



COMMUNICABLE DISEASE THREATS REPORT

CDTR

Week 37, 6-12 September 2020

All users

This weekly bulletin provides updates on threats monitored by ECDC.

NEWS

ESCAIDE 2020 will happen online, and this year's edition has even greater relevance than usual given the current global attention on communicable disease prevention and control. The eyes of the world are looking to the ESCAIDE family of epidemiologists, microbiologists and public health professionals to address the many key questions that remain in order to support meaningful action against COVID-19.

We believe that ESCAIDE 2020 will therefore offer a hugely important opportunity to exchange information on infectious diseases, and COVID-19 in particular.

The conference welcomes abstracts in all areas related to infectious disease prevention and control, including epidemiology, public health microbiology, surveillance, and the application of tools and methods to support infectious disease outbreaks or interventions.

The call for abstracts will close on 14 September 2020.

Submit an abstract: <https://www.escaide.eu/en/presenters/call-abstracts>

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I. Executive summary

EU Threats

New! Tick-borne encephalitis - Germany - 2020

Opening date: 10 September 2020

Latest update: 11 September 2020

A very large number of tick-borne encephalitis (TBE) cases have been reported in Germany, most of which were acquired in southern Germany, putting the country on course for a record number of annual cases

West Nile virus - Multi-country (World) - Monitoring season 2020

Opening date: 20 May 2020

Latest update: 11 September 2020

During the transmission season for West Nile virus, which usually runs from June to November, ECDC monitors the occurrence of infections in the EU/EEA and EU neighbouring countries. ECDC publishes weekly epidemiological updates to inform blood safety authorities. Data reported through The European Surveillance System (TESSy) are presented at the NUTS 3 (nomenclature of territorial units for statistics 3) level for EU/EEA Member States and at the GAUL 1 (global administrative unit layers 1) level for the EU neighbouring countries.

→Update of the week

Between 4 and 10 September 2020, EU Member States reported 14 human cases of WNV infection, all by Greece. All cases were reported from areas that have been affected during previous transmission seasons. This week, three deaths were reported by Greece. No human cases of WNV infection or deaths were reported from neighbouring EU countries.

On 3 September 2020, [German public health authorities](#) reported the first human autochthonous WNV infections in Germany during this transmission season. On 10 September, they reported nine [further human WNV infections](#) in Leipzig (7), Meissen (1) and Berlin (1). Further suspected cases are being investigated. Virus circulation in birds has been documented in Germany since July 2020, in a similar area as in 2019. The human WNV infections and outbreaks among birds in 2020 have not been reported through TESSy and the Animal Disease Notification System (ADNS) yet. Therefore they are currently not represented on the maps and in the Surveillance Atlas.

ECDC links: [West Nile virus infection atlas](#)

Sources: TESSy

COVID-19 associated with SARS-CoV-2 – Multi-country (World) – 2020

Opening date: 7 January 2020

Latest update: 11 September 2020

On 31 December 2019, the Wuhan Municipal Health and Health Commission reported a cluster of pneumonia cases of unknown aetiology with a common source of exposure at Wuhan's 'South China Seafood City' market. Further investigations identified a novel coronavirus as the causative agent of the respiratory symptoms for these cases. The outbreak has rapidly evolved, affecting other parts of China and other countries. On 30 January 2020, WHO's Director declared that the outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) constituted a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), accepting the Committee's advice and issuing temporary recommendations under the International Health Regulations (IHR).

→Update of the week

Since 29 August 2020 and as of 11 September 2020, 1 864 106 new cases of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) (in accordance with the applied case definition in the countries) have been reported, including 40 869 new deaths.

Globally, the number of cases has increased from 26 335 685 to 28 199 791, and the number of deaths has risen from 869 209 to 910 078.

In the EU/EEA and the United Kingdom (UK), the number of cases has increased from 2 304 846 to 2 511 049 (+ 206 203 cases)

More details are available [here](#).

Measles – Multi-country (World) – Monitoring European outbreaks

Opening date: 9 February 2011

Latest update: 11 September 2020

Measles cases in the EU/EEA and the UK continue to occur among both adults and children. However, a sharp decrease in the reporting of measles cases has been observed during the COVID-19 pandemic in the EU/EEA and the UK, as well as in other countries across the globe.

→Update of the week

Since the previous monthly measles update in ECDC's Communicable Disease Threats Report (CDTR) on 21 August 2020, five new cases have been reported by two EU/EEA countries and UK: Germany (3) and Ireland (2). No other countries reported new cases of measles.

No new deaths have been reported by EU/EEA countries or the UK. Overall, two deaths have been reported in the EU/EEA and the UK in 2020, both from Bulgaria.

Relevant updates outside the EU/EEA and the UK are available for the WHO Regional Office for Africa.

Disclaimer: the [monthly measles report published in the CDTR](#) provides the most recent data on cases and outbreaks from the publicly available information of national public health authorities or media. This report is supplementary to [ECDC's monthly measles and rubella monitoring report](#), based on data routinely submitted by 30 EU/EEA countries and the UK to The European Surveillance System (TESSy). Data presented in the two monthly reports may differ.

Non EU Threats

Ebola virus disease - eleventh outbreak - Democratic Republic of the Congo - 2020

Opening date: 4 June 2020

Latest update: 11 September 2020

On 1 June 2020, the Ministry of Health of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) [declared](#) the 11th outbreak of Ebola virus disease (EVD) in the country. The outbreak is located in Equateur Province in the north-west of the country, close to the border with Congo.

→ Update of the week

Since the last update and as of 8 September 2020, three additional cases, including one additional death, have been reported from Equateur Province in the DRC.

On 5 September 2020, Bomongo health zone reported its first case, thereby becoming the 12th health zone affected in this outbreak. The case was reported in Buburu village, close to the river that borders the DRC with Congo.

Poliomyelitis – Multi-country (World) – Monitoring global outbreaks

Opening date: 9 December 2019

Latest update: 11 September 2020

Global public health efforts to eradicate polio are continuing by immunising every child until transmission of the virus has stopped and the world becomes polio-free. On 5 May 2014, polio was declared a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) by the World Health Organization due to concerns over the increased circulation and international spread of wild poliovirus in 2014. The Emergency Committee under the International Health Regulations (2005) stated that the risk of the international spread of poliovirus remains a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC).

In June 2002, the WHO European Region was officially declared polio-free.

→ Update of the week

Since the previous update and as of 1 September 2020, 113 cases of polioviruses (WPV1, cVDPV2 and cVDPV1) have been reported, 11 of which were caused by the WPV1 strain, 14 by the cVDPV1 strain and 88 by the cVDPV2 strain.

Wild poliovirus (WPV1):

- Six cases of AFP caused by WPV1 have been reported in Afghanistan.
- Five cases of Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) caused by WPV1 have been reported in Pakistan.
- 41 WPV1 environmental samples have also been detected: 37 in Pakistan and four in Afghanistan.

Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV):

- 14 cases of cVDPV1 have been reported by Yemen.
- 88 cases of AFP caused by cVDPV2 have been reported from 10 countries: Afghanistan (40), Sudan (13), Chad (11), Cote d'Ivoire (10), Democratic Republic of the Congo (6), Somalia (3), Ethiopia (2), Benin (1), Cameroon (1) and Nigeria (1).
- No new cases of cVDPV3 have been reported.
- 36 cVDPV2 environmental samples have also been detected: 19 in Afghanistan, seven in Pakistan, four in Somalia, three in Sudan, two in Mali and one in Cameroon.

II. Detailed reports

New! Tick-borne encephalitis - Germany - 2020

Opening date: 10 September 2020

Latest update: 11 September 2020

Epidemiological summary

Summary: According to the Robert-Koch-Institute, the number of tick-borne encephalitis (TBE) cases in Germany since the beginning of 2020 are [on course to reach an annual record high](#). In 2020, as of 11 September, 567 cases have been reported. Most of these cases (around 90%) were acquired in two southern federal states, Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria. The increase is likely due to many Germans spending this year's summer holiday visiting popular destinations in mountainous recreational areas within these regions. In addition, the number of vector ticks (*Ixodes ricinus*) present in southern Germany this year is extremely high, with a three-fold increase of adult ticks compared to 2019.

Background: TBE is a viral disease transmitted through the bites of infected ticks occurring across many parts of Europe, with the highest notification rates in northern, central and eastern European countries. TBE follows a seasonal pattern, with most cases usually reported between June and September.

TBE is common across southern Germany and infection rates have been on the rise in recent years (see our [AER 2018](#) for further information).

Sources: [RKI](#), [ProMed](#)

ECDC assessment

Assessment: The likelihood of infection can be considered moderate for unvaccinated people exposed to ticks in affected regions of Germany.

People who live in, or travel to, regions where tick-borne encephalitis is endemic should be aware of the risk of exposure to ticks, protect themselves against tick bites and consider vaccination prior to exposure, which offers the most effective protection. Vaccination is recommended for people who live in TBE risk areas or who frequently visit forests and grasslands. It is advised to avoid consumption of [unpasteurised milk and dairy products in TBE risk areas](#).

Actions

Action: ECDC is following this event through its epidemic intelligence activities, and will report when relevant information is available. Data on TBE from EU/EEA countries is collected annually through TESSy. Vector distribution maps for Europe are available on [ECDC's website](#).

West Nile virus - Multi-country (World) - Monitoring season 2020

Opening date: 20 May 2020

Latest update: 11 September 2020

Epidemiological summary

Between 4 and 10 September 2020, EU Member States reported 14 human cases of WNV infection, all by Greece. All cases were reported from areas that have been affected during previous transmission seasons. This week, three deaths were reported by Greece. No human cases of WNV infection or deaths were reported from neighbouring EU countries.

On 3 September 2020, German public health authorities reported the first human autochthonous WNV infections in Germany during this transmission season. On 10 September they reported nine further human WNV infections in Leipzig (7), Meissen (1) and Berlin (1). Further suspected cases are being investigated. Virus circulation in birds has been documented since July 2020 in Germany, in a similar area as in 2019. The human WNV infections and outbreaks among birds in 2020 have not been reported through TESSy and ADNS yet. Therefore they are currently not represented on the maps and in the Surveillance Atlas.

Since the start of the 2020 transmission season and as of 10 September 2020, EU Member States have reported 173 human cases of WNV infection and 15 deaths through TESSy: Greece (91, including 12 deaths), Spain (49, including 3 deaths), Italy (29) and Romania (4). All cases were reported from areas that have been affected during previous transmission seasons. No cases have been reported from EU-neighbouring countries.

Since the beginning of the 2020 transmission season, 60 outbreaks among equids have been reported. These outbreaks have been reported by Spain (51, including 29 in the province of Seville), Italy (6), France (1), Portugal (1) and Germany (1) through ADNS. No outbreaks among birds have been reported through ADNS.

ECDC links: [West Nile virus infection atlas](#)

Sources: TESSy | Animal Disease Notification System

ECDC assessment

Human WNV infections have been reported in five EU Member States (Greece, Italy, Romania, Spain and Germany) in which WNV enzootic transmission between mosquitoes and birds has previously been described.

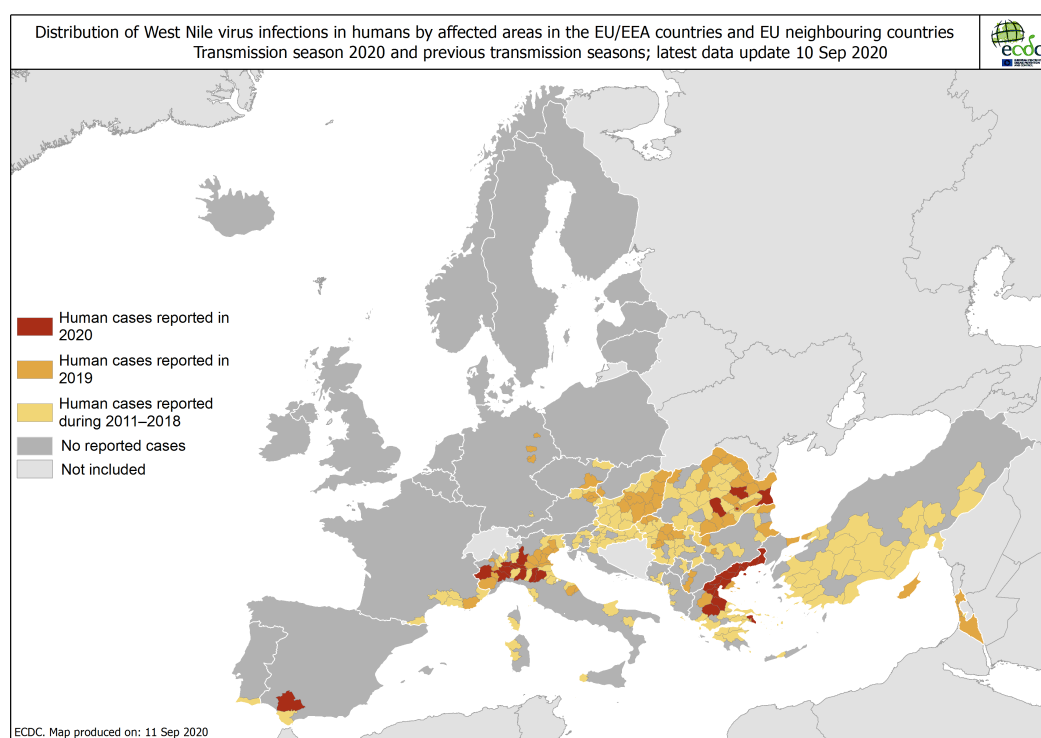
In accordance with Commission Directive 2014/110/EU, prospective donors should be deferred for 28 days after leaving a risk area for locally-acquired WNV infection, unless the result of an individual nucleic acid test is negative.

Actions

During the transmission seasons, ECDC publishes a set of WNV transmission maps and an epidemiological summary every Friday.

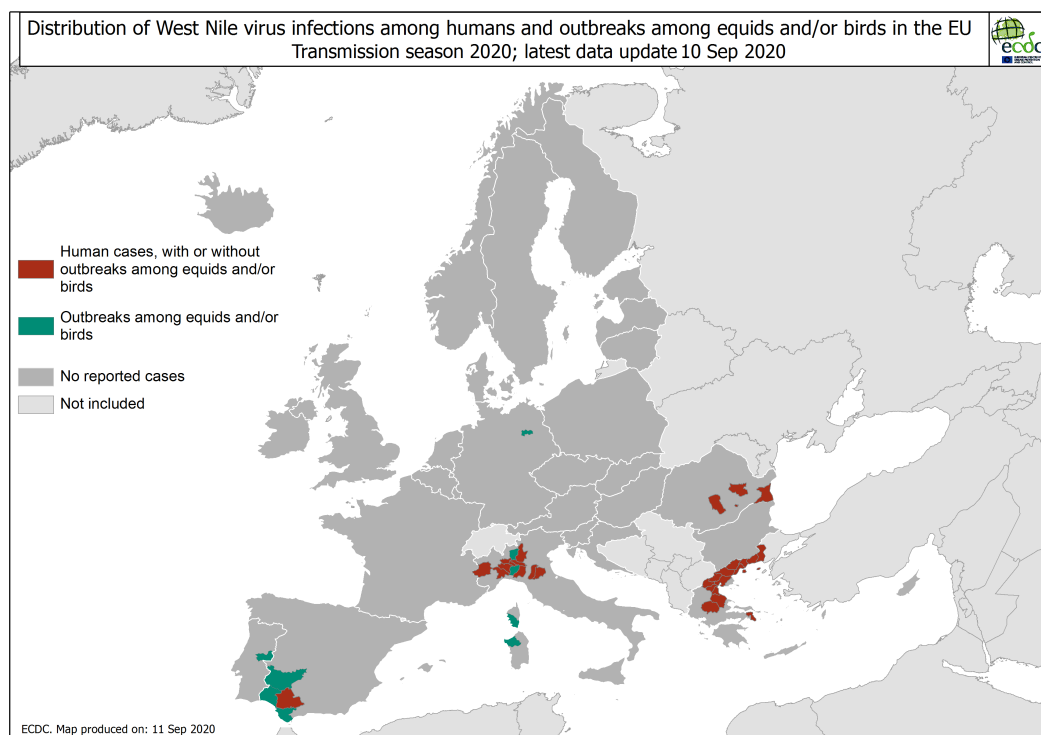
Distribution of human West Nile virus infections by affected areas as of 10 Sep

ECDC



Distribution of West Nile virus infections among humans and outbreaks among equids and/or birds in the EU as of 10 Sep

ECDC and ADNS



COVID-19 associated with SARS-CoV-2 – Multi-country (World) – 2020

Opening date: 7 January 2020

Latest update: 11 September 2020

Epidemiological summary

Since 31 December 2019 and as of 11 September 2020, 28 199 791 cases of COVID-19 (in accordance with the applied case definitions and testing strategies in the affected countries) have been reported, including 910 078 deaths.

Cases have been reported from:

Africa: 1 331 098 cases; the five countries reporting most cases are South Africa (644 438), Egypt (100 557), Morocco (79 767), Ethiopia (62 578) and Nigeria (55 829).

Asia: 8 184 242 cases; the five countries reporting most cases are India (4 562 414), Iran (395 488), Bangladesh (332 970), Saudi Arabia (323 720) and Pakistan (300 371).

America: 14 594 938 cases; the five countries reporting most cases are United States (6 397 227), Brazil (4 238 446), Peru (710 067), Colombia (694 664) and Mexico (652 364).

Europe: 4 057 597 cases; the five countries reporting most cases are Russia (1 046 370), Spain (554 143), United Kingdom (358 138), France (353 944) and Italy (283 180).

Oceania: 31 220 cases; the five countries reporting most cases are Australia (26 513), Guam (1 846), New Zealand (1 442), French Polynesia (795) and Papua New Guinea (507).

Other: 696 cases have been reported from an international conveyance in Japan.

Deaths have been reported from:

Africa: 32 119 deaths; the five countries reporting most deaths are South Africa (15 265), Egypt (5 590), Algeria (1 591), Morocco (1 491) and Nigeria (1 075).

Asia: 157 894 deaths; the five countries reporting most deaths are India (76 271), Iran (22 798), Indonesia (8 456), Iraq (7 814) and Turkey (6 895).

America: 505 897 deaths; the five countries reporting most deaths are United States (191 789), Brazil (129 522), Mexico (69 649), Peru (30 344) and Colombia (22 275).

Europe: 213 318 deaths; the five countries reporting most deaths are United Kingdom (41 608), Italy (35 587), France (30 813), Spain (29 699) and Russia (18 263).

Oceania: 843 deaths; the five countries reporting most deaths are Australia (788), New Zealand (24), Guam (22), Papua New

6/14

Guinea (5) and Fiji (2).

Other: seven deaths have been reported from an international conveyance in Japan.

EU/EEA and the UK:

As of 11 September 2020, 2 511 049 cases have been reported in the EU/EEA and the UK: Spain (554 143), United Kingdom (358 138), France (353 944), Italy (283 180), Germany (256 850), Romania (99 684), Belgium (90 474), Sweden (86 194), Netherlands (78 438), Poland (72 453), Portugal (62 126), Czechia (32 413), Austria (31 666), Ireland (30 360), Denmark (18 924), Bulgaria (17 598), Croatia (12 917), Greece (12 452), Norway (11 746), Hungary (10 191), Finland (8 469), Luxembourg (7 088), Slovakia (5 021), Slovenia (3 388), Lithuania (3 199), Estonia (2 600), Malta (2 162), Iceland (2 157), Cyprus (1 517), Latvia (1 448) and Liechtenstein (109).

As of 11 September 2020, 183 697 deaths have been reported in the EU/EEA and the UK: United Kingdom (41 608), Italy (35 587), France (30 813), Spain (29 699), Belgium (9 917), Germany (9 342), Netherlands (6 240), Sweden (5 843), Romania (4 065), Poland (2 159), Portugal (1 852), Ireland (1 781), Austria (748), Bulgaria (706), Hungary (630), Denmark (629), Czechia (448), Finland (337), Greece (297), Norway (265), Croatia (208), Slovenia (131), Luxembourg (124), Lithuania (86), Estonia (64), Slovakia (37), Latvia (35), Cyprus (21), Malta (14), Iceland (10) and Liechtenstein (1).

EU:

As of 11 September 2020, 2 138 899 cases and 141 813 deaths have been reported in the EU.

Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC):

On 30 January 2020, the World Health Organization declared that the outbreak of COVID-19 constitutes a PHEIC. On 11 March 2020, the [Director-General of the WHO](#) declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic. The [third](#) and [fourth](#) International Health Regulations (IHR) Emergency Committee meeting for COVID-19 were held in Geneva on 30 April and 31 July 2020, respectively. The committee concluded during both meetings that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to constitute a PHEIC.

Sources: [Wuhan Municipal Health Commission](#) | [China CDC](#) | [WHO statement](#) | [WHO coronavirus website](#) | [ECDC 2019-nCoV website](#) | [RAGIDA](#) | [WHO](#)

ECDC assessment

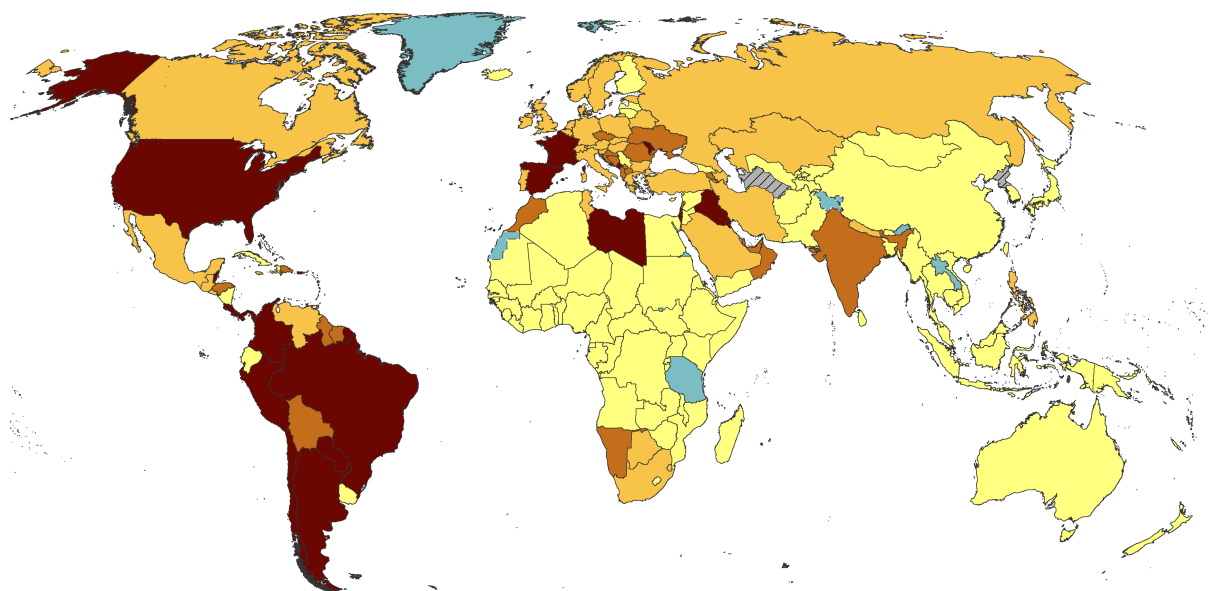
Information on the COVID-19 situation and a risk assessment can be found on [ECDC's website](#).

Actions

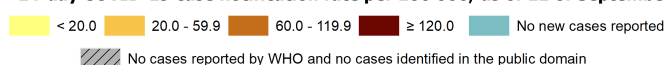
ECDC activities related to COVID-19 can be found on [ECDC's website](#).

Geographic distribution of 14-day cumulative number of reported COVID-19 cases per 100 000 population, worldwide, as of 11 September 2020

ECDC



14-day COVID-19 case notification rate per 100 000, as of 11 of September, 2020



The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the European Union.

Date of production: 11/09/2020

Measles – Multi-country (World) – Monitoring European outbreaks

Opening date: 9 February 2011

Latest update: 11 September 2020

Epidemiological summary

Since the previous monthly measles update in ECDC's Communicable Disease Threats Report (CDTR) on 21 August 2020, five new cases have been reported by two EU/EEA countries and UK: Germany (3) and Ireland (2). Other countries did not report new cases of measles.

No new deaths have been reported by EU/EEA countries and the UK. Overall, two deaths have been reported in the EU/EEA and UK in 2020, both from Bulgaria.

Relevant updates outside the EU/EEA and the UK are available for the WHO Regional Office for Africa.

Routine immunisation sessions should be maintained as long as COVID-19 response measures allow.

In May 2019, WHO classified measles outbreaks across the European Region as a [Grade 2 emergency](#). On 29 August 2019, the [European Regional Verification Commission for Measles and Rubella Elimination \(RVC\)](#) determined that, for the first time since the verification process began in the Region in 2012, four countries (Albania, the Czech Republic, Greece and the United Kingdom) had lost their measles elimination status.

Disclaimer: the [monthly measles report published in the CDTR](#) provides the most recent data on cases and outbreaks from the publicly available information of national public health authorities or media. This report is supplementary to [ECDC's monthly measles and rubella monitoring report](#), based on data routinely submitted by 30 EU/EEA countries and the UK to The European Surveillance System (TESSy). Data presented in the two monthly reports may differ.

Epidemiological summary for EU/EEA countries and the UK with updates since last month

[Germany](#) reported 139 cases in 2020 and as of week 36 (ending 6 September 2020) an increase of three cases since week 32 (ending 9 August 2020).

[Ireland](#) reported 16 cases in 2020 and as of week 35 (ending 2 September 2020) an increase of two cases since week 32 (ending 8 August 2020).

[Poland](#) reported 28 cases in 2020 and as of 31 August, a decrease of one case since 31 July 2020.

Relevant epidemiological summary for countries outside the EU/EEA and the UK

A global overview is available on [WHO's website](#). Additional information with the latest available data is provided for several countries.

According to the WHO Regional Office for Africa ([AFRO](#)), as of 6 September 2020 (week 36), outbreaks of measles were reported in the following countries: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria and South Sudan.

Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) reported 69 249 cases of measles in 2020 and as of 9 August 2020, including 987 deaths (CFR: 1.4%), an increase of 437 cases and eight deaths since 2 August 2020. Since 2019 and as of 9 August 2020 a total of 380 766 measles cases and 7 018 deaths (CFR 1.8%) were reported in the country. In addition, [media reports](#) quote the Minister of Health Eteni Longondo on 25 August 2020 saying that measles outbreak in DRC, which lasted for 25 months, is declared over.

There were no recent updates available from [WHO PAHO](#) (Pan American Health Organization) and [WHO WPRO](#) (Western Pacific Region) regions.

ECDC assessment

A substantial decline in measles cases reported by the EU/EEA countries and the UK after March 2020 contrasts with the typical seasonal pattern seen for measles, which peaks in the spring in temperate climates. A similar decrease has been observed in other countries worldwide during the same period. Under-reporting, under-diagnosis or a real decrease, due to the direct or indirect effects of the COVID-19 pandemic measures, could explain the decline of cases observed. Nevertheless, achieving the best possible vaccine uptake in the current circumstances is crucial in order to prevent measles outbreaks in the future.

Actions

ECDC monitors the measles situation through its epidemic intelligence activities, which supplement a monthly report with measles surveillance data from The European Surveillance System (TESSy) for 30 EU/EEA countries. ECDC published a [risk assessment](#) entitled 'Who is at risk of measles in the EU/EEA?' on 28 May 2019.

Ebola virus disease - eleventh outbreak - Democratic Republic of the Congo - 2020

Opening date: 4 June 2020

Latest update: 11 September 2020

Epidemiological summary

Since the start of the outbreak and as of 8 September 2020, a total of 113 cases (107 confirmed, six probable), including 48 deaths, have been reported from Bikoro (30), Bolenge (1), Bolomba (13), Bomongo (1), Iboko (4), Ingende (12), Lilanga Bobangi (6), Lolanga Mampoko (5), Lotumbe (11), Mbandaka (26), Monieka (2) and Wangata (2) health zones in Equateur province of the DRC.

Since the beginning of the vaccination campaign with rVSV-ZEBOV-GP on 5 June 2020, 27 303 people have been vaccinated.

Background: From May to July 2018, the [ninth Ebola outbreak](#) in the DRC occurred in Mbandaka, Bikoro and in the Equateur province, leading to a total of 54 cases, including 33 deaths. According to the World Health Organization, the current event seems to be separate from the [10th Ebola outbreak](#) in the eastern part of the country, which resulted in 3 470 cases, including 2 287 deaths and was declared over on 25 June 2020. [Sequencing](#) results confirm the new outbreak as a separate spill-over event. This is the DRC's [11th outbreak](#) of Ebola virus disease since 1976 when the virus was first discovered.

In addition to Ebola outbreaks, the country is currently affected by other major outbreaks such as COVID-19, cholera, monkeypox, polio and the bubonic plague.

Sources: [WHO DRC Twitter](#) | [WHO Afro Twitter](#) | [WHO Afro Sitrep](#) | [WHO Afro bulletin](#) | [WHO DON](#) | [WHO News item](#) | [Dr Tedros](#)

ECDC assessment

Ebola outbreaks in the DRC are recurrent, as the virus is present in animal reservoirs in many parts of the country. Implementing response measures is crucial, and a high level of surveillance is essential to detect and interrupt further transmission early on. Response measures can be challenging amid the other outbreaks ongoing in the country. The overall risk to the EU/EEA is very low, especially with current travel limitations.

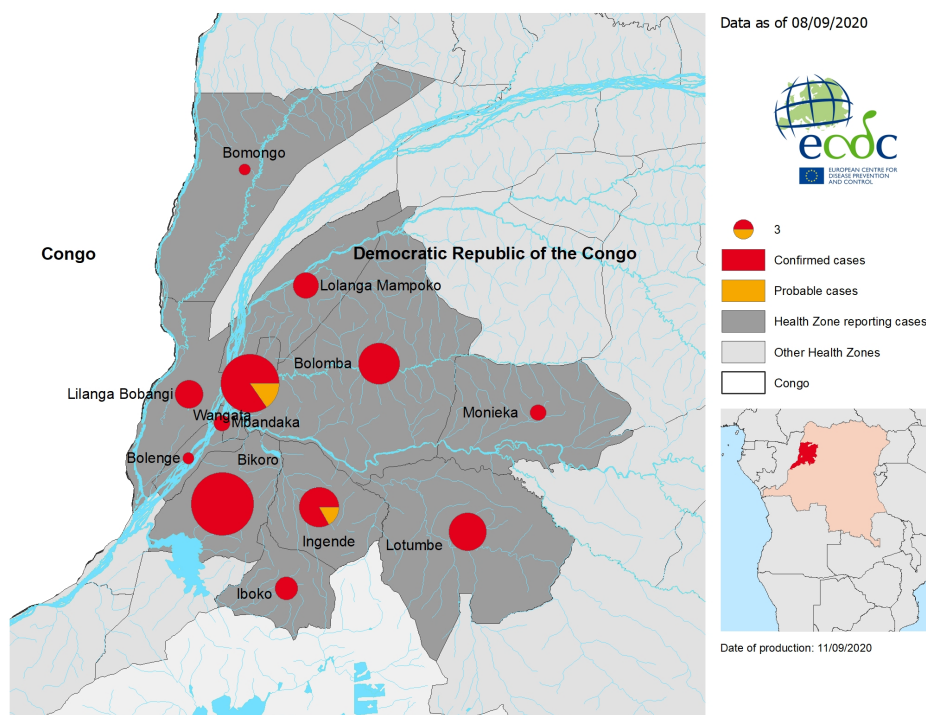
WHO assessment: As of 3 September, [WHO's assessment](#) states that the risk is high at the regional level, high at the national level and low at the global level. A lack of funding and insufficient human resources is constraining the response, which is being further hampered by strikes among locally-based response teams and the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak. In addition, response teams are currently operating in a logistically challenging environment, with many of the affected areas only accessible by boat or helicopter and with limited telecommunications capacity. Further challenges include: inadequate surveillance of deaths in communities; sub-optimal clinical care; and limited laboratory capacity.

Actions

ECDC is monitoring this event through its epidemic intelligence activities. On 25 May 2018, ECDC published a rapid risk assessment on the ninth outbreak in the DRC: [Ebola virus disease outbreak in Equateur Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo, First update](#).

Geographical distribution of confirmed and probable cases of Ebola virus disease, Equateur Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo, as of 8 September 2020

Source: ECDC



Distribution of Ebola Virus Disease cases in Equateur Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo, as of 8 September 2020

Source: ECDC

	Number of confirmed cases	Number of probable cases	Confirmed and probable cases	Number of deaths	Conf/Prob cases in past 7 days
Democratic Republic of the Congo	107	6	113	48	
Equateur	107	6	113	48	
Bikoro	30	0	30	16	ACTIVE
Bolenge	1	0	1	1	
Bolomba	13	0	13	1	
Bomongo	1	0	1	1	ACTIVE
Iboko	4	0	4	1	
Ingende	10	2	12	6	
Lilanga Bobangi	6	0	6	0	ACTIVE
Lolanga Mampoko	5	0	5	2	
Lotumbe	11	0	11	2	
Mbandaka	22	4	26	17	
Monieka	2	0	2	0	
Wangata	2	0	2	1	
Cumulative Total	107	6	113	48	

Distribution of Ebola virus disease cases in Equateur Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo, by week of reporting and as of 8 September 2020

Source: ECDC



Poliomyelitis – Multi-country (World) – Monitoring global outbreaks

Opening date: 9 December 2019

Latest update: 11 September 2020

Epidemiological summary

Summary:

Wild poliovirus: In 2020 overall, as of 1 September 2020, 105 cases have been reported from two endemic countries: Pakistan (65) and Afghanistan (40).

Circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV): In 2020 overall, as of 1 September 2020, 15 cases of cVDPV1 have been reported by Yemen (14) and Malaysia (1). In addition, 323 cases of cVDPV2 have been reported from 20 countries: Afghanistan (69), Chad (60), Pakistan (52), Cote D'Ivoire (29), Democratic Republic of the Congo (26), Ethiopia (16), Sudan (13), Ghana (11), Togo (9), Burkina Faso (9), Guinea (8), Cameroon (4), Niger (4), Somalia (3), Angola (3), Benin (2), Nigeria (2), Central African Republic (1), Mali (1) and the Philippines (1). No cases of cVDPV3 have been reported.

Global guidance from WHO recommends temporarily postponing preventive immunisation campaigns where there is no active outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease. Operationally, polio vaccination campaigns are incompatible with physical distancing recommendations. The guidance calls for countries to prioritise routine immunisation of children in essential service delivery. As a result, the Global Polio Eradication Initiative (GPEI) has taken the decision to temporarily delay immunisation campaigns.

As part of the GPEI programme, surveillance activities will continue to the extent possible to monitor the evolution of the situation. In addition, comprehensive, context-specific plans to resume efforts are being developed, to be launched whenever and wherever the situation allows.

Sources: [Global Polio Eradication Initiative](#) | [ECDC](#) | [ECDC Polio interactive map](#) | [WHO DON](#) | [WPV3 eradication certificate](#)

ECDC assessment

The WHO European Region has remained polio-free since 2002. Inactivated polio vaccines are used in all EU/EEA countries. The risk of reintroduction of the virus in Europe exists so long as there are non- or under-vaccinated population groups in European countries and poliomyelitis is not eradicated. According to the report of the European Regional Commission for Certification of Poliomyelitis Eradication dated May 2019, one EU/EEA country (Romania) and two neighbouring countries (Bosnia and

Herzegovina, and Ukraine) remain at high risk of [a sustained polio outbreak](#). According to the same report, an additional 15 EU/EEA countries are at intermediate risk of sustained polio outbreaks, following wild poliovirus importation or emergence of cVDPV due to suboptimal programme performance and low population immunity. The continuing circulation of wild poliovirus type 1 (WPV1) in two countries shows that there is still a risk of the disease being imported into the EU/EEA. Furthermore, the worrying occurrence of outbreaks of circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV), which only emerge and circulate due to lack of polio immunity in the population, shows the potential risk for further international spread.

To limit the risk of reintroduction and sustained transmission of WPV and cVDPV in the EU/EEA, it is crucial to maintain high vaccine coverage in the general population and increase vaccination uptake in the pockets of under-immunised populations.

[ECDC](#) endorses WHO's temporary recommendations with regard to EU/EEA citizens who are resident in or long-term visitors (>4 weeks) to countries with the potential risk of international spread.

ECDC links: [ECDC comment on risk of polio in Europe](#) | [ECDC risk assessment](#)

Actions

ECDC provides updates on the polio situation on a monthly basis. The agency also monitors polio cases worldwide through its epidemic intelligence activities in order to highlight polio eradication efforts and identify events that increase the risk of wild poliovirus being reintroduced into the EU/EEA.

ECDC maintains an [interactive map](#) showing countries that are still endemic for polio and have ongoing outbreaks of cVDPV.

The Communicable Disease Threat Report may include unconfirmed information which may later prove to be unsubstantiated.