

# INFLUENZA MONTHLY UPDATE

## December 2023 - Epidemiological weeks: 49–52, 2023



World Health Organization  
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE Eastern Mediterranean



### Key highlights

- In December 2023, 18 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, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen).
- The influenza-positive proportion has been showing a decreasing trend since its peak with its highest levels (28%) in week 42 of season 2023-24 (Figure 1).
- In the current analytical period (epidemiological week 27 to week 52, 2023), there was a 30% increase in the number of enrolled cases (173,427 compared to the previous reporting period with 133,498 cases in epidemiological week 27 to week 48, 2023). Out of the 173,427 enrolled cases, 172,952 (99.7%) were tested, and, out of those, 30,605 (18%) were influenza-positive (Table).
- Influenza positivity proportions varied across countries; from 2.5% in Somalia to 42% in Lebanon, based on 200 or more specimens tested during December 2023.
- In December 2023, 36,997 cases were enrolled of which, 36,865 specimens were tested for influenza (99.6%). Of those specimens tested, 6,091 (17%) were positive.
- The positivity proportion of influenza type A was higher than that of type B (84% and 16% respectively) during the month of December (Figure 2).
- Of the 6,091 specimens that tested positive for influenza in December, 1,836 (30%) were type A(H3), 1,716 (28%) were A (H1N1) pdm09, 1,613 (26%) were influenza A (not subtyped), 646 (11%) were influenza B (lineage not determined), and 280 (5%) 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 52, 2023

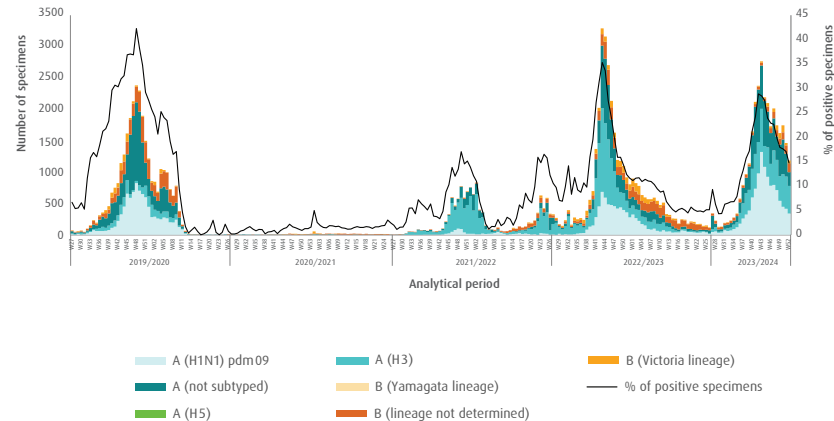
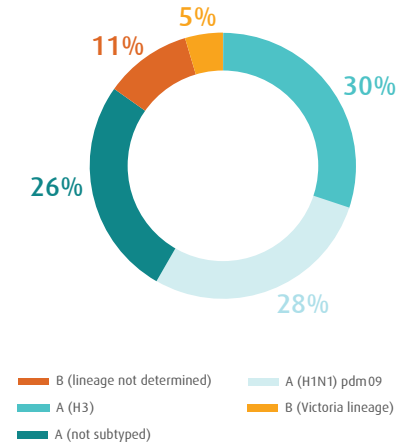


Fig 2. Proportion of influenza types and subtypes/lineages, EMR, December 2023



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

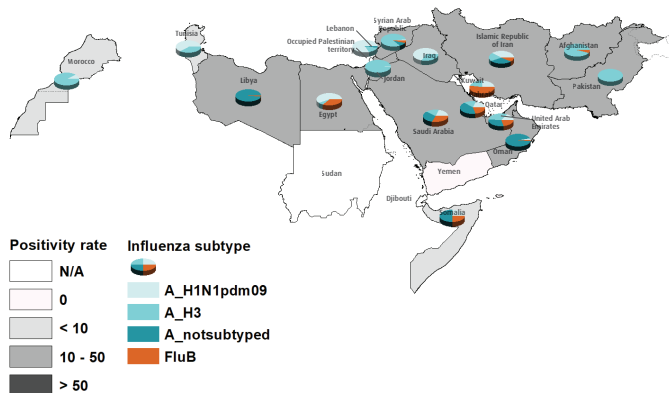


Table. Reported cumulative cases by country in the Region during the analytical period week 27 to week 52, 2023

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	1546	1523 (99)	83 (5)	53 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	26 (2)	4 (0)
Northern Africa	Egypt	17859	17859 (100)	2372 (13)	1757 (10)	99 (1)	0 (0)	516 (3)	516 (3)
	Libya	341	341 (100)	111 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	109 (32)	2 (1)
	Morocco	1061	1061 (100)	10 (1)	1 (0)	9 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Tunisia	1055	1055 (100)	18 (2)	10 (1)	8 (1)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Southern Asia	Afghanistan	1797	1787 (99)	149 (8)	1 (0)	142 (8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (0)
	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	65715	65715 (100)	14208 (22)	6171 (9)	2197 (3)	0 (0)	5327 (8)	513 (1)
	Pakistan	3679	3677 (100)	589 (16)	0 (0)	587 (16)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (0)
Western Asia	Bahrain	3869	3864 (100)	769 (20)	358 (9)	223 (6)	0 (0)	16 (0)	172 (4)
	Iraq	731	723 (99)	85 (12)	21 (3)	64 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Jordan	2207	2207 (100)	287 (13)	7 (0)	280 (13)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Lebanon	1724	1724 (100)	276 (16)	215 (12)	43 (2)	0 (0)	14 (1)	4 (0)
	occupied Palestinian territory	422	422 (100)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
	Oman	5846	5841 (100)	1230 (21)	341 (6)	174 (3)	0 (0)	646 (11)	69 (1)
	Qatar	10884	10884 (100)	1897 (17)	333 (3)	487 (4)	0 (0)	752 (7)	325 (3)
	Saudi Arabia	26650	26290 (99)	4058 (15)	908 (3)	1012 (4)	0 (0)	1297 (5)	841 (3)
	Syrian Arab Republic	501	467 (93)	67 (14)	1 (0)	59 (13)	0 (0)	5 (1)	2 (0)
	United Arab Emirates	27466	27458 (100)	4393 (16)	1062 (4)	2217 (8)	0 (0)	488 (2)	626 (2)
	Yemen	74	54 (73)	3 (6)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (6)	0 (0)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>173427</b>	<b>172952 (99.7)</b>	<b>30605 (18)</b>	<b>11239 (6)</b>	<b>7601 (4)</b>	<b>0 (0)</b>	<b>8683 (5)</b>	<b>3082 (2)</b>

For any queries about this bulletin, please contact: [emrgoihp@who.int](mailto:emrgoihp@who.int)