

Polio Consultation reaches broad consensus to complete polio eradication

On 28 February 2007, WHO Director-General Margaret Chan convened an *Urgent Stakeholder Consultation on Interrupting Wild Poliovirus Transmission* at WHO Headquarters in Geneva. The only remaining foci of indigenous wild poliovirus transmission are found in four countries – Nigeria, India, Pakistan and Afghanistan – where transmission has never been stopped. Special advisers to the heads of state of the endemic countries attended the Consultation together with top representation from the other spearheading partners of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative – Rotary International, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and UNICEF. Representatives from the endemic countries' ministries of finance and health, major donors, political organizations and independent technical experts also participated. European Regional Director Marc Danzon, attended the meeting and joined governments, donors and international agencies in supporting the planned massive attack on the poliovirus.

For the massive attack, the stakeholders agreed to raise and sustain the high levels of vaccination coverage needed to stop transmission. The Consultation outlined specific milestones in two areas where improvements would raise the coverage and immunity levels. The first is to ensure that vaccine reaches children by improving the quality of polio vaccination campaigns, strengthening health infrastructure, addressing security challenges, and by enhancing acceptance of vaccination through tailored social mobilization and community engagement strategies. Second, the Consultation agreed that there was a collective responsibility to mobilize the resources needed to complete polio eradication, in particular by filling the funding gap of US\$ 575 million for 2007-2008. Of this amount, US\$ 60 million is urgently needed by April. The Parliament of India has already outlined its firm financing commitment, and other endemic countries have outlined specific steps to provide domestic resources, however, without a rapid injection of funding, polio eradication activities will have to be curtailed, threatening the global polio eradication effort.

The political commitment of the four remaining polio-endemic countries remains strong and was reaffirmed by the participation of representatives from the offices of the Heads of Government. Together these countries vaccinate a total of 250 million children many times each year. The Consultation

defined specific milestones to monitor whether the collective capacity of all polio eradication stakeholders is being fully harnessed to make concrete and rapid progress.

In her address, Dr. Chan said, "We have made polio eradication a top cross-regional priority of the Organization. The presence here of Regional Directors solidifies our strengthened internal collaboration." The role of the European Region is twofold in the final push to eradicate polio: to sustain



European Regional Director Marc Danzon at the Stakeholders Consultation with fellow regional directors.

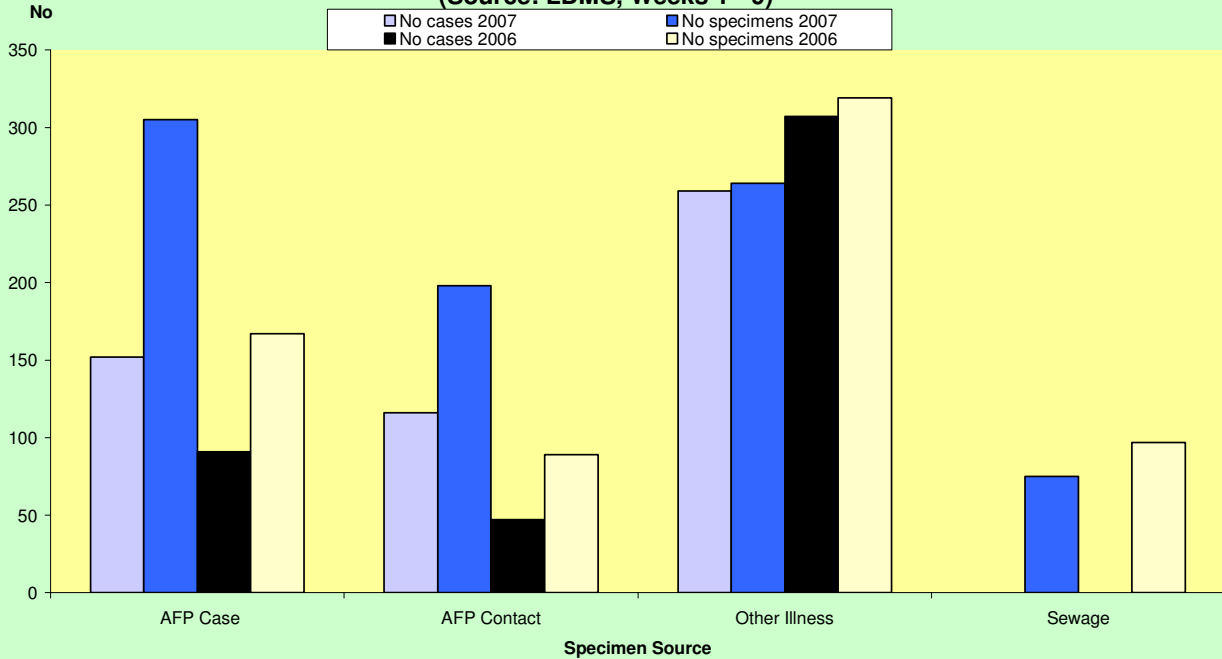
our polio-free status, and to help support the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. In addition to the four polio-endemic countries, ten countries are currently fighting outbreaks caused by importations of poliovirus, a grim reminder that this virus will travel worldwide to find unvaccinated children. Until final eradication has been achieved, the Region must remain vigilant in sustaining poliovirus immunization levels above 90% for each Member State, and maintaining high quality national polio surveillance. Finally, European donor countries and development organizations are urged to contribute generously to the Global Polio Eradication Initiative. As Dr. Chan said,

We have very few opportunities, as an international community, to do something that is unquestionably good for every country in the world. I want to reemphasize the notion of universal vulnerability. If we don't get the job done, the rest of the world is not safe from polio. ... Polio eradication will be a perpetual gift from us – and from all those in the field – to every future generation of children to be born.

POLIO LABORATORY DATA

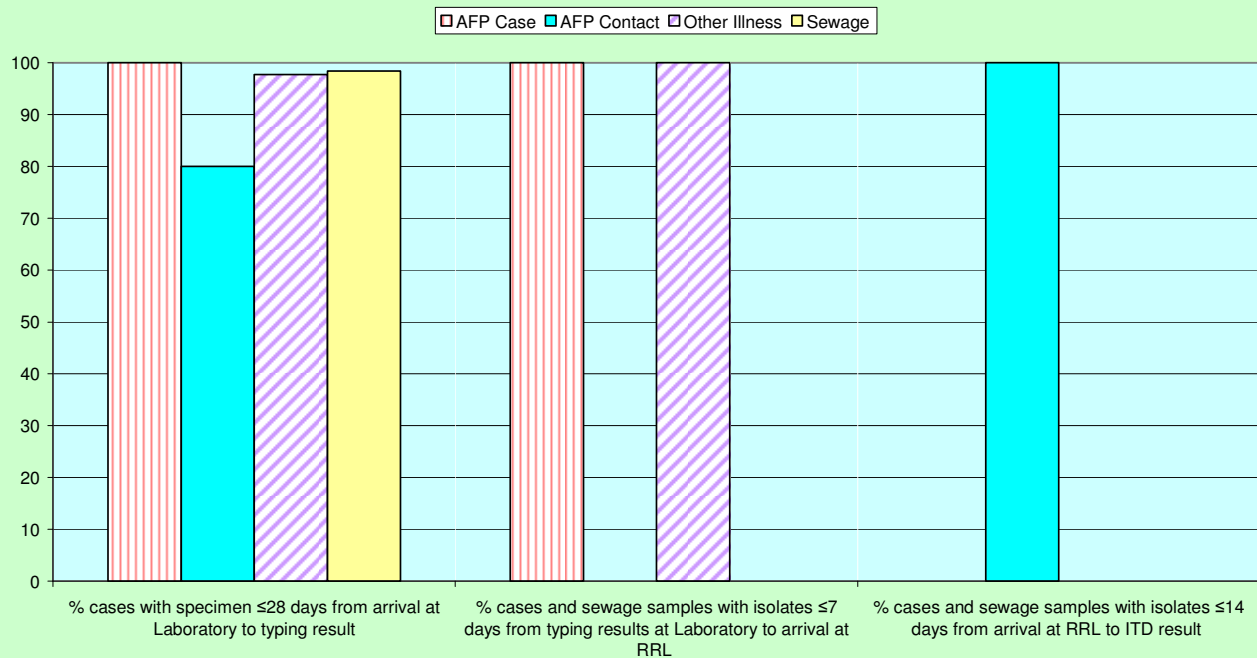
Cases and specimens processed in the Polio Laboratory Network, by source and year, 2006-2007

(Source: LDMS, Weeks 1 - 9)



Performance indicators, Polio Laboratory Network, 2007

(Source: LDMS, Weeks 1 - 9)



**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	55%	8	email	yes
Andorra*	0	100%	9	direct web entry	-
Armenia	0	77%	8	email	yes
Austria	0	100%	9	direct web entry	yes
Azerbaijan	0	100%	9	email	yes
Belarus	0	100%	9	direct web entry	yes
Belgium	0	100%	9	direct web entry	-
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	77%	9	email	partial
Bulgaria	0	88%	8	direct web entry	yes
Croatia*	0	0%		direct web entry	yes
Cyprus	0	100%	9	direct web entry	yes
Czech Republic	0	66%	9	email	
Denmark	0	0%		DNR	-
Estonia	0	100%	9	direct web entry	yes
Finland	0	0%		DNR	-
France	0	0%		DNR	-
Georgia	0	88%	9	email	yes
Germany	0	88%	8	email	yes
Greece	0	100%	9	direct web entry	partial
Hungary	0	100%	9	direct web entry	yes
Iceland	0	0%		DNR	-
Ireland	0	100%	9	direct web entry	yes
Israel	0	88%	9	email	yes
Italy	0	100%	9	direct web entry	yes
Kazakstan	0	77%	9	email	yes
Kyrgyzstan	0	66%	9	email	yes
Latvia	0	100%	9	direct web entry	yes
Lithuania	0	100%	9	direct web entry	yes
Luxembourg	0	0%		DNR	-
Malta*	0	55%	8	email	yes
Monaco	0	0%		DNR	-
Montenegro	0	0%			
Netherlands	0	0%		DNR	-
Norway	0	100%	9	direct web entry	yes
Poland	0	100%	9	direct web entry	yes
Portugal	0	88%	8	email	partial
Republic of Moldova	0	88%	8	direct web entry	yes
Romania	0	100%	9	email	partial
Russian Federation	0	88%	9	direct web entry	yes
San Marino	0	0%		DNR	-
Serbia	0	100%	9	email	partial
Slovak Republic	0	88%	9	direct web entry	yes
Slovenia*	0	100%	9	direct web entry	-
Spain	0	88%	9	direct web entry	yes
Sweden	0	0%		DNR	-
Switzerland	0	100%	9	direct web entry	yes
Tajikistan	0	77%	9	email	yes
T.F.Y.R.Macedonia	0	88%	9	email	no
Turkey	0	88%	9	email	yes
Turkmenistan	0	88%	9	email	yes
Ukraine	0	55%	9	email	yes
United Kingdom	0	0%		DNR	-
Uzbekistan	0	100%	9	email	yes
Average/Totals		86%			

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 - 9)					
	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	4	0	0	2.55	100%	1
Andorra	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Armenia	0.83	40%	0.5	3	0	3	2.71	67%	1
Austria	0.72	56%	0.48	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Azerbaijan	0.86	94%	0.81	4	0	0	1.02	100%	1
Belarus	2.8	90%	0.9	12	0	2	4.49	100%	1
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	4	0	0	2.05	100%	1
Croatia	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Cyprus	1.83	67%	1	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Czech Republic	1.03	87%	1	1	0	0	0.36	100%	0.36
Estonia	0.51	100%	0.51	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Georgia	1.11	100%	1	2	0	1	1.33	100%	1
Germany	0.54	44%	0.3	11	0	0	0.5	27%	0.18
Greece	1.26	75%	0.75	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Hungary	0.9	36%	0.51	1	0	0	0.34	100%	0.34
Ireland	1.06	22%	0.56	1	0	0	0.61	0%	0
Israel	1.06	5%	0.6	1	0	0	0.27	0%	0
Italy	0.64	65%	0.44	13	0	0	0.84	62%	0.64
Kazakhstan	1.5	94%	0.96	8	0	0	1.27	100%	1
Kyrgyzstan	1.52	96%	1	6	0	0	1.91	100%	1
Latvia	0.92	100%	0.92	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Lithuania	2.36	46%	0.85	0	0	0	0	0%	0
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	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Poland	1.06	68%	0.78	11	0	1	0.96	0%	0
Portugal	0.36	50%	0.3	2	0	0	0.62	50%	0.31
Republic of Moldova	0.81	83%	0.68	3	0	0	2.19	100%	1
Romania	1.31	86%	0.88	5	0	0	0.81	60%	0.65
Russian Federation	2.24	90%	0.92	40	0	3	0.98	95%	0.93
Serbia	1.16	86%	1	2	0	0	0.6	50%	0.3
Slovakia	0.23	100%	0.23	1	0	0	0.61	100%	0.61
Slovenia	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Spain	0.66	44%	0.4	8	0	0	0.66	62%	0.57
Switzerland	1.1	8%	0.15	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Tajikistan	0.83	100%	0.83	6	0	0	1.24	83%	0.83
T.F.Y.R.Macedonia	0.77	100%	0.77	0	0	0	0	0%	0
Turkey	0.9	84%	0.77	25	0	3	0.61	100%	0.61
Turkmenistan	1.25	95%	0.95	4	0	0	1.39	50%	0.5
Ukraine	1.9	94%	0.95	15	0	0	1.22	100%	1
Uzbekistan	1.13	99%	0.99	14	0	0	0.84	100%	0.84
Average/Totals	1.19	81%	0.86	215	0	15	0.64	81%	0.57
Recently Endemic	1.43	91%	0.92	146	0	10	0.73	93%	0.71

*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.