

INFLUENZA MONTHLY UPDATE

January 2023 - Epidemiological weeks: 1–4, 2023

Key highlights

- In January 2023, 17 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, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen).
- The number of influenza positive cases in the EMR has been consistently decreasing over the past 12 weeks after the initial spike early in the current influenza season (weeks 43 and 44).
- In the current analytical period (epidemiological week 27, 2022 to week 4, 2023), there was a 29% increase in the number of cases enrolled (163 794 cases) compared to the previous reporting period (126 945 cases). Out of the 163 794 cases enrolled in the current reporting period, 161 897 (99%) were tested and, out of those, 29 159 (18%) were influenza positive (Table).
- Influenza positivity rate in the Region has decreased over the past two months (20% in December and 26% in November 2022). During January 2023, 24 446 cases were enrolled, of which 23 896 specimens were tested for influenza (98%), of which 2725 specimens (11%) were positive.
- Of the total specimens tested positive for influenza (2725) in January 2023, 62% (1703) were influenza type A. Of the influenza-positive specimens, 796 (29%) were influenza A (H1N1) pdm09, 674 (25%) were influenza B (lineage not determined), 507 (19%) were A(H3), 400 specimens (15%) were influenza A (not subtyped), and 348 (13%) were influenza B (Victoria lineage) (Fig. 2). The positivity rate for influenza B (Victoria lineage) has nearly doubled, from 7% in December 2022 to 13% in January 2023, while the positivity rate for type B has jumped from 25% in December to 38% in January (a 52% increase).

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 4, 2023

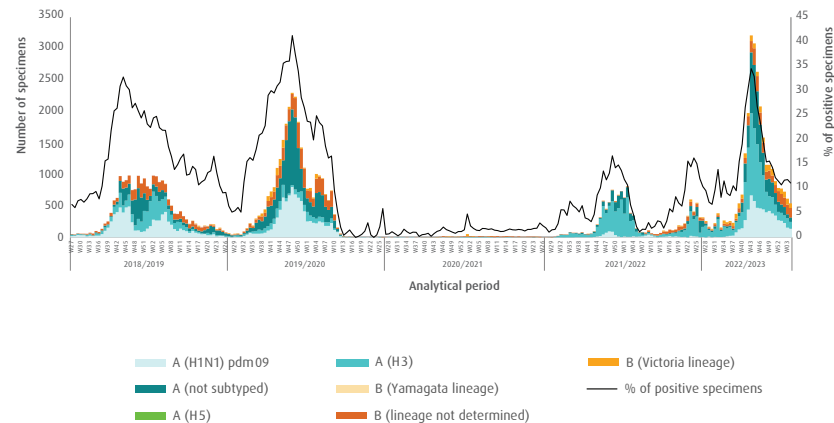
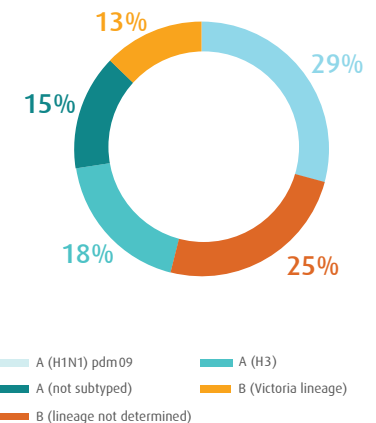


Fig 2. Proportion of influenza types and subtypes/lineages, EMR, January 2023



Map. Influenza positivity rate and detected influenza types and subtypes by country, EMR, January 2023

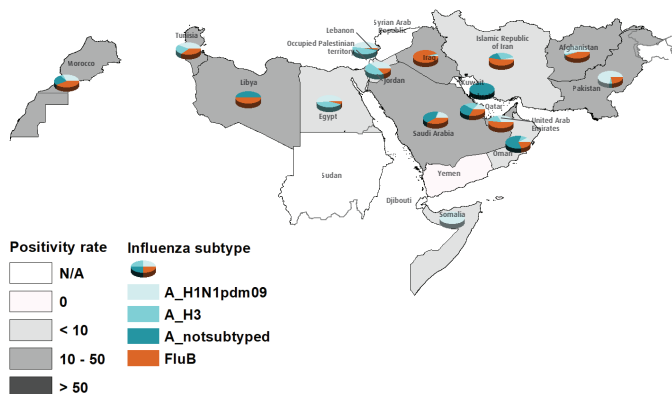


Table. Reported cumulative cases by country in the Region during the analytical period week 27, 2022 to week 4, 2023

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	1629	1628 (100)	80 (5)	1 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	78 (5)
Northern Africa	Egypt	16995	16995 (100)	2068 (12)	511 (3)	1350 (8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	207 (1)
	Libya	304	289 (95)	123 (43)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	110 (38)	13 (4)
	Morocco	1101	1094 (99)	347 (32)	80 (7)	22 (2)	0 (0)	45 (4)	200 (18)
	Sudan	276	276 (100)	3 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (1)	0 (0)
Southern Asia	Tunisia	1753	1753 (100)	494 (28)	252 (14)	126 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	116 (7)
	Afghanistan	2175	1960 (90)	210 (11)	171 (9)	10 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	29 (1)
	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	61945	61945 (100)	10979 (18)	979 (2)	4831 (8)	0 (0)	4251 (7)	918 (1)
	Pakistan	12405	12130 (98)	1503 (12)	954 (8)	123 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	426 (4)
Western Asia	Bahrain	15982	15964 (100)	2897 (18)	293 (2)	1890 (12)	0 (0)	234 (1)	480 (3)
	Iraq	2470	2470 (100)	591 (24)	326 (13)	20 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	245 (10)
	Jordan	2861	2861 (100)	143 (5)	110 (4)	21 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	12 (0)
	Lebanon	1300	1293 (99)	141 (11)	47 (4)	85 (7)	0 (0)	8 (1)	1 (0)
	occupied Palestinian territory	1532	1532 (100)	458 (30)	292 (19)	3 (0)	0 (0)	144 (9)	19 (1)
	Oman	5055	5023 (99)	937 (19)	112 (2)	288 (6)	0 (0)	175 (3)	362 (7)
	Qatar	18453	18453 (100)	5453 (30)	1870 (10)	706 (4)	0 (0)	1289 (7)	1588 (9)
	Saudi Arabia	10389	9072 (87)	1380 (15)	167 (2)	14 (0)	0 (0)	276 (3)	923 (10)
	Syrian Arab Republic	150	150 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	United Arab Emirates	6922	6922 (100)	1352 (20)	350 (5)	692 (10)	0 (0)	0 (0)	310 (4)
	Yemen	97	87 (90)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Total	163794	161897 (99)	29159 (18)	6515 (4)	10182 (6)	0 (0)	6535 (4)	5927 (4)

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