

# INFLUENZA MONTHLY UPDATE

August 2023 - Epidemiological weeks: 31–35, 2023



World Health Organization  
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE Eastern Mediterranean



## Key highlights

- In August 2023, 16 out of 21 Member States with a functional influenza surveillance system in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR) reported influenza data to FluNet and/or EMFLU (Afghanistan, Bahrain, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, occupied Palestinian territory, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen).
- The trend of influenza-positive proportion in the EMR remains below epidemic levels, not yet signaling the beginning of the new influenza 2023–2024 season (Figure 1).
- In the current analytical period (epidemiological week 27, 2022 to week 35, 2023), there was a 6% increase in the number of cases enrolled (306,309 compared to the previous reporting period with 288,263 cases in epidemiological week 27, 2022 to week 30, 2023). Out of the 306,309 enrolled cases, 301,738 (99%) were tested and, out of those, 38,939 (13%) were influenza-positive (Table).
- In Aug 2023, 14,693 cases were enrolled of which, 14,402 specimens were tested for influenza (98%). Of those specimens tested, 943 (6.5%) were positive.
- Influenza positivity rates varied across the countries; from 0% in Afghanistan, Lebanon, and Pakistan to 12% in Qatar, based on 200 or more specimens tested during August 2023.
- In August, the positivity rate of influenza type A was higher than that of type B (80% and 20% respectively) Figure 2.
- Of the total 943 specimens that tested positive for influenza, 296 (31.4%) were influenza A (not subtyped), 239 (25.3%) were type A(H3), 222 (23.5%) were A (H1N1) pdm09, 154 (16.4%) were influenza B (lineage is not determined), and 32 (3.4%) were influenza B (Victoria lineage) Figure 2 and Map).

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, 2019 to week 35, 2023

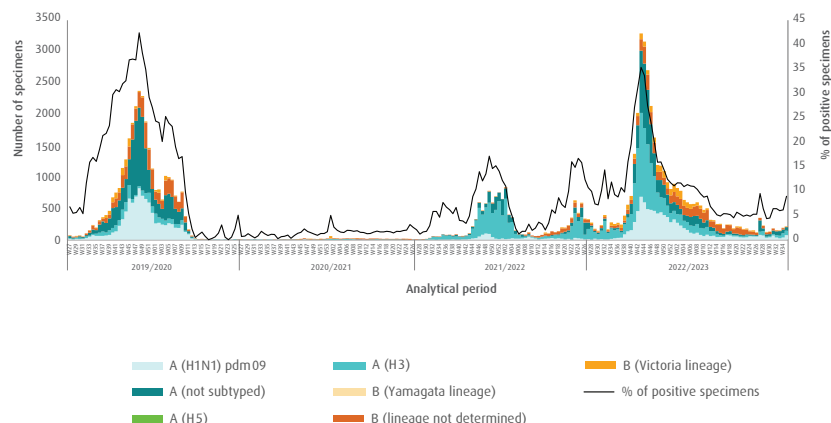
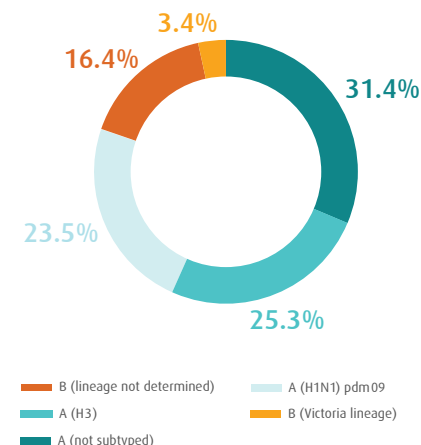


Fig 2. Proportion of influenza types and subtypes/lineages, EMR, August 2023



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

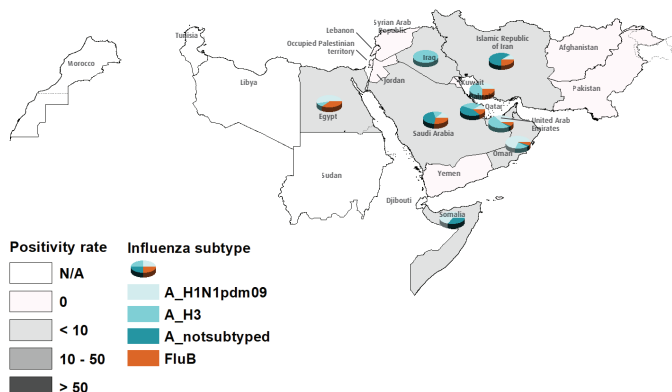


Table. Reported cumulative cases by country in the Region during the analytical period week 27, 2022 to week 35, 2023

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	4340	4192 (97)	265 (6)	106 (3)	3 (0)	0 (0)	46 (1)	110 (3)
	Egypt	31456	31456 (100)	2845 (9)	778 (2)	1420 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	647 (2)
Northern Africa	Libya	286	286 (100)	92 (32)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	59 (21)	33 (12)
	Morocco	1913	1883 (98)	422 (22)	103 (5)	27 (1)	0 (0)	73 (4)	219 (12)
	Sudan	383	379 (99)	5 (1)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (1)	1 (0)
	Tunisia	3072	3072 (100)	610 (20)	266 (9)	139 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	205 (7)
Southern Asia	Afghanistan	4261	4259 (100)	306 (7)	215 (5)	12 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	79 (2)
	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	108940	108940 (100)	13343 (12)	1073 (1)	5158 (5)	0 (0)	4812 (4)	2300 (2)
	Pakistan	17147	16904 (99)	1776 (11)	1117 (7)	160 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	499 (3)
Western Asia	Bahrain	19279	19267 (100)	3159 (16)	407 (2)	1931 (10)	0 (0)	235 (1)	586 (3)
	Iraq	4275	4275 (100)	640 (15)	330 (8)	26 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	284 (7)
	Jordan	5130	5130 (100)	313 (6)	128 (2)	56 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	129 (3)
	Lebanon	2581	2557 (99)	153 (6)	49 (2)	86 (3)	0 (0)	7 (0)	11 (0)
	occupied Palestinian territory	3084	3084 (100)	602 (20)	300 (10)	4 (0)	0 (0)	151 (5)	147 (5)
	Oman	8927	8890 (100)	1082 (12)	186 (2)	302 (3)	0 (0)	215 (2)	379 (4)
	Qatar	32493	32493 (100)	7859 (24)	2114 (7)	1541 (5)	0 (0)	2027 (6)	2177 (7)
	Saudi Arabia	31968	29755 (93)	3200 (11)	744 (3)	160 (1)	0 (0)	800 (3)	1496 (5)
	Syrian Arab Republic	790	314 (40)	44 (14)	28 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	16 (5)
	United Arab Emirates	25798	24436 (95)	2223 (9)	615 (3)	878 (4)	0 (0)	35 (0)	695 (3)
	Yemen	186	166 (89)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>306309</b>	<b>301738 (99)</b>	<b>38939 (13)</b>	<b>8560 (3)</b>	<b>11903 (4)</b>	<b>0 (0)</b>	<b>8463 (3)</b>	<b>10013 (3)</b>

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