0	91%	21	email	yes
Germany	0	95%	21	email	yes
Greece	0	95%	20	direct web entry	partial
Hungary	0	95%	21	direct web entry	yes
Iceland	0	0%		DNR	-
Ireland	0	100%	21	direct web entry	yes
Israel	0	91%	21	email	yes
Italy	0	95%	21	direct web entry	yes
Kazakstan	0	82%	21	email	yes
Kyrgyzstan	0	43%	21	email	yes
Latvia	0	95%	21	direct web entry	yes
Lithuania	0	100%	21	direct web entry	yes
Luxembourg	0	0%		DNR	-
Malta*	0	60%	14	email	yes
Monaco	0	0%		DNR	-
Montenegro	0	47%	21		
Netherlands	0	0%		DNR	-
Norway	0	100%	21	direct web entry	yes
Poland	0	100%	21	direct web entry	yes
Portugal	0	100%	21	email	partial
Republic of Moldova	0	91%	21	direct web entry	yes
Romania	0	100%	21	direct web entry	partial
Russian Federation	0	91%	21	direct web entry	yes
San Marino	0	0%		DNR	-
Serbia	0	95%	21	email	partial
Slovak Republic	0	95%	21	direct web entry	yes
Slovenia*	0	100%	21	direct web entry	-
Spain	0	95%	21	direct web entry	yes
Sweden	0	95%		DNR	-
Switzerland	0	100%	21	direct web entry	yes
Tajikistan	0	86%	21	email	yes
T.F.Y.R.Macedonia	0	86%	20	email	no
Turkey	0	95%	21	email	yes
Turkmenistan	0	86%	21	email	yes
Ukraine	0	65%	21	email	yes
United Kingdom	0	0%		DNR	-
Uzbekistan	0	95%	21	email	yes
<b>Average/Totals</b>		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,  
2006-2007 Countries with AFP surveillance**

Country	2006 (Weeks 1 - 52)			2007 (Weeks 1 - 21)					
	non-Polio AFP rate*	% with 2 stool spec.**	Surveillance index***	No. of AFP cases	No. of cases pending §	No. of cases priority pending §§	non-Polio AFP rate*	% with 2 stool spec.**	Surveillance index***
Albania	0.36	100%	0.36	5	0	0	1.33	100%	1
Andorra	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Armenia	0.33	50%	0.33	6	0	0	1.88	60%	0.8
Austria	0.72	56%	0.48	1	0	0	0.18	100%	0.18
Azerbaijan	0.86	94%	0.81	13	3	0	1.38	100%	1
Belarus	2.73	92%	0.92	28	0	1	4.36	96%	0.96
Belgium	0.35	17%	0.06	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.63	100%	0.63	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Bulgaria	1.83	84%	0.84	5	4	0	1.07	100%	1
Croatia	0	0%	0	1	0	0	0	0%	0
Cyprus	1.83	67%	1	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Czech Republic	1.03	87%	1	5	0	1	0.76	100%	0.76
Estonia	0.51	100%	0.51	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Georgia	1.11	100%	1	3	0	0	0.83	100%	0.83
Germany	0.55	44%	0.3	31	3	3	0.57	43%	0.38
Greece	1.2	74%	0.74	5	0	0	0.69	60%	0.41
Hungary	0.96	40%	0.58	4	0	0	0.57	25%	0.57
Ireland	1.06	22%	0.56	1	0	0	0.25	0%	0
Israel	0.9	6%	0.58	4	0	0	0.45	0%	0.23
Italy	0.64	65%	0.44	20	4	1	0.54	50%	0.32
Kazakhstan	1.5	94%	0.96	22	0	0	1.46	91%	0.95
Kyrgyzstan	1.7	96%	1	15	3	0	1.99	100%	1
Latvia	0.92	100%	0.92	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Lithuania	2.36	46%	0.85	3	0	0	1.23	67%	1
Malta	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Montenegro	1.58	100%	1	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Norway	1.22	27%	0.73	2	1	0	0.48	0%	0.24
Poland	1.08	71%	0.82	17	2	1	0.62	47%	0.4
Portugal	0.3	60%	0.24	4	2	0	0.52	25%	0.26
Republic of Moldova	0.81	83%	0.68	10	1	0	3.04	100%	1
Romania	1.16	95%	0.95	16	3	0	1.08	88%	0.88
Russian Federation	1.93	90%	0.92	183	57	21	1.85	92%	0.93
Serbia	1.16	86%	1	5	1	0	0.62	80%	0.5
Slovakia	0.23	100%	0.23	4	0	1	1.02	75%	1
Slovenia	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Spain	0.67	43%	0.4	18	2	0	0.61	61%	0.55
Switzerland	1.19	7%	0.14	3	0	0	0.56	33%	0.19
Tajikistan	0.83	100%	0.83	16	0	0	1.38	94%	0.94
T.F.Y.R.Macedonia	0.77	100%	0.77	1	0	0	0.57	0%	0.57
Turkey	0.9	84%	0.77	98	16	4	0.99	85%	0.87
Turkmenistan	1.25	95%	0.95	10	1	0	1.45	80%	0.8
Ukraine	1.89	94%	0.95	59	2	1	2	98%	1
Uzbekistan	1.15	99%	0.99	46	0	0	1.15	98%	0.98
Average/Totals	1.13	81%	0.86	664	105	34	1.02	84%	0.89
Recently Endemic	1.34	91%	0.93	508	87	26	1.3	92%	0.93

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

\*\*Two stool specimens collected at least 24 hours 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 (% 1 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.

All indicators are calculated year to date unless specified otherwise.