



 HSE  
National  
Immunisation Office

**Protect yourself.  
Protect each other.  
#EveryDoseCounts**

European Immunisation Week 2023

[immunisation.ie](https://immunisation.ie)

# WHO European Immunisation Week 2023 NIO Campaign Pack

April 2023



# WHO European Immunisation Week

23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023

## Background

The World Health Organization (WHO) European Immunisation Week will take place from **23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023**. This year's theme, “**the big catch-up**”, aims to promote the importance of timely, routine vaccination and improve vaccination uptake worldwide, especially in children who missed out on vaccines due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This European Immunisation Week also marks **75 years of the WHO** and the major public health achievements over the years, especially the impact of vaccination on public health and wellbeing.

## **We want to bring awareness to the drop in vaccination rates in Ireland and Europe.**

Unvaccinated children and young people are right now vulnerable against diseases like measles and HPV which we can prevent.

## **We want to remind people to make sure they/their family/patients are up to date with their recommended vaccines**

Timing matters, so it is important to get vaccinated on time and catch up on any missed doses as soon as possible so everyone is protected.

## **We want to assure people that vaccines are safe and effective.**

Getting vaccinated is the best way you can protect yourself and those you love from vaccine preventable diseases.

## **We want to encourage action**

- Have a vaccination conversation – talk to your healthcare provider if you have questions about vaccines. Health and care professionals are a trusted source of vaccine information. Encourage your patients to get protected.
- Book a catch up vaccination appointment or [Book a HPV vaccine catch-up appointment online](#).
- Visit [www.immunisation.ie](http://www.immunisation.ie) for information about vaccines you can trust.

## Key messages

Underpinning the central theme of “**the big catch-up**”, there are three key messages this year:

### **1. #EveryDoseCounts**

- Many children in the WHO European Region are not up to date with their recommended vaccines, leaving them vulnerable to disease.
- Vaccines save lives. It is so important to keep up to date with the recommended vaccines to prevent diseases from spreading or coming back into Ireland.
- Keeping up to date with your (your family's) vaccines is the single most important thing you can do to protect yourself and those you love.

### **2. Timing matters**

- Missing or delaying any dose increases the risk of infection and serious illness. It's not too late to get vaccinated and catch up on missed vaccines.
- The more people vaccinated, the closer we are to eliminating certain diseases and cancers.

### **3. Have a #VaccinationConversation**

- Parents and guardians want the best for their children. It's normal to have questions about vaccines. Your healthcare provider is there to help.
- Health and care professionals are a trusted source of vaccine information. Encourage your patients to keep up to date with their vaccines and sign up for the Laura Brennan HPV vaccine catch-up programme if they are eligible.

# WHO European Immunisation Week

23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023

## Frequently asked questions

### HPV vaccine

#### **Who is eligible for the Laura Brennan HPV vaccine catch-up programme?**

The Laura Brennan HPV vaccine catch-up programme is for people who did not get the HPV vaccine when it was offered to them in school.

The catch-up programme offers a free HPV vaccine to:

- females in 2nd to 6th year of secondary school
- females under the age of 25
- males in 2nd to 4th year of secondary school
- males in 5th year who skipped Transition Year

#### **How can people get a HPV vaccine catch-up appointment?**

If you are 16 or older and eligible for the catch-up programme, you can [book a HPV vaccine catch-up appointment online](#). If you are under 16 years the school vaccination team will offer vaccines in some areas or at a HSE clinic. Visit [www.hpv.ie](http://www.hpv.ie) for more information about your area.

#### **Where can people get a HPV vaccine catch-up appointment?**

HPV vaccines are being offered in schools and clinics across the country.

#### **Why should people get vaccinated?**

Each year in Ireland, HPV causes 406 cancers in both men and women.

The HPV vaccine protects against almost all cases of cervical cancers, 9 out of 10 HPV-related anal cancers and genital warts, 7 out of 10 vaginal cancers and 5 out of 10 vulval cancers.

The HPV vaccine is the safest, most effective way to protect young people from cancers the HPV virus causes. Over 550,000 people in Ireland have got the HPV vaccine.

The more people vaccinated, the better we can reduce the number of cancers caused by HPV.

### MMR vaccine

#### **When should children get the MMR vaccine?**

In Ireland, children get their first dose of the MMR vaccine when they are aged 12 months. They get a booster dose when they are in Junior Infants.

But if a child has missed their MMR vaccines, it's not too late to catch up.

#### **Where can children get the MMR vaccine?**

Children can get their first dose of the MMR vaccine from GPs. The second dose is given by the HSE school vaccination teams when they are in Junior Infants. (In Donegal, Sligo and Leitrim the second dose is given in GP practices)

If a child is not fully protected then they can get the MMR from their GP or school vaccination team.

#### **Why should children get vaccinated?**

Measles cases are rising right now in Europe. Over 1.2 million children in The WHO European Region have missed out on an MMR vaccine. [According to UN UNICEF \(April 2023\)](#), 67 million children are reported to have missed out on vaccines during the pandemic.

The MMR vaccine gives children the best protection against measles. They need two doses to be fully protected. Uptake rates of the first and second doses of the MMR vaccine in Ireland are below the 95% rate that is recommended by the WHO to stop measles from spreading. We need to act now to catch up on the children who missed out on their vaccines during the pandemic.



# WHO European Immunisation Week

23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023

We welcome your ongoing help, support and partnership.

## 1. Support the campaign

Please share the social media assets with your own message or post it to your social pages tagging @HSEImm

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/hseimm/>

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/hseimm>

**LinkedIn:** <https://www.linkedin.com/company/hse-national-immunisation-office>

**YouTube:** [HSE National Immunisation Office](#)

**Spotify:** [HSE National Immunisation Office](#)

## 2. Share our social media messages

You can support the campaign by reposting and sharing posts from the NIO.

You can also share some of the social media messages and images on the next pages.

**Thank you for your ongoing support – it makes a big difference.**



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23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023

## Audiences

Parents and guardians  
Health and care professionals  
Partner organisations

## Campaign channels and assets

**Digital** – NIO website, NIO Lunch and Learn webinar/podcast on vaccine hesitancy.

**Press** – HSE press release

**Social media** – NIO and WHO messages and videos will be shared across NIO, Public Health and HSE social media channels – Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube.

**Internal communications** – NIO all-staff email, HSE all-staff email.

**Stakeholder communications** – HSE partner pack feature.

## Sample social media messages



The image shows a social media post for English. At the top right is the HSE National Immunisation Office logo. Below it is a grid of seven portrait photos of diverse individuals. The text reads: "Protect yourself. Protect each other. #EveryDoseCounts". At the bottom left is a teal bar with "European Immunisation Week 2023" and at the bottom right is "immunisation.ie".



The image shows a social media post for Irish. At the top right is the HSE Oifig Náisiúnta Imdhíonta logo. Below it is a grid of seven portrait photos of diverse individuals. The text reads: "Cosain thú féin. Cosain a chéile. Tá gach dáileog tábhachtach." At the bottom left is a teal bar with "Seachtain Eorpach Imdhíonta 2023" and at the bottom right is "immunisation.ie".

Keeping up to date with your vaccines helps keep us all safe from serious infectious diseases. This European Immunisation Week let's make sure everyone is protected.

Talk to your healthcare provider about the vaccines recommended for you and your family.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/news/eiw23.html>

#EveryDoseCounts

An tSeachtain Imdhíonta na hEorpa seo lean an scéideal agus faigh aon dáileoga ba chearta a bheith faighte agat roimhe seo. Tá gach dáileog tábhachtach.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/news/eiw23.html>


#EveryDoseCounts

# WHO European Immunisation Week

23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023

## Sample social media messages


"I get vaccinated to protect the people in my community because not everyone can get vaccinated."



Olufemiwa Adeniyemi,  
Business & Administration Support, NDO

Every  
Dose Counts

European Immunisation Week 2023



"I get vaccinated because it is so important to protect myself and the people around me from serious, infectious diseases."



Dr Lúca Zorzi,  
HSE Immunisation Lead & Consultant in  
Public Health Medicine, NDO

Every  
Dose Counts

European Immunisation Week 2023




"I get vaccinated not only to protect myself, but also to protect the vulnerable people in society."



Muthu Subba,  
Associate Director of Nursing, NDO

Every  
Dose Counts

European Immunisation Week 2023



"Faighimse snáthaidí do mo sheanmháthair, Marie, a bheidh nócha trí an mhí seo chugainn."




Dr. Evelyn Henolly,  
Ollghearch Leighe Síneach, OIR

Tá gach dáileog  
tábhachtach

Seachtain Imdhionta na hEorpa 2023




"I get vaccinated to protect myself and all those around me."



Dr Tom Barrett,  
Senior Medical Officer, NDO

Every  
Dose Counts

European Immunisation Week 2023



"Faighim vacsaíní chun mo chlann a chosaint."



Cilla Dowling,  
Ollghearch Cumarsáid, OIR

Tá gach dáileog  
tábhachtach

Seachtain Imdhionta na hEorpa 2023



Getting vaccinated is one of the most important ways we can protect ourselves and the people we love. This European Immunisation Week let's make sure we are all protected.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/news/eiw23.html>

#EveryDoseCounts

Vaccines save lives. This European Immunisation Week make sure you are up to date with your vaccines. Have a #VaccinationConversation with a trusted health professional about the vaccines recommended for you.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/news/eiw23.html>

#EveryDoseCounts

Getting vaccinated helps keep us all safe. The more people vaccinated, the closer we are to eliminating certain diseases and cancers. This European Immunisation Week let's make sure everyone is protected.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/news/eiw23.html>

#EveryDoseCounts

# WHO European Immunisation Week

23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023

## Sample social media messages



Many children in Europe right now are not up to date with their vaccines that protect them against harmful diseases and cancers. This European Immunisation Week make sure your child is protected.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/news/eiw23.html>

#EveryDoseCounts

It's not too late to catch up on any vaccines your child has missed. This European Immunisation Week have a #VaccinationConversation with your healthcare provider about the vaccines recommended for your child.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/news/eiw23.html>

#EveryDoseCounts



Measles cases are rising right now in Europe. Your child needs two doses of the MMR vaccine to be fully protected. It is the best way to protect our little ones from measles.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/news/eiw23.html>

#EveryDoseCounts

Measles cases are rising right now in Europe. If your child has missed their MMR vaccine, it is not too late to get protected. Have a #VaccinationConversation with your healthcare provider about catching up on your child's vaccines.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/news/eiw23.html>

#EveryDoseCounts

Health and care professionals are a trusted source of vaccine information. This European Immunisation Week have a #VaccinationConversation with your patients about catching up on any vaccines they may have missed. Getting vaccinated helps keep us all safe.

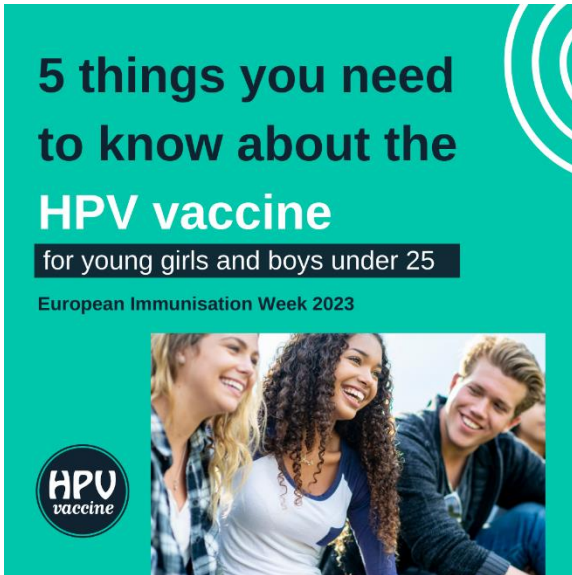
<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/news/eiw23.html>

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# WHO European Immunisation Week

23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023

## Sample social media messages



**5 things you need to know about the HPV vaccine**  
for young girls and boys under 25  
European Immunisation Week 2023

HPV vaccine

The graphic features a teal background with a white circular graphic on the right. Below the text is a photograph of three young people smiling. A small circular logo with 'HPV vaccine' is in the bottom left corner.

This European Immunisation Week we want to share what you need to know about #HPV and the #HPVvaccine.

1. Each year in Ireland, HPV causes 406 cancers in both men and women.
2. The HPV vaccine protects both you against HPV and the cancers it causes. The vaccine protects against almost all cervical cancers and 9 out of 10 anal cancers.
3. The HPV vaccine is safe and effective. Gardasil 9 is the name of the HPV vaccine currently used in Ireland. Over 100 million people have been fully vaccinated with Gardasil worldwide. Over 550,000 people in Ireland have got the HPV vaccine.
4. 1<sup>st</sup> year students can get the HPV vaccine through the school vaccination programme. If you are eligible and want to get the HPV vaccine, you can get the vaccine through your school or a HSE clinic.
5. Some people who did not get the HPV vaccine when it was offered in school may be able to get the vaccine now through the Laura Brennan HPV vaccine catch-up programme.

Find out more about HPV vaccine and Laura Brennan HPV vaccine catch-up programme at link in bio ([www.hpv.ie](http://www.hpv.ie))

This European Immunisation Week give yourself the best protection from HPV and get vaccinated. If you missed out on a HPV vaccine, check if you are eligible to get a free vaccine through the Laura Brennan catch-up programme. [www.hpv.ie](http://www.hpv.ie)



## Is your baby up to date?



**#EveryDoseCounts**

European Immunisation Week 2023

Are you up to date with your baby's vaccines? It's not too late to get your child protected from serious infectious diseases and catch up on any missed vaccines.

Talk to your healthcare provider about the vaccines for your child.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/news/eiw23.html>

#EveryDoseCounts

Keeping up to date with your baby's vaccines is the best way we can protect our little ones from serious infectious diseases. This European Immunisation Week make sure your child is protected.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/news/eiw23.html>

#EveryDoseCounts





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23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023

## Posters and factsheets



### GET THE FACTS

**75 YEARS OF THE WHO.  
ALMOST 200 YEARS OF  
VACCINES IN IRELAND.**

#### A WORLD FREE OF SMALLPOX

The smallpox vaccine was the first vaccine introduced in Ireland in 1863.



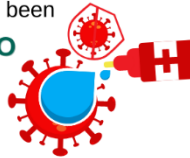
In 1980, the WHO declared the world free of smallpox.

Smallpox is the **only** disease we have completely eliminated in Ireland and worldwide.

The WHO European Region has been

#### FREE OF ENDEMIC POLIO SINCE 2002.

The last reported case of polio in Ireland was in 1984.



#### MEASLES CASES DROPPED DRAMATICALLY

from **10,000 cases** in 1985 to **201 cases** in 1987 after the measles vaccine was introduced in 1985.



#### MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS CASES HAVE DROPPED MORE THAN 80%

since the meningococcal C and B vaccines were introduced in 2000 and 2016.

Ireland has been

#### FREE OF ENDEMIC RUBELLA SINCE 2016

because of the rubella vaccine, which was introduced in 1971.



#### WHO EUROPEAN IMMUNISATION WEEK 2023

Vaccines save lives. Let's keep working together to stop infectious diseases from spreading or coming back into Ireland. Getting vaccinated helps keep us all safe.

APRIL 2023

#EVERYDOSECOUNTS

IMMUNISATION.IE

Vaccines save lives. The more people vaccinated, the closer we are to eliminating serious diseases and cancers. This European Immunisation Week let's make sure everyone is protected.

Get the facts. Get vaccinated. #EveryDoseCounts



# WHO European Immunisation Week

23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023

## Posters and factsheets



### Measles: What you need to know

**Measles is a highly contagious and potentially serious disease caused by a virus. Two doses of measles-containing vaccine provide life-long protection against infection and the potentially serious consequences of the disease.**

Before the introduction of widespread vaccination, major epidemics occurred approximately every 2–3 years and caused an estimated 2.6 million deaths globally each year. While vaccination has drastically reduced this number, the virus continues to circulate, and in 2021, an estimated 128,000 people lost their lives to measles. In 2023, measles is on the rise in the WHO European Region.

**The only way to stop measles is to prevent it through vaccination**

Measles vaccination is safe and effective. Around 99% of people who receive 2 doses of the vaccine will be protected for life. 95% vaccination coverage, in every population every year, will prevent measles from spreading and causing large outbreaks, and will lead to elimination of the disease.



### How does measles spread?

Measles is normally spread through direct contact and through the air. The virus infects the respiratory tract, then spreads throughout the body.

The measles virus can live for up to 2 hours on a surface or in the air. If other people breathe in the contaminated air or touch the infected surface and then their eyes, nose or mouth they can become infected. An infected person can spread the virus even before they have any symptoms. The virus is so contagious that 90% of unimmune people who come into contact with an infected person will become infected and develop the disease.



### Is it dangerous?

Like many infectious diseases, measles usually starts with a high fever followed by a runny nose, cough, red and watery eyes. But there are also specific small white spots inside the cheeks. After several days, a painful rash erupts, eventually spreading to the whole body.

In most cases, measles infection clears in 7 to 10 days, but about 1 in 5 people will develop more serious complications, such as ear infection, deafness, blindness, pneumonia, encephalitis (brain swelling) or even death. Measles infection has also been shown to weaken a person's immune system, making it more difficult to fight off other pathogens for months to even years.

Any non-immune person (who has not had the disease before, not been vaccinated or was vaccinated but did not develop immunity) can become infected. Serious complications are more common in children under the age of 5 and adults over the age of 30. Non-immune women who become ill with measles while pregnant are at risk of miscarriage or premature labour, and low birth weight infants.

Measles outbreaks can be particularly deadly in countries experiencing or recovering from a natural disaster or conflict. Damage to health infrastructure and health services interrupts routine immunization, and overcrowding in collective settings (such as residential camps during emergencies) can greatly increase the risk of infection.




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# WHO European Immunisation Week

23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> April 2023

## Posters and factsheets




World Health Organization  
European Region


### HPV and cervical cancer: What you need to know

**Cervical cancer** is the fourth most common cancer among women globally. Almost all cervical cancer cases are caused by **human papillomavirus (HPV)** infection, which can be prevented through vaccination.

To protect women from the devastating effects of cervical cancer, WHO calls for:



HPV vaccination of adolescents




Regular screening tests for cervical cancer and quality treatment

**What is HPV?**

HPV is the most common viral infection of the reproductive tract in women and men. Most people will have an HPV infection at some point during their lifetime, though they may not know it and may not experience any signs or symptoms of infection. HPV can infect both women and men. HPV infection usually clears on its own, but sometimes it can persist over time and eventually lead to cancer.

Cervical cancer is the most common cancer linked to HPV, but the virus is also responsible for some cancers of the vulva, vagina, penis, anus and back of the throat, including the base of the tongue and tonsils. HPV can also cause genital warts.



### Vaccination

HPV vaccination can prevent more than 90% of HPV-related cancers. HPV vaccines are most effective in preventing cervical cancer later in life if administered to girls between the ages of 9 and 14. The HPV vaccine is given to this age group in 1–2 doses depending on the country guideline. The HPV vaccine is effective and safe and does not have any known long-term side effects. At the time of vaccination, a person may experience pain in the injection site, but it usually resolves shortly after the vaccine is given.

HPV vaccination is given as a priority to girls but is also available to boys in many countries to prevent spread of the virus, thereby reducing the risk for cervical cancer in women, and reducing the risk of other HPV-related cancers and genital warts in the whole population. As of March 2023, 45 (of 53) countries in the WHO European Region offer HPV vaccination to girls, and in 20 countries also to boys.



### Screening

Especially in women older than 30 years of age, HPV infection may persist over time, and lead to changes in the cervix that can develop into cervical cancer. It normally takes 15–20 years for cervical cancer to develop in women with normal immune systems, and can take as few as 5 years in women with diseases that cause weakened immune systems.

Early detection and treatment of precancerous lesions prevents the development of cervical cancer. Cervical cancer detected at an early stage can be treated effectively.

WHO therefore recommends screening for vaccinated and unvaccinated women, beginning at 30 years of age and again every 5–10 years when using HPV DNA detection as the primary screening test, or every three years when using visual inspection or cytology as the primary screening test, until 49 years of age. For HIV-positive individuals, screening should start at age 25 and be repeated every 3–5 years.

If cervical precancerous cells are found during testing, treatment involves a minimally invasive procedure to destroy the abnormal cells in the cervix. Cervical cancer is treated with surgery, radiation therapy and chemotherapy. If treatment is not provided, cervical cancer can be fatal.

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**Please share with your  
networks**

**Thank you**

If you have any queries or ideas, please contact  
[cria.dowling@hse.ie](mailto:cria.dowling@hse.ie).

Thanks for supporting the campaign.