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Type: Oral presentation

Epidemiology of malaria in Germany, 2017 to 2025: insights from statutory surveillance data, air traveller incidences and time series analysis

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Malaria is mainly imported into Germany from endemic areas abroad, despite available chemoprophylaxis. We describe notified *Plasmodium* infections from 2017–2025 to identify epidemiological patterns and inform prevention.

We analysed notified infections in Germany (2017–2025) and describe demographics, species, exposure countries and travel purpose. Incidence/100,000 air travellers was estimated using German Federal Statistical Office air passenger data. Temporal trends and seasonality were assessed using negative binomial regression with Fourier terms, adjusting for the COVID-19 pandemic phases.

In total, 7,439 cases were reported (366 in 2020–1,001 in 2023). Median age was 38 years, 69% were male, 12% were children and 84% had *P. falciparum*. Among cases with travel purpose, 64% were visiting friends and relatives (VFR), 19% tourists and 7% occupational travellers. Most infections were acquired in Sub-Saharan Africa (95%), mainly Nigeria, Cameroon and Ghana. Traveller incidence was highest for Sierra Leone (1,038), Cameroon (666) and Guinea (605). No overall temporal trend was observed ($p=0.56$), but annual and semi-annual seasonality were identified. Case counts declined during the COVID-19 pandemic. Among VFR-travellers, case counts increased over time ($p=0.041$).

The majority of malaria cases notified in Germany occur among travellers returning from West Africa and VFR-travellers, highlighting the need for targeted prevention and improved uptake of chemoprophylaxis.

Keywords

Communicable Diseases, Imported; Plasmodium falciparum; Chemoprevention; Disease Notification; Travel Medicine

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Professional Status of the Speaker

Graduate Student

Junior Scientist Status

No, I am not a Junior Scientist.

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