

Europe sees sharp rise in measles: 41,000 cases, 37 deaths

August 20 2018



In this file photo dated Monday, Aug. 6, 2018, a child receives a measles vaccination in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The World Health Organization (WTO) said Monday Aug. 20, 2018, the number of measles cases in Europe jumped sharply during the first six months of 2018 with at least 37 people dead from the disease, and called for increased immunization rates to prevent an endemic. (AP Photo/Leo Correa, FILE)

The World Health Organization says the number of measles cases in Europe jumped sharply during the first six months of 2018 and at least

37 people have died.

The U.N. agency's European office said Monday more than 41,000 measles cases were reported in the region during the first half of the year—more than in all 12-month periods so far this decade.

The previous highest annual total was 23,927 cases in 2017. A year earlier, only 5,273 cases were reported.

The agency said half—some 23,000 cases—this year occurred in Ukraine. France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Russia and Serbia also had more than 1,000 infections each.

The agency called for better surveillance and increased immunization rates to prevent the disease from becoming endemic.

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