

Polio Outbreak in the European Region and Country Responses

Summary

As of 3 September, Tajikistan had reported 456 laboratory-confirmed cases of wild poliovirus type 1, including 20 deaths. The last confirmed case in Tajikistan had a date of onset of 4 July. Since the beginning of the year, the Russian Federation has reported 12 poliomyelitis (polio) cases.

Four rounds of national immunization days (NIDs) in Tajikistan and three rounds in Uzbekistan had taken place. Kyrgyzstan began its second round of NIDs on August 23. Turkmenistan's second round of NIDs is under way (26 August – 5 September). Coverage was extremely high in all rounds in all countries.

The WHO European Region has experienced the first importation of wild poliovirus since it was certified polio free in 2002 (Fig. 1 and 2).

Tajikistan

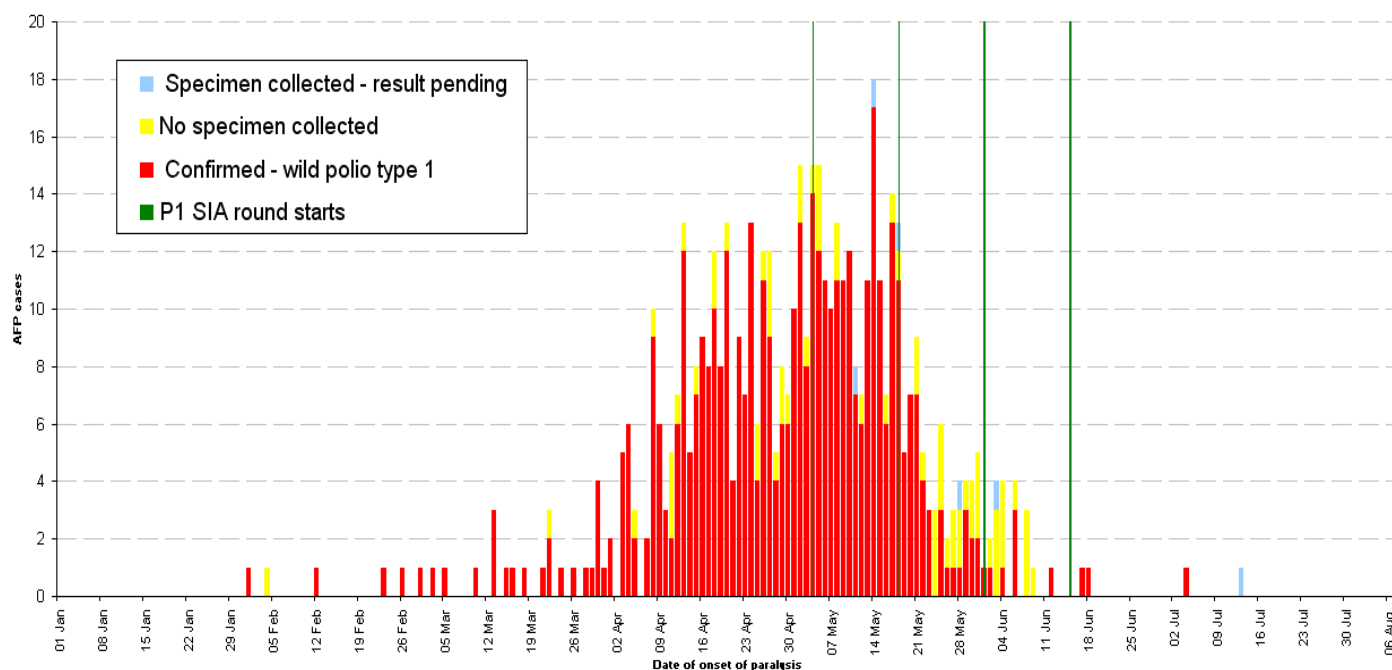
As of 3 September 2010, Tajikistan had reported 456 laboratory-confirmed cases of wild poliovirus type 1 (Fig. 1). Confirmed cases have come from 35 of 61 administrative territories (58 districts and 3 cities – Dushanbe, Khujand, and Kurgan-Tube); there is currently no evidence of transmission to Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous oblast (GBAO). The last confirmed polio case in Tajikistan had a date of onset of 4 July (over 15 years of age).

The 456 laboratory-confirmed polio cases included 20 deaths (4.4%); 4 were in infants, 8 in the group aged 1–5 years, 6 in the group aged 6–14 and 2 in people aged 15 years or more.

Administrative reports from all four rounds of NIDs show very high nationwide coverage of 99.3% or higher. Final monitoring reports from rounds 3 and 4 are being prepared.

Conducting a rapid assessment, an international expert team found that the country's surveillance system is sensitive enough to detect acute flaccid paralysis (AFP)

Fig 1. Laboratory confirmed polio cases by week of paralysis onset, Tajikistan, 2010*



Total 456 confirmed wild poliovirus type1

*Data as of 3 September 2010.

cases. Nevertheless, the team recommended that the system be strengthened. A report on the assessment is being prepared.

A mop-up campaign using monovalent oral polio vaccine type 1 (mOPV1) vaccine is planned for 13–17 September 2010 and will target 1 788 871 young people aged 0–15 years in 34 districts. Two nationwide rounds with trivalent oral polio vaccine (tOPV) are planned for 4–8 October 2010 and 8–12 November 2010 to cover susceptible populations. The target group will be people aged under 15 years.

The Russian Federation

From 1 January to 3 September 2010, the Russian Federation reported 255 AFP cases; 12 were laboratory-confirmed cases of wild poliovirus type 1 (Fig. 2). The latest reported polio case was confirmed in a child aged 2 years in the Chechen Republic, with a date of onset of 10 August 2010. The child has no history of being vaccinated against polio.

The WHO Regional Committee for Europe will hold its annual meeting in Moscow on 13–16 September. Its agenda includes sustaining the polio-free status of the European Region.

Fig. 2. Confirmed polio cases and reported AFP cases in central Asian countries and the Russian Federation



Turkmenistan

Since the beginning of the year, Turkmenistan has reported 37 AFP cases. The preliminary reported vaccination coverage was 98.9%. A second round of NIDs is under way (26 August – 5 September). A third round is due to take place two weeks afterwards, targeting people aged 15 years or less.

Uzbekistan

Since the beginning of the year, 91 AFP cases have been officially reported. To date, samples from 15 patients have been sent to the regional reference laboratory for

polio in Moscow: all were negative for poliovirus. Three rounds of NIDs with mOPV1 were conducted in Uzbekistan in June–July. Further supplementary immunization activities are planned in September.

Kazakhstan

Since the beginning of 2010, Kazakhstan has reported 54 AFP cases. Laboratory results from all cases tested by the regional reference laboratory in Moscow are negative.

The Government of Kazakhstan has approved a decree to conduct one round of NIDs on 6–10 September 2010, and thus secured funds needed to procure the vaccine through the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). The plan is to vaccinate 1 836 284 children aged 0–5 years with tOPV.

Kyrgyzstan

Since 1 January 2010, Kyrgyzstan has reported 33 AFP cases, of which 31 tested negative in the reference laboratory in Moscow; the results of the 2 others are pending. WHO is following up with the Ministry of Health of Kyrgyzstan to avoid delays in AFP reporting and to ensure timely shipment of specimens and incorporation of laboratory results.

According to official data from the Ministry, national coverage during the first round of NIDs (19–23 July) was 95.2%, with 638 326 people immunized. The second round took place on

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