

2024

Measles and Rubella Bulletin

Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR)



Overview of the
Population in the EMR

22 Countries

● 824,402,418
Total population

● 273,368,289
Under 15 years

● 19,300,035
Under 1 year

Key Highlights and Recent Developments

Bahrain, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Oman **have achieved the elimination of both measles and rubella through the end of 2023**. Meanwhile, Afghanistan, Djibouti, and Somalia have yet to introduce the rubella-containing vaccine (RCV)

SAGE Updates on Rubella Vaccine Introduction and Immunization Strategies

- SAGE recommended lifting the requirement that countries attain 80% MCV coverage in routine or campaigns before the RCV introduction
- SAGE recommended universal introduction of RCV in the 13 countries yet to introduce the vaccine
- SAGE reinforced the current policy for RCV introduction with a wide age-range campaign to accelerate the reduction of CRS
- SAGE reinforced the existing WHO policy for regular follow-up campaigns in all countries until they reach 90% routine MCV1/MRCV1 immunization coverage



Campaigns/SIA/Outbreak Responses

The following table highlights key national immunization campaigns and outbreak responses across select countries, showcasing the scale and impact of recent measles and rubella vaccination efforts.

Country	Outbreak Response	Details
Pakistan	Measles Outbreak Response	Vaccinated more than 4.2 million children (6-59 months) in 35 districts
Iraq	MMR Nationwide Vaccination Campaign	Vaccinated more than 6.73 million children in April 2024
Libya	Integrated Campaign (MR, Vitamin A, OPV)	Vaccinated more than 708,500 children under 6 years nationwide
Sudan	Routine Immunization Program	Introduced Rubella-containing vaccine, vaccinated more than 6.8 million children under 15 years in 8 out of 18 states

Measles and Rubella Surveillance Summary

Sixteen countries (72%) met the surveillance performance indicator of a discard rate ≥ 2 non-measles, non-rubella cases per 100,000 population annually.

Measles

In 2024, 21 member states in Eastern Mediterranean Region reported 161,111 suspected measles cases, of which about 96,550 (59.9%) were classified as confirmed measles.

In 2023, about 142,580 suspected measles cases were reported from 22 member states, of which about 90,481 (63%) were classified as confirmed measles.

Rubella

In 2024, 3,468 confirmed rubella cases were reported from 20 member states.

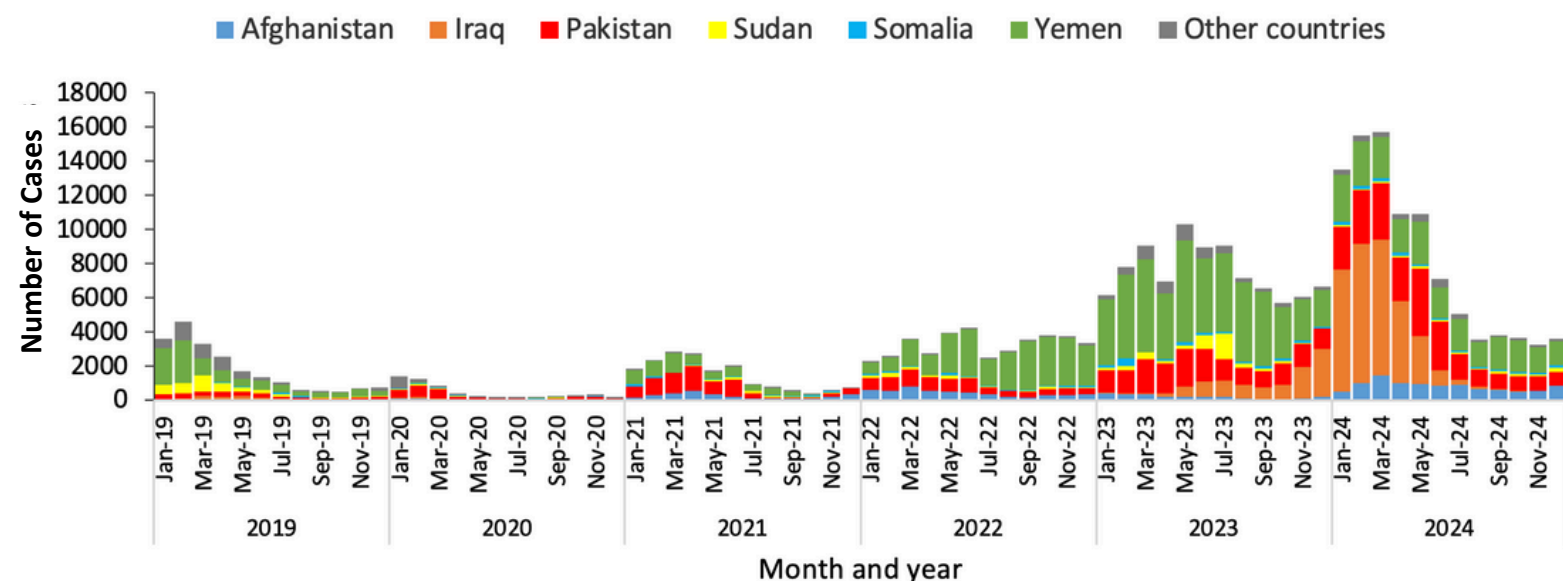
In 2023, 1,976 confirmed rubella cases were reported from 22 member states.

Laboratory

In 2024, 60 % (97,155) of suspected measles cases, were tested for measles confirmation, of which 40% were positive for measles. B3 and D8 genotypes of measles virus were isolated by EMR countries in 2023 and 2024.

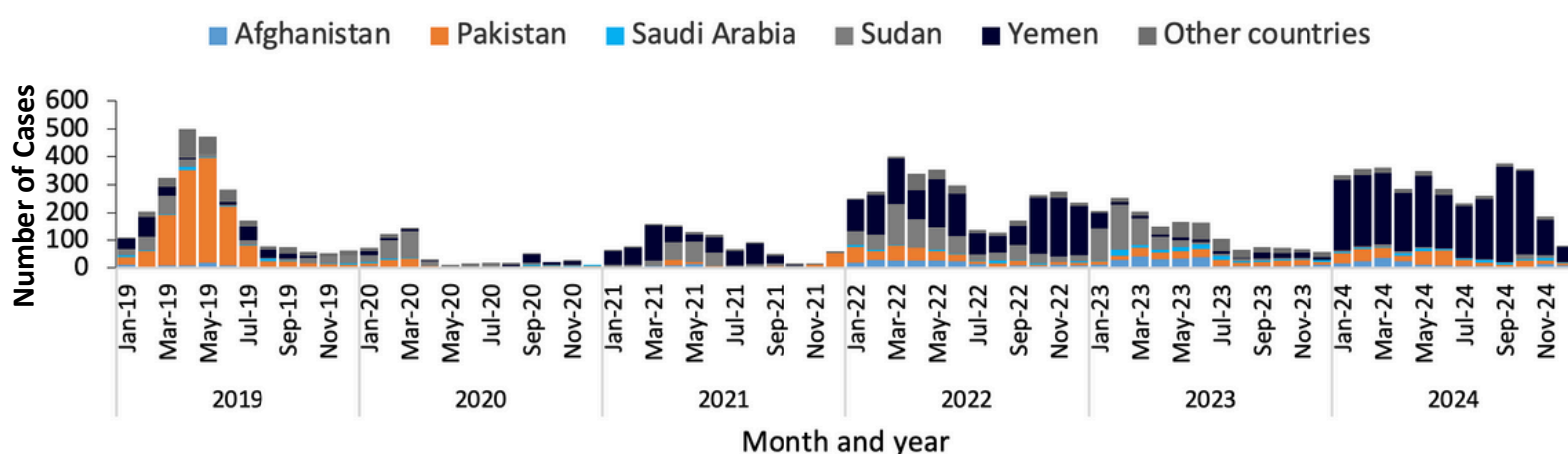
In 2023, 56% (80,156) of suspected measles cases were tested for measles confirmation, of which 38% were positive for measles.

Confirmed measles cases by month of rash onset, WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region, 2019-2024



Over 95% of reported cases during this period were from six countries — Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, and Yemen — which continue to shape the measles epidemiological profile in the EMR.

Confirmed rubella cases by month of rash onset, WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region, 2019-2024



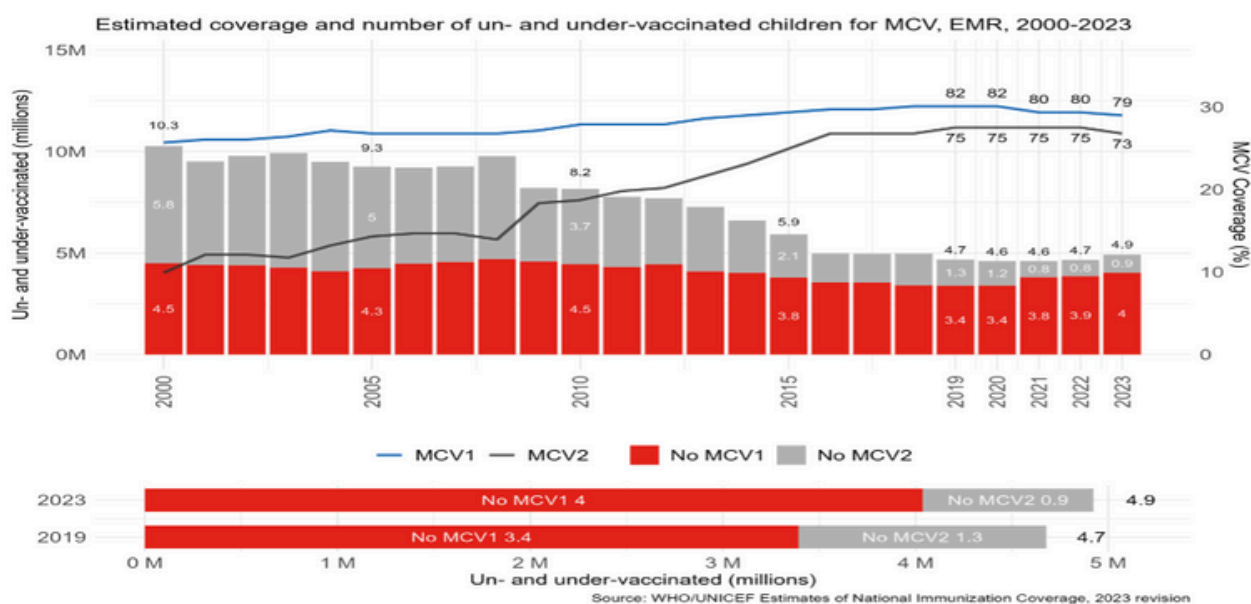
Confirmed rubella cases have increased since early 2022, with sustained transmission continuing through 2023 and into 2024. In 2024, the majority of reported cases — approximately 90% — originated from three countries: Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Yemen.

Measles and rubella confirmed* cases

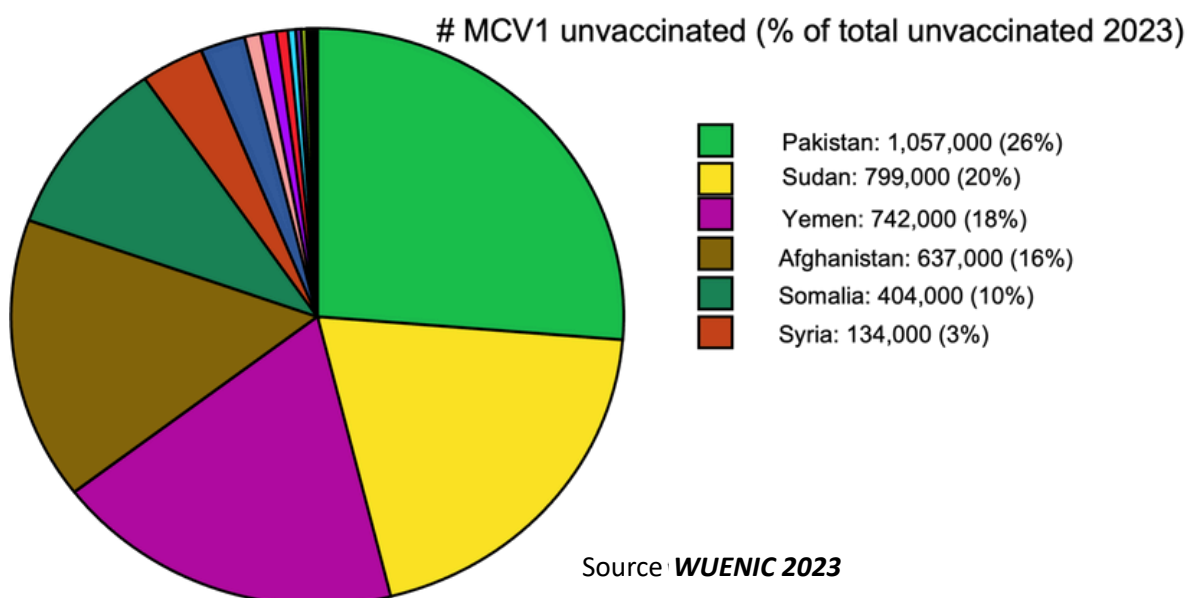
Country	2022		2023		2024	
	Measles	Rubella	Measles	Rubella	Measles	Rubella
Afghanistan	5,090	197	2,525	229	9,769	152
Bahrain	18	0	3	0	2	0
Djibouti	182	21	73	4	60	3
Egypt	14	5	256	4	0	0
Iran	231	90	645	13	437	20
Iraq	36	27	9,651	47	32,370	6
Jordan	21	1	136	6	18	5
Kuwait	7	0	7	1	8	2
Lebanon	86	2	346	7	74	5
Libya	13	32	177	129	184	39
Morocco	2	18	131	36	379	27
Oman	5	0	25	0	13	0
Pakistan	7,068	309	17,515	236	24,263	330
Palestine	0	0	2	0	0	0
Qatar	18	0	118	7	55	3
Saudi Arabia	149	40	2,162	113	1,243	76
Somalia	805	0	1,781	16	1,516	0
Sudan	1,272	694	4,097	491	1,440	69
Syria	217	23	744	18	134	24
Tunisia	10	16	20	28	16	36
UAE	98	4	514	15	591	17
Yemen	23,924	1,654	49,571	186	23,990	2,665
EMR	39,266	3,133	90,499	1,586	96,562	3,479

***Note:** Confirmed cases include laboratory-confirmed, epidemiologically linked, and clinically compatible cases.

source: Regional measles and rubella surveillance database (data received from Member States)



In 2023, an estimated 4.9 million children in the EMR missed either the first or second dose of the measles-containing vaccine (MCV). Of these, 4,037,000 children did not receive their first routine dose (MCV1), while 900,000 missed their second dose (MCV2). Despite progress in immunization coverage in previous years, MCV1 coverage declined slightly from 80% in 2022 to 79% in 2023, and MCV2 coverage dropped from 75% to 73%. These gaps highlight the continued risk of measles outbreaks across the Region.



In 2023, 91% of children who did not receive their first dose of measles-containing vaccine (MCV1) were located in six countries: Pakistan, Sudan, Afghanistan, Yemen, Somalia, and Iraq. This concentration reflects the distribution of zero-dose children across the Region and contributes significantly to regional immunity gaps.

The below table summarizes reported incidence rates of measles and rubella, alongside the annualized NMNR discarded rate per 100,000 population across EMR countries. Between 2022 and 2024, significant increases in measles incidence were recorded in Iraq and Yemen, while rubella incidence remained highest in Yemen.

Country	Measles Incidence			Rubella incidence			Annualized non-measles non rubella discarded rate per 100,000 population		
	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024
Afghanistan	124	60	229	4.8	5.4	3.6	8.7	5.7	11.7
Bahrain	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	63.2	80.4	34.2
Djibouti	162	64	51	18.7	3.5	2.6	4.5	0.4	3.3
Egypt	0	2	No Report	0.1	0.0	No Report	2.7	2.9	No Report
Iran	0	1	0	1.0	0.2	0.2	11.6	8.2	8.2
Iraq	1	212	703	0.6	1.0	0.1	1.2	5.3	3.4
Jordan	2	11	2	0.1	0.5	0.4	1.5	6.6	3.9
Kuwait	2	1	1	0.0	0.2	0.2	2.0	3.0	1.6
Lebanon	16	65	13	0.4	1.3	0.9	1.2	7.2	2.3
Libya	2	26	25	4.7	20.3	5.3	6.9	23.1	8.1
Morocco	0	3	10	0.5	1.0	0.7	0.3	1.0	1.5
Oman	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.6	27.9	1.3
Pakistan	30	73	97	1.3	1.0	1.3	4.0	8.0	22.4
Palestine	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8	1.7	12.7
Qatar	2	4	8	0.0	3.0	0.0	1.4	1.5	3.3
Saudi Arabia	4	58	36	1.1	3.1	2.2	2.1	8.3	6.3
Somalia	46	98	79	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.2	6.6	8.5
Sudan	27	85	29	14.8	10.2	1.4	1.1	0.6	0.3
Syria	10	32	5	1.0	0.8	0.5	4.4	5.4	3.7
Tunisia	1	2	1	1.3	2.3	2.9	1.1	1.4	1.3
UAE	10	40	39	0.4	1.6	1.4	1.5	7.3	10.0
Yemen	710	1439	591	49.1	5.4	65.7	3.6	4.4	2.1
EMR	50	113	116	4	2	4.2	4.3	6.1	11.7

Plans and Way Forward

Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Somalia are scheduled to conduct preventive measles follow-up campaigns in 2025.

Djibouti and Somalia will apply for introduction of RCV and MR catch up campaigns in 2026 and 2027 respectively.

The next EMR RVC MR meeting is planned for December 2025 to review and assess the MR elimination status based on 2024 data.

For full indicators and detailed data, please click on the underlined text below

[Measles and Rubella Dashboard – EMR.](#)



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