

Serbia probes vaccination opponents amid measles outbreak

March 20 2018

Serbian authorities said Tuesday they have launched an initial investigation of some public opponents of vaccination after 12 people, including two children, have died in an outbreak of measles.

"The prosecutor's office for high-tech crime is looking into whether there is criminal accountability by a number of public persons, opponents of vaccination of children," the Serbian prosecutors's office said in a statement.

The probe came about after a group of 270 parents last month accused 43 people of "causing panic", including a famous folk singer Jelena Krleusa, a writer and even a doctor who have publicly spoken against vaccination, local media has reported.

The prosecutor did not reveal the names of those being investigated.

According to Serbia's Institute of Public Health, more than 3,800 cases of measles, including a 15-day-old baby, have been recorded since the beginning of the outbreak in October.

The 12 people who died of the disease included two children, aged two and four, the Institute said on its [web site](#).

Earlier this month Serbian Health Minister Zlatibor Loncar urged parents to vaccinate their children, saying "the [outbreak](#) of measles would have never happened if they had listened to doctors and not

celebrities."

The vaccination, including against [measles](#), is mandatory for [children](#) in Serbia, but courts have rarely issued fines that are 30,000 to 150,000 dinars (250 to 1,250 euros/\$300 to \$1,550).

Measles has also struck in neighbouring Romania as well as Italy, France, Germany and Greece.

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