Influenza Update N° 448
26 June 2023, based on data up to 11 June 2023

In this update, in addition to the influenza surveillance information, that of the SARS-CoV-2 surveillance by the Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) through its associated sentinel and non-sentinel surveillance systems and reported to the surveillance data platform FluNet hosted by RespiMART is included. Information on respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) is included where available.

Summary

- Countries are recommended to monitor the relative co-circulation of influenza and SARS-CoV-2 viruses and report to RespiMART (FluNet and FluID) directly or via regional platforms. They are encouraged to enhance integrated surveillance, and in southern hemisphere countries step-up their influenza vaccination campaign to prevent severe disease and hospitalizations associated with influenza. Clinicians should consider influenza in differential diagnosis, especially for high-risk groups for influenza, and test and treat according to national and WHO guidance.
- Globally, influenza detections remained low, but in the southern hemisphere, some countries reported variable changes in influenza detections in recent weeks while detections in other countries seemed to have peaked.
- In Oceania, influenza activity continued to increase with influenza A viruses predominant.
- In South Africa, influenza activity decreased but remained at a moderate level in pneumonia and decreased to a low level in influenza-like illness (ILI) surveillance with influenza A viruses predominately detected.
- In temperate South America, influenza activity appeared to decrease with A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses most frequently detected followed by B viruses, mainly reflecting an apparent decrease in Chile. Variable activity was reported in other countries.
- In the Caribbean countries, influenza activity remained low overall. In the Central American countries, increased influenza activity was reported in a few countries with A(H1N1)pdm09 most frequently detected followed by B/Victoria lineage viruses.
- In the tropical countries of South America, overall influenza activity decreased with detections of predominantly A(H1N1)pdm09 and B viruses.
- In tropical Africa, influenza detections were low in reporting countries. Influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses predominated among reported detections.
- In Southern Asia, influenza activity remained low with all seasonal subtypes detected.
- In South-East Asia, influenza activity remained stable in most reporting countries, with continued reporting of predominantly A(H1N1)pdm09 and A(H3N2) virus detections.
- In the temperate zones of the northern hemisphere, influenza activity was reported at low levels or below seasonal threshold in most reporting countries. All seasonal influenza subtypes were detected in similar proportions overall.
- Globally, RSV activity was generally low except in Australia and a few countries in the Region of the Americas. RSV activity increased in a few countries in tropical and temperate South America.
- National Influenza Centres (NICs) and other national influenza laboratories from 108 countries, areas or territories reported data to FluNet for the time period from 29 May 2023
to 11 June 2023 (data as of 23/06/2023 07:09:51 AM UTC). The WHO GISRS laboratories tested more than 262,237 specimens during that time period. 6,709 were positive for influenza viruses, of which 42,211 (62.9%) were typed as influenza A and 24,886 (37.1%) as influenza B. Of the sub-typed influenza A viruses, 20,090 (73.6%) were influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and 7,119 (26.4%) were influenza A(H3N2). Of the type B viruses for which lineage was determined, all (321) belonged to the B/Victoria lineage.

**Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype globally**

![Graph showing number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype globally](image)

**Data source:** FluNet ([www.who.int/toolkits/flunet](http://www.who.int/toolkits/flunet)). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) Data generated on 23/06/2023

**Percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for influenza, by influenza transmission zone**. Map generated on 23 June 2023.

![Map showing percentage of respiratory specimens testing positive for influenza by transmission zone](image)

**SARS-CoV-2 sentinel surveillance**

- Globally, SARS-CoV-2 positivity from sentinel surveillance decreased to 15%. Activity decreased to approximately 25% in the Western Pacific region and remained around 13% in

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3Information in this report is categorized by influenza transmission zones, which are geographical groups of countries, areas or territories with similar influenza transmission patterns. For more information on influenza transmission zones, see: [https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/influenza_transmission_zones](https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/influenza_transmission_zones)
the Region of the Americas. Activity was around or below 10% in the other regions. SARS-CoV-2 positivity from non-sentinel surveillance was reported around 16% globally.

- WHO encourages countries, especially those that have received the multiplex influenza and SARS-CoV-2 reagent kits from GISRS, to conduct integrated surveillance of influenza and SARS-CoV-2 and report epidemiological and laboratory information in a timely manner to established regional and global platforms. The guidance can be found here: https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-integrated_sentinel_surveillance-2022.1.

- NICs and other national influenza laboratories from 73 countries, areas or territories from six WHO regions (African Region: 12; Region of the Americas: 20; Eastern Mediterranean Region: 4; European Region: 26; South-East Asia Region: 5; Western Pacific Region: 6) reported to FluNet from sentinel surveillance for time period from 29 May 2023 to 11 June 2023 (data as of 23/06/2023 07:09:51 AM UTC). The WHO GISRS laboratories tested more than 36 666 sentinel specimens during that time period and 6291 (17.2%) were positive for SARS-CoV-2. Additionally, more than 61 306 non-sentinel or undefined reporting source samples were tested in the same period and 8660 were positive for SARS-CoV-2. Further details are included at the end of this update.

For more detailed information, see the Influenza reports from WHO Regional Offices:
- WHO Region of the Americas: www.paho.org/influenzareports
- WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region: https://www.emro.who.int/health-topics/influenza/updates.html
- WHO European Region: www.flunewseurope.org/
- WHO Western Pacific Region: https://www.who.int/westernpacific/emergencies/surveillance/seasonal-influenza

Countries in the temperate zone of the southern hemisphere

- In Oceania, influenza activity continued to increase with influenza A predominantly detected. In Australia, influenza detections and ILI rates at sentinel general practitioners continued to increase overall, with differences across the states or territories. The majority of detections were influenza A viruses. In New Zealand, ILI and severe acute respiratory infections (SARI) activities continued to be reported at low levels with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and B viruses most commonly detected. In the Pacific Islands, Palau reported increased influenza activity in children under 15 years of age, mainly due to influenza B viruses. The RSV-associated hospitalization rate increased in Samoa in recent weeks.

- In South Africa, influenza activity decreased but remained moderate in pneumonia surveillance and decreased to a low level in ILI surveillance. Influenza A viruses were predominately detected.

- In temperate South America, influenza activity appeared to decrease with A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses most frequently detected followed by B viruses, mainly reflecting an apparent decrease in Chile. Influenza activity increased in Argentina to a moderate level with ILI cases at a low level and SARI cases below the seasonal threshold. Influenza activity also increased slightly in Paraguay and Uruguay but remained at low levels. RSV activity was elevated in Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay and SARI activity increased to a high level in Paraguay and to the moderate threshold in Uruguay. In Chile, influenza positivity decreased to a low level, SARI cases were at a moderate level and ILI cases decreased but remained high and above average
levels for this time of year. SARS-CoV-2 activity decreased or remained low across the countries in the subregion.

**Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Oceania Melanesia Polynesia**

[Graph showing the number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Oceania Melanesia Polynesia]

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/toolkits/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 23/06/2023

**Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Southern Africa**

[Graph showing the number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Southern Africa]

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/toolkits/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 23/06/2023

**Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Temperate South America**

[Graph showing the number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Temperate South America]

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/toolkits/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)
Data generated on 22/06/2023

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**Countries in the tropical zone**

**Tropical countries of Central America, the Caribbean and South America**

- In the Caribbean countries, influenza activity remained low in most reporting countries with influenza B/Victoria lineage viruses predominant in the subregion. In the countries in Central America, increased influenza activity was reported in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama with A(H1N1)pdm09 followed by B/Victoria lineage viruses most
frequently detected. Influenza activity was at a low level in El Salvador and Guatemala, moderate in Nicaragua and Panama and high in Honduras. SARI cases were also at a moderate level in Honduras. ILI and SARI activities increased above seasonal thresholds in Guatemala. In Mexico, influenza activity remained around the moderate threshold with B/Victoria lineage viruses predominant; other indicators remained low. In other countries, influenza detections were low and influenza activity was close to or below baseline. RSV activity was low in the Caribbean and Central American countries except in Guatemala where a slight increase was reported in recent weeks. SARS-CoV-2 activity was low overall but increased in some Caribbean countries.

- In tropical South America, overall influenza activity decreased with detections of predominantly A(H1N1)pdm09 and B viruses. In Bolivia (Plurinational State of), influenza positivity decreased further below the seasonal threshold, SARI cases decreased but remained at a moderate level and SARS-CoV-2 activity remained elevated. Influenza activity decreased further in Brazil and remained below the seasonal threshold while SARI activity remained elevated at a moderate level. SARI and pneumonia cases remained at moderate levels in Ecuador. Elevated SARS-CoV-2 activity was reported in Colombia and Ecuador.

Influenza activity was below or near the epidemic threshold and SARS-CoV-2 activity was low in other countries. RSV activity continued to be reported in Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Colombia.

### Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in Central America and Caribbean

![Graph showing influenza activity by subtype](image)

**Data source:** FluNet ([www.who.int/toolkits/flunet](http://www.who.int/toolkits/flunet)). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS)

**Data generated on 23/06/2023**

### Tropical Africa

- In Western Africa, influenza detections of predominately influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 were low in reporting countries.
- In Middle Africa, low detections of influenza B viruses were reported in Gabon in recent weeks.
- In Eastern Africa, influenza detections of all seasonal subtypes were low in reporting countries.

### Tropical Asia

- In Southern Asia, influenza activity remained low across reporting countries with all seasonal subtypes detected. SARS-CoV-2 activity as detected in integrated surveillance decreased or remained low in countries reporting this data during this reporting period.
- In South-East Asia, influenza activity remained stable in most reporting countries. Cambodia, Laos People’s Democratic Republic and Thailand reported continued detections of
predominantly influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses. Malaysia and Singapore continued to report A(H1N1)pdm09 and A(H3N2) virus detections. Increased detections of predominately A(H1N1)pdm09 viruses were reported in the Philippines. SARS-CoV-2 activity as detected in integrated surveillance remained low in countries reporting this data during this reporting period.

Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in South-East Asia

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/toolkits/flunet), Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) Data generated on 23/06/2023

Countries in the temperate zone of the northern hemisphere

- In the countries of North America, influenza activity remained low with most indicators of influenza activity at levels typically observed between influenza seasons. Influenza B viruses predominated in Canada and influenza A and B viruses co-circulated in the United States of America (USA) with A(H1N1)pdm09 predominant among the subtyped influenza A viruses in both countries. In the USA, the percentage of deaths attributed to pneumonia, influenza or COVID-19 remained just above the epidemic threshold established from historical data, with the majority of recent mortality attributed to COVID-19. RSV activity was low in both countries.
- In Europe, influenza detections were low in all reporting countries. Influenza B viruses predominated in Northern and Eastern Europe and A virus detections outnumbered influenza B virus detections in Southwest Europe. Pooled all-cause mortality estimates from the EuroMOMO network showed no excess mortality across all age groups.\(^2\) The proportion of sentinel specimens testing positive for influenza was lower than the proportion testing positive for SARS-CoV-2.
- In Central Asia, no influenza detections were reported.
- In Northern Africa, no influenza detections were reported.
- In Western Asia, ILI and influenza activity remained low across reporting countries with detections of all seasonal influenza subtypes.
- In Eastern Asia, influenza activity remained low in China and Japan. In Hong Kong SAR, China, influenza positivity and hospital admission rates returned to below the baseline threshold, with influenza A(H1N1)pdm09 and A(H3N2) viruses co-circulating. In the Republic of Korea, the ILI rate and influenza detections of predominantly influenza A(H3N2) appeared to

\(^2\) Please refer to the EuroMOMO website for a cautionary note relating to interpretation of these data.
decrease. In Mongolia, ILI and pneumonia cases showed decreasing trends although they remained above the upper tolerance limits.

Number of specimens positive for influenza by subtype in the Northern hemisphere

SARS-CoV-2 sentinel surveillance data reported to FluNet

SARS-CoV-2 data are included from those countries reporting testing one or more sentinel specimens for SARS-CoV-2 per week. Influenza data are included from those countries reporting testing one or more sentinel specimens for influenza per week regardless of their reporting of SARS-CoV-2 testing data. Currently, there are a limited number of countries reporting such data to FluNet in a timely and consistent way. The charts below show the data globally and by WHO region from the data reported to date to WHO from a limited number of countries and thus the trends in percent positivity do not reflect the situation as a whole in the region. Additional information on data reported from countries can be found on the Integrated influenza and other respiratory viruses surveillance outputs dashboard here.

Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 virus detections from sentinel surveillance reported to FluNet globally

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/toolkits/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) Data generated on 23/06/2023
Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 virus detections from sentinel surveillance reported to FluNet from countries, areas and territories in the WHO African Region

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/toolkits/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) Data generated on 23/06/2023

Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 virus detections from sentinel surveillance reported to FluNet from countries, areas and territories in the WHO Region of the Americas

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/toolkits/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) Data generated on 23/06/2023
Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 virus detections from sentinel surveillance reported to FluNet from countries, areas and territories in the WHO South-East Asia Region

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/toolkits/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) Data generated on 23/06/2023

Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 virus detections from sentinel surveillance reported to FluNet from countries, areas and territories in the WHO European Region

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/toolkits/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) Data generated on 23/06/2023
Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 virus detections from sentinel surveillance reported to FluNet from countries, areas and territories in the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/toolkits/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) Data generated on 23/06/2023

Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 virus detections from sentinel surveillance reported to FluNet from countries, areas and territories in the WHO Western Pacific Region

Data source: FluNet (www.who.int/toolkits/flunet). Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) Data generated on 23/06/2023
Sources of data
The Global Influenza Programme monitors influenza activity worldwide and publishes an update every two weeks. The updates are based on available epidemiological and virological data sources, including FluNet (reported by the WHO Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System), FluID (epidemiological data reported by national focal points) hosted by WHO RespiMART platform and influenza and other respiratory virus reports from WHO Regional Offices and Member States. During the COVID-19 pandemic, FluNet has also been receiving updates on testing of samples obtained from routine influenza surveillance systems for SARS-CoV-2. Completeness can vary among updates due to availability and quality of data available at the time when the update is developed.

Virological surveillance updates: [https://www.who.int/tools/flunet/flunet-summary](https://www.who.int/tools/flunet/flunet-summary)

Contact: fluupdate@who.int