EUROPEAN IMMUNIZATION WEEK  
23-29 APRIL 2018  

Communications package
BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE

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 papilomavirus and hepatitis B virus to prevent severe forms of disease and cancers these microbes can cause.

Unfortunately the benefits of vaccines are spread unevenly in the European Region, with far too many children missing the protection they deserve. 1 in 15 infants in the European Region missed their first measles-containing vaccine in 2016 and 1 in 21 did not receive all recommended doses of vaccines against diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis. Uptake of HPV vaccines is still below 50% in some countries.

The cost of not vaccinating is clear. Gaps in immunization coverage are an open door for contagious diseases, allowing them to spread among those who are not vaccinated. Every year thousands of measles cases are detected in this Region and many still suffer unnecessarily from mumps and pertussis. In 2017, the Regional Certification Commission for polio eradication determined that 3 countries in the Region are at risk of a polio outbreak. Most sexually active women and men will be infected with HPV at some point in their lives. Among those who are not immunized, HPV infection can cause genital warts or lead to various forms of cancer.

Objective
The objective of European Immunization Week (EIW) 2018 is to sustain momentum toward a European Region free of vaccine-preventable diseases by raising awareness of the importance of vaccination as an individual right and a shared responsibility.

In conjunction with other regional initiatives and World Immunization Week, the European Region will utilize EIW 2018 as an opportunity to highlight how vaccines work to protect individuals and their communities and to help achieve the global Sustainable Development Goals.

The week will also be celebrated in other WHO regions and globally as World Immunization Week (WIW):
Immunization is a right and a responsibility. Every person deserves to be protected from vaccine-preventable diseases and plays a vital role in protecting others by choosing to vaccinate.

Tagline: Vaccines work to protect you and those around you from serious diseases #Vaccineswork #immunizeEurope

European Immunization Week 2018 activities and materials will seek to:

- raise awareness of how vaccines work to protect health, both for those who are vaccinated and, through herd immunity, for those who cannot be vaccinated;
- remind teens, parents and health care professionals to make evidence-informed choices about immunization and share only evidence-based information;
- make parents aware of the importance of keeping their family’s immunizations up to date, for their own protection as well as for the protection of others;
- encourage health authorities and health professionals to raise awareness about vaccines to help sustain demand for vaccination.
KEY MESSAGES

This communications package is designed to support EIW stakeholders, by providing them with consistent messages with which to develop EIW materials and communicate with the media, health professionals, decision-makers and the general public.

Please select the messages that apply to your particular immunization priorities and/or challenges – or use alternative messages that are more relevant to your specific needs.

• #Vaccineswork to protect people of all ages from potentially dangerous diseases.
• Every person deserves to be protected from vaccine-preventable diseases and plays a vital role in protecting others by choosing to vaccinate.
• When all eligible individuals are fully vaccinated those who cannot be vaccinated are also protected through herd immunity.
• Consult with your doctor and check your family’s immunization records to make sure that you are all fully protected.
• False information can influence choices and endanger lives. Get the facts and share only evidence-based information about vaccines.
• Health professionals are the most trusted source of information about vaccines for their patients. Raising awareness about vaccines saves lives.
• Equitable access to immunization is the right of every individual and community.
• Immunization helps us to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
• Immunization keeps us protected together.

More information on WHO recommendations for routine immunization are available on the WHO website:
http://www.who.int/immunization/policy/immunization_tables/en/
CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Infographic I
How vaccines work

Infographic II
Herd Immunity: fighting measles is a shared responsibility

Infographic III
Measles

Infographic IV
Rubella

Poster

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Do your part to #immunizeEurope!

DID YOU KNOW...

Region in the WHO European circulating anywhere as long as rubella is
women infected with the rubella virus early in pregnancy will lose their
defects, hearing impairment, heart, eye.

Children born with congenital rubella syndrome.

For some diseases, more doses of vaccine may be needed
later in life, may be needed than one dose of the
to stop the chain of infection, vaccinated children and adults prevent the virus from
potentially reaching babies too young to be vaccinated and people who cannot be vaccinated because of weakened or

Herd Immunity: fighting measles is a SHARED responsibility

BEFORE VACCINES

Contracted the disease. Many suffered serious complications such
as ear infection, encephalitis or even death.

Before vaccines were available, there was no way to stop the
disease from spreading. Each time a community was exposed to

BBUILD THE HERD

1 IN 5 CASES

Vaccination provides nearly 100% protection against
measles.

Measles REMAINS A THREAT in the WHO European Region

YOU CAN STOP MEASLES

To protect you and those around you from serious diseases

YOU CAN STOP RUBELLA

Produce the next generation by making sure you and your family

Do your part to #immunizeEurope!
The WHO Regional Office for Europe encourages immunization stakeholders at national and local levels to get involved in EIW by joining or organizing campaigns. The following resources, available at http://www.euro.who.int/iew2018, can help you get started in the weeks leading up to EIW 2018:

- Background document: Why is EIW important?
- EIW guidelines for planning, PR and working with the media
- EIW meeting folders, posters and other materials
- Information materials for health workers and the general public
- Advocacy tools for policy-makers and health authorities

Global materials with the “Vaccines work” theme are available on the WHO headquarters website:
To promote your EIW initiatives, see what is being planned near you and connect with other EIW stakeholders, visit the Immunize Europe Forum:

www.immunize-europe.org

For more information please contact eueiw@who.int