

INFLUENZA MONTHLY UPDATE

September 2023 - Epidemiological weeks: 36–39, 2023



World Health Organization
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE Eastern Mediterranean



Key highlights

- In Sep 2023, 17 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, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunis, and the United Arab Emirates).
- The influenza-positive proportion in the EMR started to increase reaching epidemic levels, signaling the beginning of the new influenza 2023–2024 season (Figure 1).
- In the current analytical period (epidemiological week 27 to week 39, 2023), there were a total of 56,325 enrolled cases. Out of which, 55,659 (99%) were tested, and out of the tested, 5,496 (10%) were influenza-positive (Table).
- In Sep 2023, 23,367 cases were enrolled of which, 22,907 specimens were tested for influenza (98%). Of those specimens tested, 3,348 (15%) were positive.
- Influenza positivity proportions varied across countries; from 0% in Afghanistan to 20% in Qatar, based on 200 or more specimens tested during Sep 2023.
- In September, the positivity proportion of influenza type A was higher than that of type B (92% and 8% respectively) Figure 2.
- Of the total 3,348 specimens that tested positive for influenza in September, 1,030 (31%) were influenza A (not subtyped), 1,027 (31%) were type A(H3), 1,007 (30%) were A (H1N1) pdm09, 237 (7%) were influenza B (lineage not determined), and 45 (1%) 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 39, 2023

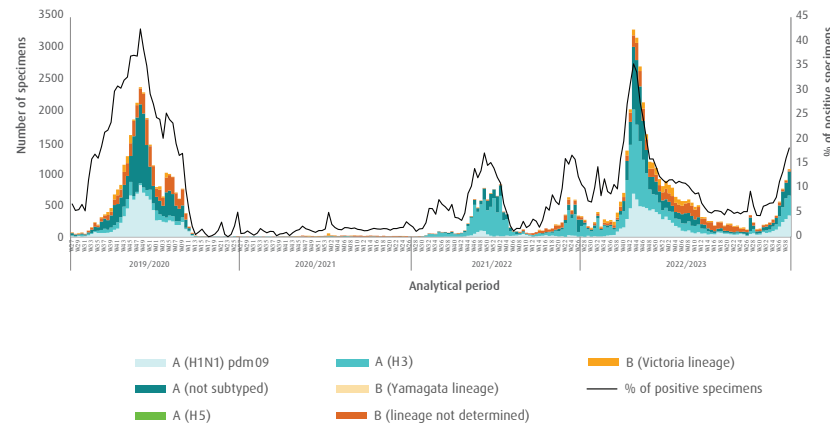
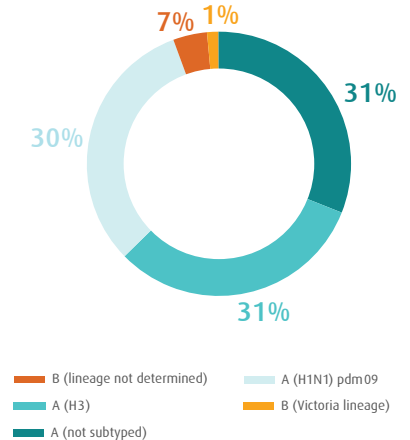


Fig 2. Proportion of influenza types and subtypes/lineages, EMR, September 2023



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

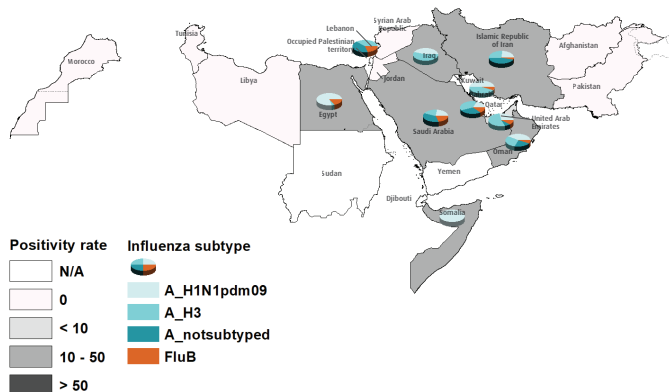


Table. Reported cumulative cases by country in the Region during the analytical period week 27, 2022 to week 39, 2023

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	693	660 (95)	43 (7)	35 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	8 (1)	0 (0)
Northern Africa	Egypt	7077	7077 (100)	641 (9)	420 (6)	32 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	189 (3)
	Libya	4	4 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Morocco	82	82 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Tunisia	275	275 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Saudi Arabia	701	399 (57)	1 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (0)
Southern Asia	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	16193	16193 (100)	2016 (12)	390 (2)	489 (3)	0 (0)	973 (6)	164 (1)
	Pakistan	796	790 (99)	5 (1)	0 (0)	3 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0)
Western Asia	Bahrain	2150	2150 (100)	218 (10)	96 (4)	96 (4)	0 (0)	1 (0)	25 (1)
	Iraq	530	530 (100)	14 (3)	6 (1)	8 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Jordan	505	504 (100)	4 (1)	0 (0)	4 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Lebanon	651	651 (100)	7 (1)	2 (0)	2 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0)	1 (0)
	occupied Palestinian territory	149	149 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Oman	2517	2514 (100)	324 (13)	150 (6)	82 (3)	0 (0)	69 (3)	23 (1)
	Qatar	3524	3524 (100)	514 (15)	81 (2)	173 (5)	0 (0)	195 (6)	65 (2)
	Saudi Arabia	10442	10207 (98)	976 (10)	174 (2)	175 (2)	0 (0)	412 (4)	215 (2)
	Syrian Arab Republic	90	19 (21)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	United Arab Emirates	9923	9915 (100)	733 (7)	231 (2)	368 (4)	0 (0)	48 (0)	86 (1)
	Yemen	23	16 (70)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Total		56325	55659 (99)	5496 (10)	1585 (3)	1432 (3)	0 (0)	1708 (3)	771 (1)

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