EUROPEAN IMMUNIZATION WEEK
24-30 April 2019
Communications package
JOIN us in celebrating EIW 2019 and SPREAD the word that #VaccinesWork
BACKGROUND

Vaccination is a life-long investment in children’s health and well-being. Thanks to vaccines, most children and adults in the European Region are immune to measles, rubella, mumps, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus and polio. An increasing number are also vaccinated against pneumococcal bacteria, human papillomavirus and hepatitis B virus to prevent the severe forms of disease they can cause. With an average of 90% coverage across the Region, more children received the second dose of measles containing vaccine in 2017 than ever before.

However, despite the progress already made in reducing the threat of vaccine-preventable diseases, too many people are still missing out on the protective benefits of vaccination. More effort is needed to ensure that immunization coverage gaps are closed and that no one is left behind. The cost of not vaccinating is clear. In 2018, over 82 000 people suffered from measles and 72 died of related complications in the European Region. Gaps in immunization coverage are an open door for contagious vaccine-preventable diseases, allowing them to spread among those who are not vaccinated.

Achievement of the European Vaccine Action Plan (EVAP) vision of a “European Region free of vaccine-preventable diseases, where countries provide equitable access to high-quality, safe, affordable vaccines and immunization services throughout the life course” is a vital stepping stone to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in particular Goal 3 “to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”.

OBJECTIVE and THEME

European Immunization Week (EIW) 2019 will help sustain momentum toward this vision by raising awareness of the importance of vaccination. The slogan Prevent. Protect. Immunize. carries this message across the Region. In conjunction with other regional initiatives and World Immunization Week, the European Region will use EIW 2019 as an opportunity to celebrate everyday vaccine heroes, the individuals who contribute in so many ways to protecting lives through vaccination, including vaccine researchers, policy-makers who make sure every child has equitable access to vaccines, health workers who administer vaccines, parents who choose vaccination for their children as well as everyone who seeks out and shares evidence-based information about vaccines.

The week will also be celebrated in other WHO regions and globally as World Immunization Week (WIW): https://www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2019/04/24/default-calendar/world-immunization-week-2019.
Every year, vaccines save millions of lives.

We can all do our part to #immunizeEurope as vaccine heroes
KEY MESSAGES

“Vaccine heroes”

- Policy-makers create the medical, educational and social systems needed to ensure equitable access to vaccines.
- Health professionals are the most trusted source of information about vaccines for their patients. Raising awareness about vaccines saves lives.
- Every parent plays a vital role in protecting their children and others by choosing to vaccinate. Every child deserves to be protected from vaccine-preventable diseases.
- Vaccine researchers have saved millions of lives by developing safe and effective vaccines. Ongoing innovation will expand this protection to more diseases in the future.
- By sharing the facts about vaccines, everyone can help raise awareness about immunization being a life-saving tool.
- It takes many people working toward the same goal of protecting life to ensure that every child receives the vaccines they deserve.

“Get the facts”

- Vaccination prevents disease, protects life and is a strong foundation for life-long health and well-being.
- Vaccination against contagious diseases protects not only the person vaccinated, but also those around them.
- Thanks to vaccination, polio has been reduced by 99.9% since 1988. Together we can end polio.
- Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination can prevent up to 90% of cervical cancer cases.
- The HPV vaccine combined with regular screening is the most effective tool for preventing cervical cancer.
- Measles is one of the world’s most contagious diseases. Unvaccinated young children have the highest risk of getting measles and its complications, including death.
- Rubella infection in pregnant women may cause fetal death or congenital defects. Vaccination against rubella during childhood protects a person for life.
- The hepB vaccine is 95% effective in preventing infection and the development of chronic disease and liver cancer caused by hepatitis B.
- Combined vaccines, such as the diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (DTP) vaccine, reduce the number of clinic visits and injections needed, thereby reducing the discomfort experienced by a child.
CAMPAIGN MATERIAL

Campaign material will be available via the EIW 2019 website: www.euro.who.int/eiw2019

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#VaccinesWork

Sharing the facts about vaccines can save lives.

Do your part to
#ImmunizeEurope
RESOURCES

- European Immunization Week 2019 [www.euro.who.int/eiw2019](http://www.euro.who.int/eiw2019)
- Highlights of European Immunization Week 2018 [http://bit.ly/2MgCA6g](http://bit.ly/2MgCA6g)

CONNECT AND SPREAD THE WORD THAT #VaccinesWork

To promote your EIW initiatives, see what is being planned near you and connect with other EIW stakeholders, visit the EIW Facebook event page: [https://www.facebook.com/pg/WHOEurope/events/?ref=page_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/WHOEurope/events/?ref=page_internal)

For more information please contact:
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Get the facts.
Share the facts.
Be a vaccine hero!

Everyone can contribute to raising awareness about immunization.

Let’s work together.