

INFLUENZA MONTHLY UPDATE

December 2022 - Epidemiological weeks: 49–52, 2022

Key highlights

- In December 2022, 18 out of 21 countries with a functional influenza sentinel surveillance system in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) reported influenza data to FluNet and/or EMFLU (Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, occupied Palestinian territory, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen).
- Based on the reported influenza data, there has been a decrease in influenza activity after the spike in weeks 43 and 44. While this decrease is notable, countries should be extra vigilant, particularly during the influenza season, to ensure that the decrease is not an artefact of surveillance inactivity or reporting delays.
- In the current analytical period (epidemiological week 27 to week 52, 2022), there was a 30% increase in the number of cases enrolled (126 945 cases) compared to the previous reporting period (97 761 cases). Out of the 126 945 cases enrolled in the current reporting period, 125 370 (99%) were tested and, out of those, 24 783 (20%) were influenza positive (Table).
- Influenza positivity rate in the Region has decreased over the past two months (26% in November and 15% in December 2022 compared to 32% in October 2022). During December, 22 542 cases were enrolled, of which 21 839 specimens were tested for influenza (97%), of which 3243 specimens (15%) were positive.
- Of the total specimens tested positive for influenza (3243) in December 2022, 75% (2429) were influenza type A. Of the influenza-positive specimens, 1111 (34%) were influenza A (H1N1) pdm09, 797 specimens (25%) were influenza A (not subtyped), 586 (18%) were influenza B (lineage not determined), 521 (16%) were A(H3) and 228 (7%) were influenza B (Victoria lineage) (Fig. 2).

Fig 1. Number of specimens by influenza virus subtypes/lineages and percentage of specimens testing positive for influenza viruses in the Region from week 27, 2018 to week 52, 2022

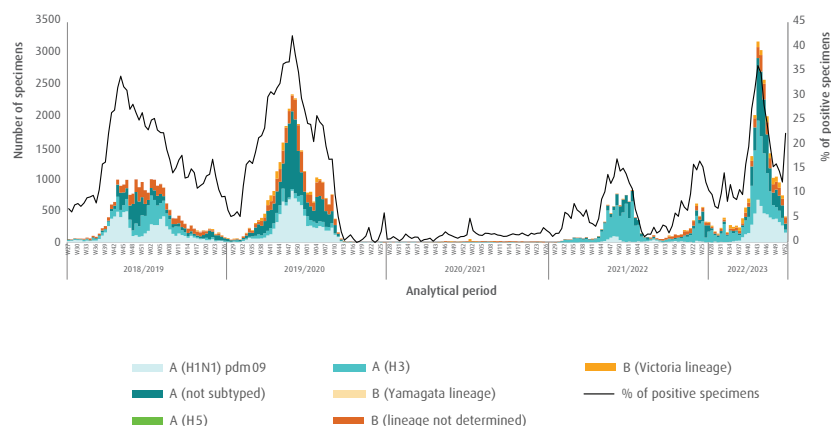
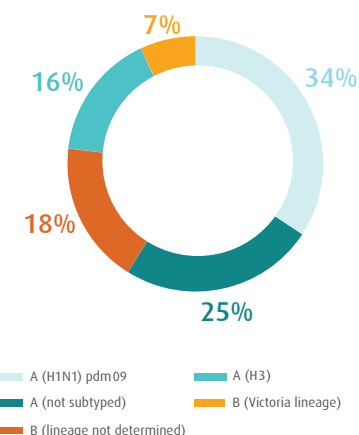


Fig 2. Proportion of influenza types and subtypes/lineages, EMR, December 2022



Map. Influenza positivity rate and detected influenza types and subtypes by country, EMR, December 2022

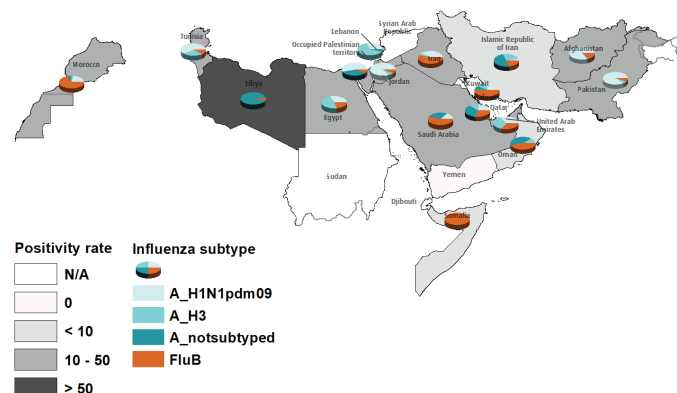


Table. Reported cumulative cases by country in the Region during the analytical period week 27 to week 52, 2022

| Transmission zone | Country | Number of enrolled cases | Number of tested cases (%) | Number of positive cases (%) | Flu A (%) | | | | Number of flu B cases (%) |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| | | | | | A (H1N1)pdm09 | A (H3) | A (H5) | A (not subtyped) | |
| Eastern Africa | Somalia | 1474 | 1370 (93) | 79 (6) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 79 (6) |
| | Egypt | 8366 | 8366 (100) | 788 (9) | 107 (1) | 523 (6) | 0 (0) | 5 (0) | 153 (2) |
| Northern Africa | Libya | 228 | 213 (93) | 106 (50) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 98 (46) | 8 (4) |
| | Morocco | 526 | 523 (99) | 165 (32) | 32 (6) | 11 (2) | 0 (0) | 8 (2) | 114 (22) |
| | Sudan | 182 | 175 (96) | 2 (1) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 2 (1) | 0 (0) |
| | Tunisia | 925 | 925 (100) | 235 (25) | 130 (14) | 75 (8) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 30 (3) |
| | Yemen | 1643 | 1643 (100) | 174 (11) | 152 (9) | 9 (1) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 13 (1) |
| Southern Asia | Afghanistan | 1643 | 1643 (100) | 174 (11) | 152 (9) | 9 (1) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 13 (1) |
| | Iran (Islamic Republic of) | 45826 | 45826 (100) | 10205 (22) | 950 (2) | 4623 (10) | 0 (0) | 4114 (9) | 518 (1) |
| Western Asia | Pakistan | 9863 | 9696 (98) | 966 (10) | 561 (6) | 97 (1) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 308 (3) |
| | Bahrain | 15198 | 15188 (100) | 2814 (19) | 263 (2) | 1880 (12) | 0 (0) | 219 (1) | 452 (3) |
| | Iraq | 1788 | 1788 (100) | 480 (27) | 321 (18) | 17 (1) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 142 (8) |
| | Jordan | 2267 | 2267 (100) | 94 (4) | 75 (3) | 12 (1) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 7 (0) |
| | Lebanon | 980 | 973 (99) | 99 (10) | 27 (3) | 65 (7) | 0 (0) | 7 (1) | 0 (0) |
| | occupied Palestinian territory | 1532 | 1532 (100) | 458 (30) | 292 (19) | 3 (0) | 0 (0) | 144 (9) | 19 (1) |
| | Oman | 4341 | 4311 (99) | 927 (22) | 111 (3) | 287 (7) | 0 (0) | 169 (4) | 360 (8) |
| | Qatar | 16157 | 16157 (100) | 4713 (29) | 1759 (11) | 527 (3) | 0 (0) | 1073 (7) | 1354 (8) |
| | Saudi Arabia | 9293 | 8071 (87) | 1221 (15) | 141 (2) | 12 (0) | 0 (0) | 226 (3) | 842 (10) |
| | Syrian Arab Republic | 150 | 150 (100) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) |
| | United Arab Emirates | 6131 | 6131 (100) | 1257 (21) | 316 (5) | 677 (11) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 264 (4) |
| | Yemen | 75 | 65 (87) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) |
| Total | | 126945 | 125370 (99) | 24783 (20) | 5237 (4) | 8818 (7) | 0 (0) | 6065 (5) | 4663 (4) |

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